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TEACH YOURSELF YORUBA

E. C. Rowlands

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INTRODUCTION

The Yoruba people and their language

Yoruba is the mother tongue of upwards of ten million people who live in the Western Region of Nigeria and in adjoining areas of the Northern Region and also in Dahomey. Their language was first written down, by Christian missionaries, in the early part of the nineteenth century. It is now being increasingly used in books and weekly newspapers and is widely taught in schools, but it has not yet attained the status of being an official language.

As is the case with most languages, Yoruba has certain regional variations—dialects—but a generally accepted 'Standard Yoruba'* has gradually come into being since the language came to be written and this is what is found in books and taught in schools. There are two slightly different forms of 'Standard Yoruba', one of them corresponding closely with the type of Yoruba spoken in Oyo province while the other is associated with Lagos. As the differences between the two forms are found mainly in the grammar we shall occasionally have to take note of them in the course of this book.

TONE

Like many other languages in Africa and other parts of the world, Yoruba is a 'tone' language. This means that in learning words we have to take account not only of the sounds but also of the tune which is an integral part of each word. To a limited extent we have something comparable in English in that we have to learn what

* The abbreviation 'S.Y.' is used to refer to this in the body of the book.

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syllable to stress, e.g. we must learn to stress 'invalid—sick person' on the first syllable and 'invalid—null and void' on the second syllable. In Yoruba such cases are so numerous that unless you get most of your tunes right you will either not be understood at all or you may find yourself making embarrassing mispronunciations which cause general amusement. The stock example of this is to say 'go and smash this dish' instead of 'go and wash this dish', the difference between 'smash' and 'wash' (*fṣ* and *fṣ*) resting merely on a distinction of tone. These distinctions are explained in detail in the early lessons which follow.

The distinction between the two meanings of 'invalid' is, as we explained above, made by differences of *stress*. It is very important to realise, however, that the distinctions we make in English between stressed and unstressed syllables do not exist in Yoruba. All syllables are approximately equally stressed regardless of the *tones* they carry and we do not get any of the differences we make in English in the pronunciation of vowels and consonants according to their position in the word. In speaking Yoruba we must avoid the following habits:

(a) vowels in unstressed syllables in English lose their distinctiveness, e.g. the second syllables of 'beated' and 'fetid' sound the same. In Yoruba *kékeré* 'small', however, there is no variation in the quality of the vowels.

(b) unvoiced stop consonants (e.g. *p*, *t*, *c/k*) are in English pronounced with quite a strong puff of breath following them when at the beginning of a stressed syllable, but without this puff of breath elsewhere, e.g. in 'cocoa', 'total' the two 'c's and 't's differ. But in Yoruba *kákó* 'cocoa' and *tètè* 'early' there is no distinction: in each syllable the consonant is pronounced with a very slight following puff of breath. (Yoruba *p*, as explained below, represents quite a different sound from English 'p' and is not followed by this slight puff of breath.)

(c) voiced stop consonants (e.g. *b*, *d*, *g* as in 'go') at

the beginning of stressed syllables in English sound more energetically pronounced (because they are partially unvoiced) than in other positions, e.g. compare the consonants in 'bob', 'dead' and 'gig'. But in Yoruba *baba* 'father', *dúdú* 'dark' and *gígún* 'long' the consonants are pronounced in all positions like their *unstressed* counterparts in English, i.e. they are always pretty well fully voiced.

LETTERS AND SOUNDS

The Yoruba alphabet has the letters *a b d e e f g gb h i j k l m n o o p r s s t u w y*. Note that there are three letters, *e o s*, which must be written with a distinguishing dot or line beneath them. Failure to insert such a distinguishing mark is a common spelling mistake in Yoruba.

By means of this alphabet Yoruba indicates very clearly the distinctive sounds of the language, so that there is rarely any doubt as to how a written word is to be pronounced. To describe these sounds we will make the usual distinction between vowels and consonants and in making comparisons with English we will take as our standard the pronunciation of B.B.C. news-readers on the national transmitters.

(a) Yoruba, like French, has two sorts of vowels—oral vowels, *a e e i o o u*, whose sound comes out entirely through the mouth, and nasalised vowels, *an/on* in *un en*, whose sound comes out through the nose as well. As in French, this nasalisation is shewn by writing an *n* after the vowel letter, so learners must be on their guard against pronouncing *n* in these cases as a separate consonant. All single vowels are to be regarded as short and length is generally shewn in this book by writing doubled vowels, e.g. *aa*. The earlier way of shewing a long vowel was by writing a tilde over the vowel, e.g. *ã*, but the use of doubled vowels is now becoming popular because it is easier with this way to add tone marks.

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a is about mid way between the short front 'a' of 'fat' and the long back 'a' of 'father'.

e is like French 'é' or the first part of the vowel sound of 'bay', i.e. it is a simple vowel, not a diphthong.

ɛ is like the vowel of 'bet', 'bed', pronounced in the very front of the mouth.

i is like the vowel of 'eat', 'feet'.

o is like the first part of the vowel of 'hoe', 'sew'.

ɔ is like the vowel sound of 'caught', 'brought' (only short).

u is like 'oo' in 'cool', 'hoot'.

an/ɔn has with many Yorubas a tongue position close to that of 'a' in 'father'. Some Yorubas actually make quite a difference between **an** and **ɔn**, but others do not and it is convenient for learners to adopt this latter pronunciation. The distinction then becomes merely a matter of spelling. The convention is that **ɔn** is written after consonants in which the lips play some part in the articulation, i.e. **b f gb m p w**, while **an** is written after the other consonants. A further convention is that **ɔ** is written after **m** instead of **ɔn** and **a** is written after **n** instead of **an**. This is possible because the oral **ɔ** and **a** cannot occur in this position. Thus **na** is to be pronounced as **nan** and **mɔ** as **mɔn**.

un has about the tongue position of short English 'oo' in 'foot', or of 'u' in 'put'.

in has about the tongue position of 'i' in 'pit', 'sick'.

ɛn (which occurs only rarely) has the same tongue position as **ɛ**.

(b) Among the consonants only two, **gb** and **p**, present any difficulty.

b d g (always as in 'go', never as in 'gem') and **t k**, apart from the differences already commented on, are very like their English counterparts.

f h as in English.

w y as in English when followed by oral vowels, but when followed by nasalised vowels these consonants themselves are strongly nasalised, so that you may think that an **n** is pronounced in front of them.

m n as in English.

s is like English 's' only rather higher pitched.

ʃ is like English 'sh' but with higher pitch and pronounced with spread lips.

l is like the clear 'l' at the beginning of words in English, e.g. 'low'.

r is very like the 'r' heard in English between vowels, e.g. as in 'bury', 'carry'. It is a light sound, tending to drop out in certain words, and it must never be strongly trilled. Like **w** and **y**, it is itself strongly nasalised when it is followed by nasalised vowels so that you may think you hear an **n** pronounced in front of it.

j has less friction than English 'j', often sounding almost like 'dy'.

gb and **p** represent sounds which do not occur in any European language. These two sounds are related to each other in the same way that 'p' and 'b' are related to each other, but as Yoruba does not possess an ordinary 'p' sound the letter **p** is used for this other sound, which in various other West African languages is denoted by **kp**. Whereas in ordinary 'p' and 'b' the tongue is in a neutral position, in these two sounds the back of the tongue is raised to the position which it takes in pronouncing 'k' and 'g' while the lips are closed as in pronouncing 'p' and 'b'. The tongue is moved away from this position at the same time that the lips are opened, producing sounds in which the qualities of 'k' and 'g' are combined with those of 'p' and 'b'. The important point to note is that the qualities are heard *simultaneously*, not in succession. Learners practising these sounds are apt to tense the muscles of the mouth, but actually the sounds are produced with these muscles quite relaxed. There is no puff of breath after **p**, and **gb** is fully voiced. A useful way of acquiring these sounds is to take English words like 'Blackpool' and 'rag-bag' and try to pronounce them as 'Bla-ckpool', 'ra-gbag'.

To acquire a good pronunciation it is advisable to hear the sounds from the lips of a Yoruba, but the foregoing description will help to avoid some pitfalls. If you can get

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hold of an informant, get him (or her) to read slowly through the early examples and exercises in the book and repeat them after him. To help in picking up the distinction between *e* and *ɛ*, *o* and *ɔ*, *b* and *gb* the following pairs of words will be useful: *ògèdè** 'incantation', *ògèdè* 'banana'; *oko* 'farm-plot', *okò* 'husband'; *enì* 'one', *enì* 'mat'; *Èkó* 'Lagos', *èkó* 'education'; *èrò* 'thought', *èrò* 'antidote'; *ìgbé* 'forest', *ìbè* 'mouth sores'; *àbàlá* 'sort of food', *àgbàlá* 'back-yard'; *ègbé* 'destruction', *ègbé* 'side'; *àbá* 'attempt', *àgbá* 'barrel'. Note that in each pair the tone pattern is the same, so you will not be distracted by having to attend to this feature as well.

THE MAKE-UP OF SYLLABLES

A syllable in Yoruba may have one of three forms: it may be a vowel, a consonant plus a vowel or a nasal (written *m* or *n*). It is not possible to have groups of consonants in any position or to have syllables ending in consonants. This is seen clearly in the way English words borrowed into Yoruba are treated; vowels are added and consonants dropped to make them conform to the system, e.g. 'bed' becomes *bèḗḗdi* (*bḗḗdi*), 'street' becomes *títì*, 'shilling' becomes *ṣìlè*, 'Christmas' becomes *Kérésimesì* and so on.

There are no diphthongs in Yoruba and sequences of vowels are pronounced as separate syllables, so that e.g. *láiṣé* 'soon' and *ráúráú* 'completely' are to be pronounced as three and four syllable words respectively. In some ways it is convenient to think even of long vowels as made up of two separate syllables as they are usually obviously derived from such groups, e.g. *aago* 'clock, watch' from *agogo*.

Learners often have difficulty in pronouncing a syllabic nasal at the beginning of words, though we are accustomed in English to saying them at the end of words, e.g. 'cotton' is usually pronounced 'cotn'. It is important to know that a syllabic nasal is always homorganic, i.e. pronounced in

* The significance of the marks over the vowels is explained later on in this Introduction.

the same part of the mouth, as a following consonant, regardless of how it is actually spelt. For example, in *ńkọ* 'what about . . .?' the nasal sound represented by *n* is the same as that found in the English word 'ink', while in *ńpa* 'is killing' the nasal has the same double articulation as the *p*. In a few cases the sound of *n* in 'ink' is represented by the spelling *ng* (as in English 'sing').

WORD DIVISION

Ordinary colloquial Yoruba is difficult to understand at first because there is a strong tendency to run words together and in the absence of a word stress accent it is hard to know where one word ends and another begins. In written Yoruba elisions are often not shewn and people tend to read a written text in an artificial, disjointed way. When asking a Yoruba to read something to you it is worth while explaining that you want it read as it would be naturally spoken. In this book we shall adopt as colloquial a style of writing as possible.

We speak of the 'elision' of a vowel when one of two vowels in contact is just dropped without any compensatory lengthening of the other vowel, e.g. in *peja* (*p'eja*) from *pa eja* 'to kill fish' = 'to fish' the *a* of *pa* 'to kill' disappears without any effect on the following *e*. But in *òótó* from *òtító* 'truth' we say that there is 'assimilation' of *i* to the preceding *o* after dropping or eliding the intervening *t*, because here the *i* is replaced by *o*, producing the long *óó*. Elision most frequently occurs when a verb or preposition is followed by a noun object, as in *peja* above, while assimilation often occurs between two nouns which are closely linked, e.g. *ilé iwé* 'school' (lit. 'house of books') is generally pronounced *iléwé*.

It is not possible to give simple rules about which vowel will drop out in cases of elision. We can say that the commoner a word is the more likely it is to lose its vowel. Where a word is used in two different senses we may get different results, e.g. *sí* 'to' with *ara* 'self' produces *s'ira* but with *ara* 'body' it produces *s'ára*. It will be necessary to memorise examples as they turn up.

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TONE MARKING

Though tone is so important in Yoruba very few tones are marked in an ordinary Yoruba text. The general principle is that tones are marked when they are necessary to avoid ambiguity, but many writers use no marks at all, so that it is sometimes necessary to read a passage through more than once in order to be certain of what is intended. Where tones are marked, an acute accent, e.g. *fó* 'to break', indicates a high tone while a grave accent, e.g. *f̀ò* 'to wash', indicates a low tone, mid tones being left unmarked. In this book (as will be explained later) some extra signs are used to indicate certain modified tones with which the ordinary orthography cannot deal, and tones will be consistently marked so that the learner may be in no doubt as to the pronunciation.

1

SIMPLE TONE PATTERNS
DESCRIPTIVE VERBS

Tone is so important in Yoruba that we shall have to concentrate our attention in the first few lessons on learning tone patterns, but various points of grammar will be introduced in the examples. In this first lesson these are:

(a) There is no grammatical gender in Yoruba. The single word *ó* equals English 'he/she/it', as in the phrase *ó kéré* 'he/she/it is small'.

(b) The subject always precedes the verb.

(c) Note that the single Yoruba word *kéré* corresponds to the two English words 'is small'. In English the adjective is the basic form and in making a statement containing an adjective we must add a verb 'is/was'. In Yoruba, on the other hand, the basic form is the one used in making statements and it is proper to think of this form as a verb. The adjective, in this case *kékeré* 'small', is derived from this basic verb form. We shall deal with the formation of adjectives later.

(d) The word *kéré* was translated above as 'is small', but if we add the word *télèrì* 'previously' to it we shall have to translate the phrase *ó kéré télèrì* as 'it was small'. In English the verb form itself shews whether the time referred to is present or past, but this is not so in Yoruba. It is the situation in which a phrase is used or some accompanying word which fixes the time as present or past. This may seem strange at first, but one soon gets used to it. In this present case it is as if we said 'it small' or 'it small once'; the first of these might refer to either the present or the past while the second obviously refers to the past.

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(e) A number of descriptive words which begin with the letters *l* or *n* are made up of a verb *ní* 'to have' and a noun, e.g. *lówó* 'to have money, be wealthy' is made up of *ní* and *owó* 'money'. Most nouns in Yoruba begin with a vowel, as in the example just given. The vowel of *ní* is elided before the vowel of the noun but the high tone is transferred on to the surviving vowel. An *l* replaces the *n* of *ní* except when the noun begins with the vowel *i*, e.g. *nirun* 'have hair, be hairy' from *ní irun*. The spelling of these forms is not absolutely fixed and sometimes an apostrophe is used to show that two words have run together, e.g. *l'ówó* instead of *lówó*. This does not mean that there is any difference in the pronunciation.

(f) Descriptive verbs often occur with some qualifying word added. This may itself be a verb, e.g. *tó* 'be enough', *jù* 'surpass'. *ó kéré tó* means 'it is small enough' while *ó kéré jù* means 'it is too small'. Other common words used in this way are *púpò* 'much' and *diè* 'some'. *ó kéré púpò* means 'it is very small' and *ó kéré diè* 'it is somewhat small'.

tone patterns

1. The first pattern given consists of a sequence of level high tones. The first syllable of the word or phrase is pitched at about the same level as the first *accented* syllable of the corresponding English word or phrase and this level is maintained over all the remaining syllables. Note particularly that there is no dropping of the voice on the last syllable. This is a speech tune which we do not use in English and it produces on an English ear an effect of chanting or singing. The actual level of pitch may vary from person to person and the same person will pitch his voice higher at some times than at others. A higher than usual pitch may indicate that the speaker is excited or is asking a question rather than making a statement.

ó dúdú, he is dark
ó lówó tó, he is wealthy enough
ó fójú, she is blind

ó fúyé, it is easy, light in weight
ó jáfáfá, he is active, keen
ó ní kókó, it has lump(s), is lumpy

Note that in the last example *ní* occurs as a separate word because the object noun *kókó* begins with a consonant. Other common nouns which, like *kókó*, have level high tones are *kókóró* 'key'; *şíbí* 'spoon'; *dígí* (*jígí*) 'mirror'.

2. When a high tone is followed by a mid tone one is conscious of a step down in pitch but again it is important to note that the mid tone syllable maintains its own level of pitch even at the end of a sentence. In a short sentence said in a matter-of-fact way the interval between high and mid is about a major third, but it might be less in a longer sentence or more in the stress of excitement. If a high tone follows the mid it is on the same pitch as the preceding high tone.

ó tóbi, it is big
ó tóbi tó, it is big enough
ó dára, it is nice, good to look at
ó le, he is hard
ó le tó, it is hard enough
ó ga, it is lofty
ó pupa, it is red
ó nirun, it is hairy
ó wúwo, it is heavy
ó lágbára, he is strong (*agbára* 'strength')

3. When a high tone is followed by a low tone one hears a pronounced fall on the low tone syllable, particularly when this syllable is at the end of the sentence. The tune of Yoruba sentences like *ó dùn* 'it is tasty', *ó pò* 'it is plentiful' is very like that of such English sequences as 'hot stew', 'cold soup' pronounced with matter-of-fact statement intonation.

ó dùn, it is tasty
ó kéré jù, it is too small
ó dúdú jù, it is too dark (in colour)

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ó dúdú púpò, he is very dark
ó fúyẹ diẹ, it is fairly light
ó dára púpò, it is very good
ó lẹwà, she is beautiful (ẹwà 'beauty')
ó gùn jù, it is too long

When low tone follows mid tone the falling effect is not nearly so marked.

ó tóbi jù, it is too big
ó ga jù, it is too lofty
ó korò, it is bitter

EXTRA VOCABULARY FOR PRACTICE

wọn, to be expensive
tẹjú, to be level
kún, to be full
dájú, to be certain
kúrú, to be short
mọ, to be clean

nípon, to be thick (cloth,
paper)
wúlò, to be useful
sanra, to be stout, fat
funfun, to be white
kan, to be sour
yí, to be tough

EXERCISE 1

Read aloud and then translate into English: ó lówó diẹ; ó kúrú púpò; ó kún jù; ó wọn púpò; ó le jù; ó wúlò; ó mọ tó; ó korò jù; ó lágbara púpò; ó ga diẹ; ó nípon jù; ó yi púpò; ó kan jù; ó wọn jù; ó tẹjú tó; ó funfun diẹ; ó dájú; ó pupa jù; ó nírun púpò; ó dúdú tó; ó sanra púpò; ó wúwo jù; ó kan diẹ.

Now turn to the key at the back of the book and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

THE NEGATIVE KÒ;
UNEMPHATIC PRONOUNS (1)

The negative kò 'not' is placed in front of the verb. No pronoun corresponding to 'he/she/it' is used with this word, so that e.g. 'he/she/it is not small' is translated simply by kò kéré. To say ó kò kéré would be completely wrong. Otherwise the subject is placed in front of kò, e.g. igi kò wọn 'wood is not expensive'. When kò has a word preceding it in the sentence in this way, the k is generally dropped, e.g. igi kò wọn (the usual written form) is pronounced igi ò wọn unless one is speaking in a very careful way. Sometimes you will find the k actually dropped in writing. To remind learners of this point we shall write (k) in such situations in the early lessons.

Negative sentences containing kò will provide us with convenient examples for learning tone patterns which begin with a low tone. In such sentences the verb is often qualified with a following rárá 'at all' or mọ 'any more, again'. Note that this mọ has no connection with the word mọ 'be clean' which we learnt in the preceding lesson. In learning Yoruba it is often rather confusing to find that one and the same syllable functions as two or more different words according to the position which it occupies in the sentence or the words which accompany it. It is better to learn Yoruba words in sentences rather than try to memorise them as isolated items in a vocabulary.

TONE PATTERNS

1. Low tone followed by mid tone—the low tone has the pitch of an *unaccented* initial syllable in a phrase of comparable length in English and the mid tone rises a step above this with an interval of about a minor third in a

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short phrase. For example, in *kò ga* 'it is not lofty' the *kò* is pitched at about the level of the first syllable of 'correct' pronounced as an unexcited statement. But, unlike the second syllable of 'correct', the *ga* maintains a level pitch. If a high tone follows this mid tone, as in *kò ga rárá* 'it is not lofty at all', that will be a step higher again with an interval of about a major third in a short phrase like the above.

- kò pupa*, she is not 'red', i.e. light of colour
- kò pupa mó*, it is not red any more
- kò funfun tó*, it is not white enough
- kò yi*, it is not tough
- kò sanra rárá*, he is not fat at all

2. Low tone followed by high tone—the low tone is pitched as before and a very perceptible rise of pitch, starting a little above the low tone level, is heard on the high tone syllable. The effect is quite different from that of the step up in pitch which characterises the movement from low to mid. In a short phrase the interval at the top of the rise may be as much as a fifth above the level of the low tone. Any following high tone has level pitch. For example in *kò dúdú tó* 'it is not dark enough' the first syllable of *dúdu* has rising pitch but the two following syllables have level pitch.

- kò dúdú rárá*, it is not dark at all
- kò kéré mó*, it is not small any more
- kò dájú*, it is not certain
- kò tóbi tó*, it is not big enough
- kò wúwo rárá*, it is not heavy at all

3. A sequence of low tones has level low pitch and a final low tone drops right away below the level of audibility.

- kò pò jù (pòjù)*, it is not too much
- kò gùn jù rárá*, it is not too long at all
- kò dùn mó*, it is not tasty any more

It is very important to notice that, in unexcited speech

at any rate, the intervals down to low tone are always bigger than the corresponding upward intervals. For example, in *májèlé* 'poison' after the low tone of *-jè-* the high tone of *-lé* does not rise to quite the same pitch as the high tone of *má-*, while in *adiẹ* 'chicken' the mid tone of *-ẹ* sounds flat in comparison with that of *a-*.

UNEMPHATIC SUBJECT PRONOUNS

Yoruba is like French in having separate sets of unemphatic and emphatic pronouns, e.g. *je* and *moi* 'I' etc. In English we shew emphasis by adding stress to the pronoun but this cannot be done in Yoruba. Leaving the emphatic pronouns to be dealt with later, we now give the complete set of unemphatic subject pronouns used with the verb forms we have so far learnt.

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>mo</i> , I	<i>a</i> , we
<i>o</i> , you	<i>ẹ</i> , you
<i>ó</i> , he/she/it	<i>nwón</i> , they

Notes:

(1) Note the distinction between *o* and *ó*, which is merely one of tone.

(2) The singular *o* is used in speaking to children, familiar friends and servants and in general implies familiarity. The use of the plural *ẹ* implies respect. Even when *referring* to a person the plural is sometimes used to shew respect, e.g. a child referring to one of its parents will use *nwón* instead of *ó*.

(3) *nwón* is pronounced as if written *wón*. This arbitrary spelling was adopted in order to distinguish the pronoun from the verb *wón* 'be dear'.

Before the negative *kò* the forms are slightly different:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>ng</i> , I	<i>a</i> , we
<i>o</i> , you	<i>ẹ</i> , you
(zero), he/she/it	<i>nwón</i> , they

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Notes:

(1) *ng* is pronounced like 'ng' in English 'sing'. Southern Yorubas use *mi* instead of *ng*, e.g. *ng (k)ò mò*, *mi (k)ò mò* 'I do not know'. This *mi* is not often written.

(2) *nwọn* has a *mid* tone here, not a high tone.

(3) After *a* and *ẹ* the negative *kò* not only loses its *k* in ordinary speech but the remaining *ò* is also assimilated to the preceding vowel, e.g. *a kò mò* 'we do not know' is heard as *a à mò* and *ẹ kò mò* as *ẹ ẹ mò*, or rather, *aà mò* and *ẹẹ mò*. To distinguish the negative from the positive, note that the vowel is longer and *drops to low tone*. The same distinction holds good between *o* and *o (k)ò*, as in *o mò* 'you know' and *o (k)ò mò* 'you do not know', and the distinction between *mo* and *ng (k)ò* is very similar.

The verb in Yoruba does not alter for person or number.

TONE PATTERNS

Phrases containing pronouns will provide examples of patterns beginning with a mid tone. Be careful to distinguish *o* from *ó*, and also to fall on a low tone following a high and to rise on a high tone following a low.

VOCABULARY

<i>gbó</i> , to hear, understand	<i>kàwé</i> , to read
<i>jó</i> , to dance	<i>kòwé</i> , to write
<i>mò</i> , to know	<i>şişé</i> , to work
<i>lè</i> , to be able	<i>şiré</i> , to play
<i>kòrin</i> , to sing	<i>pàlò</i> , to ask riddles
<i>loşo</i> , to wash clothes	<i>pitàn</i> , to tell stories

EXERCISE 2

Read aloud the following pairs of sentences and then translate them into English: *o sanra pupo*, *ó sanra púpò*;

a *lè kàwé*, *a à lè kàwé*; *mo gbó*, *ng (k)ò gbó*; *nwọn lè sàré*, *nwọn (k)ò lè sàré*; *ó lè kòrin*, *kò lè kòrin*; *ó kéré jù*, *o kéré jù*; *o lè loşo*, *o (k)ò lè loşo*; *ẹ lè pàlò*, *ẹ ẹ lè pàlò*; *mo lè pitàn*, *ng (k)ò lè pitàn*; *nwọn şişé púpò*, *nwọn (k)ò şişé púpò*; *o lè kòwé diẹ*, *ó lè kòwé diẹ*; *mo mò*, *ng (k)ò mò*; *ng (k)ò lè şiré mò*, *nwọn (k)ò lè şiré mò*.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

3

MORE ABOUT VERBS UNEMPHATIC PRONOUNS (2)

We have said something about verbs which denote qualities; we now go on to talk about verbs which denote actions and processes and the states arising from them. We shall see that the great majority of these verbs are monosyllables, e.g. *tì* 'push', *jẹ* 'eat', *kú* 'die'.

It has already been pointed out that the Yoruba verb does not contain any built-in distinction between past and present and we must keep on bearing this fact in mind in dealing with these new verbs. When we describe the completion of an event in English we normally use the past tense, e.g. 'he suddenly got up, ran to the door, opened it and rushed out'. But if we want to produce a vivid, dramatic effect or are giving instructions to actors in printed copies of plays we use the present, e.g. 'he suddenly gets up, runs to the door, opens it and rushes out'. This particular dramatic effect is something which cannot be easily reproduced in a Yoruba translation because that language has only one form—made up of the simple stem of the verb—which conveys the meaning of completed action. There is another form which corresponds to the English present tense in 'he gets up at seven o'clock every morning and goes out for a walk' but we cannot use this form to translate 'gets up' in the other sentence because it conveys the idea of the habitual repetition of an action.

Besides denoting a completed action or process the simple stem form can also convey the idea of a state which is the result of this, e.g. *ó kú* 'he died, he is dead'. Here too the absence of any distinction between past and present must be kept in mind. English uses a past tense to describe a state existing in the past, e.g. 'they said he

was dead', while *nwón l'ó kú* (*nwón ní ó kú*) can be rendered as 'they say he is dead' or 'they said he was dead'. (The verb *ní* 'say' used here behaves in every way like *ní* 'have' which was mentioned earlier.)

Because the same simple verb form can denote both action and state there are some cases where Yoruba uses one verb while English uses two quite different verbs, e.g. *ó wọ aṣọ dúdú* 'he put on dark clothes, he is/was wearing dark clothes'. English treats the wearing of clothes as a sort of process or action while Yoruba treats it as a state resulting from the putting on of clothes. We could actually here get nearer to the Yoruba way of expressing the idea by saying instead 'he has/had on dark clothes'. (Note that in this example the adjective 'dark' happens to have the same form as the verb 'be dark'.)

UNEMPHATIC OBJECT PRONOUNS

Verbs of action may be followed by noun or pronoun objects, e.g. *ó lù Ọjó* 'he hit Ojo', *ó lù mí* 'he hit me'. Yoruba is like English in having different sets of forms for subject and object pronouns but not for nouns, e.g. *mo lù Ọjó* 'I hit Ojo', *Ọjó lù mí* 'Ojo hit me'. But this distinction occurs only among the *unemphatic pronouns*; we shall see later (p. 27) that the *emphatic pronouns* behave just like nouns.

The unemphatic object pronouns are:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>mí, me</i>	<i>wa, us</i>
<i>ọ/ẹ, you</i>	<i>nyin, you</i>
vowel of verb repeated,	<i>wọn, them</i>
<i>him/her/it</i>	

Notes:

(1) The distinction between *ọ* and *ẹ* is one of dialect. *ọ* is generally written in books but *ẹ* is widely heard in speech.

(2) The 'vowel of the verb repeated' is best explained by examples, e.g. *fà á* 'pull it', *tì í* 'push it', *sè é* 'stew it',

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fọ ó 'wash it'. Nasalised vowels are extended in the same way, but it is a fairly general convention not to write *n* twice, e.g. *sin i* 'accompany him' rather than *sin in* is the commoner written form. The verb plus extension is pronounced as one long vowel, not as two separate short syllables. This serves to distinguish 'him/her/it', in deliberate pronunciation at any rate, from 'you' where the written forms are identical, e.g. *kọ ọ* 'reject you/reject him', 'reject him' being pronounced as one long vowel while 'reject you' is pronounced as two separate short vowels. A hyphen is sometimes written where 'you' is intended, e.g. *kọ-ọ* 'reject you'.

(3) *nyin* is an arbitrary spelling. Yorubas not familiar with the convention write it *yin*, which represents the actual pronunciation.

(4) It is conventional to write *nwon* for 'they' but *won* for 'them'. People not familiar with the convention write *won* for both.

(5) The tones of these pronouns vary according to the tones of the preceding verbs. The general rule is that they have *high* tone after low and mid tone verbs but *mid* tone after high tone verbs, e.g. *pè mí* 'call me', *pa mí* 'kill me', but *fún mí* 'give me'. *nyin* is exceptional in having high tone even after a high tone verb. In this case the vowel of the verb is extended onto the mid tone in front of the pronoun, though this extension is not shown in writing, e.g. *mo rí nyin* 'I saw you' is pronounced *mo rí (i)nyin*.

The long vowel of the third person singular is a special case. It follows the general rule (a) regularly in careful pronunciation, (b) even in quicker pronunciation when it has either a high tone syllable or nothing preceding it in the sentence, e.g. *ó fà á* 'he pulled it', *fà á* 'pull it'; *ó jẹ é* 'he ate it', *jẹ é* 'eat it'; *ó sí i* 'he opened it', *sí i* 'open it'. Otherwise some simplification occurs. After a mid or low tone syllable *jẹ é* sounds as *jé* and so on, e.g. *mo jẹ é* 'I ate it', *kò jẹ é* 'he did not eat it', while *sí i* sounds as *şii* or even *şi* and so on, e.g. *mo sí i* 'I opened it', *kò sí i* 'he

did not open it'. After a *low* tone not only does *jẹ é* sound as *jé* but also *dè é* sounds as *dé* and so on, i.e. the distinction here between mid and low tone verb does not operate. We shall see later (p. 35) that there are other cases of this.

VERB COMBINATIONS

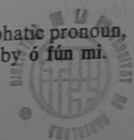
The English learner of Yoruba may be struck by the fact that it is often necessary to use two or more Yoruba verbs to convey an idea expressed by a single English verb. For example, 'bring' will according to circumstances be translated by *mú . . . wá* 'grasp . . . come', *gbé . . . wá* 'lift . . . come' or *kó . . . wá* 'gather . . . come'. *mú . . . wá* is used if we are talking of a person or a light object such as a book, *gbé . . . wá* if we are talking of a heavy object or a person who has to be carried, e.g. somebody on a stretcher, and *kó . . . wá* if we are talking of several persons or objects thought of collectively. Similarly, 'take' is translated by *mú . . . lọ*, *gbé . . . lọ*, *kó . . . lọ* 'grasp . . . go etc.'. Note that in these combinations the object is placed after the *first* verb, e.g. *ó gbé e wá* 'he brought it'.

A second feature we should notice is that many verbs are followed by the preposition *ní*. This word may be regarded as equivalent to 'in, at' in English and is actually the only word in Yoruba which we can properly call a preposition. From the point of view of elision it behaves exactly like the verbs *ní* 'to have' and *ní* 'to say'. Looking at these combinations with their English translations in mind we can distinguish two types.

(a) Where English verbs have two objects the second object in Yoruba is always preceded by *ní*.

ó fún mí l'ówó (ní owó), he gave me money
nwon kọ wa ní Yorubá, they taught us Yoruba
mo yá a ní sísí, I lent him 6d

This *ní* cannot be followed by an unemphatic pronoun, and 'he gave me it' is translated simply by *ó fún mí*.



(b) Various single English verbs are rendered in Yoruba by a verb plus *ní* with a noun.

ó yà mí l'ènu, it surprises me (it opens me in mouth)
 ó fà mí l'èti, he gave me a hint (he pulled me in ear)
 ó ràn mí l'òwò, she helped me (she helped me in hand)

Very often the verb, as actually in the last example above, has no clear meaning apart from the words which follow, cp. 'do' in 'do up, do down'. Notice how Yoruba prefers to say 'pull me in ear' rather than 'pull my ear'. Other examples are:

ó jì mí l'òwó gbé, he stole my money (stole me in money take)
 ó bà mí n'inú jé, it made me sad (spoil me at inside—bà . . . jé 'spoil')
 ó bá mí l'ára mu, it agrees with me (bá . . . mu 'agree', l'ára 'in body')

VOCABULARY

tí, to push; to shut	sè, to stew
jé, to eat	fọ, to wash (articles)
kú, to die	sin, to accompany person
ní, to say; to have	kò . . . silẹ, to reject, divorce
lù, to hit	pa, to kill
pè, to call, pronounce word	fún, to give, transfer to (often = to, for)
rí, to see, find	şe, to do, cause, affect
ká, to fold; to pluck fruit	mú, to grasp; to cause to do
wá, to come	gbé, to lift, carry
lọ, to go	kó, to gather, collect
kọ, to teach, learn	bá, to meet, be in association with (often = for)
yá, to lend, borrow	inú, inside
ilé, house, home	nínú (n'inú), (at) inside
nílẹ, (n'ile) at home	ọjà, market
wà, to exist, be located	
oko, farm	
wù, to please, attract	
fà, to pull	

EXERCISE 3

Read aloud and then translate into English: ó wù mí púpọ; ó kọ nyín ní Yorubá; nwọn fún wá l'òwó púpọ; kò wù wá rará; nwọn pa á kú; ó kọ ó silẹ; nwọn gbé e lọ; mo bá wọn nilé; a rí o l'ọjà; nwọn wá nilé; ó bá wá l'óko; ó wá nínú ilé; mo pè é fún wọn; kò fọ ọ tó; ó l'ó wù wọn díẹ; ng (k)ò lù nyín rará; ó yá mí ní şibí; ó rà á fún mí; kò tà á fún wọn; nwọn bá wá rà á; mo rí i nínú àpótí; nwọn l'ó tó; ó ní kò tóbí tó; nwọn (k)ò yá wá l'òwó rará; mo gbé e wá fún u; ó bà wọn nínú jé; nwọn jì mí ní kọkọrọ gbé.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

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EMPHASIS QUESTION WORDS (1)

It has already been remarked that we cannot, as we do in English, give extra stress to words to shew emphasis. We now take up this point in greater detail.

If asked to give the English for the Yoruba word *igi* we would say 'wood' or 'tree' with an unemphatic sort of intonation which we might say carried no implications beyond the information given. In answer to the question 'what is this?', however, we would say 'wood/it's wood (a tree)' with an intonation which implied, e.g. that the material in question was wood and not some other possible material such as metal or plastic. The point to notice is that the presence or absence of 'it's' in the answer really makes no difference to the meaning; it is the intonation on the word 'wood' which is important. In Yoruba the situation is quite different. Reversing the questions one would answer the first with *igi* and the second with *igi ni*. The *ni* can be translated by 'it's' but what it really corresponds to is the intonation we give to 'wood' in that context. Whereas the 'it's' can be omitted in English without altering the sense the Yoruba *ni* is essential.

Words or phrases made emphatic with *ni* are always placed at the head of the sentence.* Contrast the unemphatic *a fẹ owó* 'we want money' with the emphatic *owó l'a fẹ* 'it's money we want, we want money'. In 'we want money' English has the same order of words as in the unemphatic sentence but the difference of intonation shews the difference of meaning. It is not possible to do

* We shall see later (p. 157) that *ni* can be placed at the end of a whole clause or sentence to add emphasis.

EMPHASIS - QUESTION WORDS (1)

25

this in Yoruba; *owó l'a fẹ* is the only possible order for the emphatic meaning.

aṣo ni mo rà, it was *cloth* I bought

Kẹhinde ni nwón mú wá, it was *Kehinde* they brought

Táiwò ni mo fún l'ówó, it was *Taiwo* I gave money to

When a subject is emphasised with *ni* a pronoun follows.

Táiwò l'ó fẹ ọ, *Taiwo* broke it

Àdùkẹ l'ó rà á, *Aduke* bought it

Ojó l'ó kọ mi ní Yorùbá, *Ojo* taught me Yoruba

When a noun subject is plural—shewn by the presence of *awon* in front of it (see p. 40)—the following pronoun is generally still singular, though some Yorubas use the plural.

awon okunrin l'ó gbé e wá, it was the *men* brought it
awon okunrin ni nwón gbé e wá, it was the *men* brought it

A second object in this emphatic position is not preceded by *ní*.

owó ni nwón fún mi, it was *money* they gave me

The case of other extensions which have *ní* in the unemphatic order is more complicated and is left for treatment later (p. 85).

Notes:

(1) The mid tone of *ni* is lost in elisions.

(2) An English sentence like 'it was cloth I bought' can be given several different intonations. The one intended here is that in which 'cloth' is the only stressed word and is given a falling intonation, the implication being that cloth and not some other commodity was bought on the occasion in question. Other intonations would need a different Yoruba translation.

The negative of *ni* is *kọ*, which must not be confused with the word *kò* 'not' which is used before verbs. *kọ* by

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itself means 'is/was not', and the word preceding it is emphatic in the same way as when it is preceded by *ni*, e.g. *eja kò* 'it is not fish'. *kò* is usually followed by *ni* when a verb phrase follows, e.g. *eja kò ni mo fẹ* 'it is not fish I want'. On the other hand, *áláfià k'ẹ́ dé bí* 'is it not in health you have arrived?' (a greeting), where *k'ẹ́* is for *kò ẹ*.

'WHO' AND 'WHAT'

In *tani* and *kini*, the common forms of the Yoruba words for 'who?' and 'what?', the *ni* we have just been discussing is written as part of the word. The basic forms are *ta* and *kí* but these are always emphatic, i.e. followed by *ni*, though *ni* is occasionally separated by an intervening word (see p. 149), in which case the two elements are naturally written as separate words. Departure from the usual emphatic order is uncommon, cp. English 'he gave you what?' compared with 'what did he give you?'.
When *tani* is the subject of the sentence two dialectal variants are heard, e.g. *tal'ó rà á, tani rà á?* 'who bought it?'. These can be regarded as different reductions of *tani ó rà á?* In *tal'ó rà á?*, the northern Yoruba spoken form and the usual book form, the *ni* is elided in the normal way, while in *tani rà á?* the *ó* is elided and its high tone is thrown back onto the *ni*. As the tone patterns of the two forms are the same, the difference to a Yoruba ear is very slight. The same variants occur also with *kini*, e.g. *kil'ó dé, kini dé?* 'what has happened?' (literally 'arrived'); *kil'ó ẹ, kini ẹ?* 'what caused?'—the Yoruba for 'why?'.
The answer to such a question as *tal'ó rà á?* is generally of the form *Kẹ́hinde ni* 'it was Kẹ́hinde'.
When *tani* and *kini* are objects there is, of course, no variation.

- tal'ó ri nibẹ?* who did he see there?
- tal'ẹ ri l'ójà?* who did you see in the market?
- kil'ó mú wá?* what did he bring?
- kini nwọn tà fún u?* what did they sell him?

When *tani* and *kini* are objects there is often no emphasis in the answer.

- kil'ó rá nibẹ?* what did you buy there?
- mo ra ata,* I bought pepper
- tal'ó bá l'óko?* who did you meet at the farm?
- mo bá Ojó,* I met Ojo

EMPHATIC PRONOUNS

There is a special set of emphatic pronouns which must be used with *ni* (and also in other emphatic contexts).

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>ẹmi,</i> I, me	<i>àwa,</i> we, us
<i>iwo,</i> you	<i>ẹnyin,</i> you
<i>òun,</i> he/him etc.	<i>àwọn,</i> they, them

Notes:

- (1) *òun* is sometimes spelt *òn*.
- (2) *ẹnyin* is an arbitrary spelling. Yorubas who do not know the convention spell it *eyin*, which reflects the pronunciation better.
- (3) As the translations given above clearly shew, these forms are used as either subject or object.

When these pronouns are the subject of emphatic sentences of the type we have just been describing we find a variation in use which is exemplified in the following pairs of sentences: *ẹmi ni mo fọ ọ* and *ẹmi l'ó fọ ọ* 'it was I broke it'; *iwo l'ọ mọ* and *iwo l'ó mọ* 'you know'. The emphatic pronoun is followed either by the corresponding *unemphatic* form or by the unemphatic *ó* 'he/she/it' throughout just like a noun. From the point of view of grammar we can in fact regard these pronouns as a special sort of noun. There does not seem to be any difference of meaning between the two uses; some Yorubas use one and some the other.

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VOCABULARY

eja, fish	àgùtàn, sheep
ẹran, meat	ewúrẹ, goat
ìgì, tree, wood (material)	ọ̀dà, paint
ìrìn, iron, metal	ẹ̀jẹ̀, blood
wùrà, gold	omì, water
gòlù (gòdù), gold	ẹmu, palm-wine
fàdákà, silver	ata, pepper
ìṣu, yam	ilá, okro (a vegetable)
pákí, cassava	eyẹ, bird
ọ̀pẹ, oil-palm	ọ̀bọ, monkey
àràbà, silk cotton tree	fẹ, to want
fọ, to break, smash	jù . . . nù, to throw away
dà . . . nù, to throw away	(throw be lost) (single things)
(pour be lost) (liquids, collectives)	

EXERCISE 4

Feed aloud and then translate into English: kìnì nwọ̀n fẹ? kíl'ó fún nyìn? tani nwọ̀n bá l'óko? tani bá ẹ rà á? tani fún nyìn l'ówó? kìnì nwọ̀n rí nínú àpótí? cmi kọ, ẹmu ni; eja kọ ni mo fẹ, ẹran ni; ata kọ l'a rà, ilá ni; ẹmu kọ ni mo cà nù, cmi ni; Adùkẹ kọ l'ó gbé e wá, Eísí ni; àgùtàn kọ l'ó fẹ, ewúrẹ ni; ó ní wùrà/gòlù kọ, ó ní fàdákà ni; ó l'ọ̀dà kọ, ó l'ẹ̀jẹ̀ ni; ọ̀un l'ó jù ú nù; iwọ kọ ni mo pè wá, Àíná ni; ewúrẹ kọ ni nwọ̀n tà fún u, àgùtàn ni; àpótí irin kọ ni mo rà, àpótí ìgì ni.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences back into Yoruba.

5

MORE ABOUT TONES

We have seen that a low tone has an effect upon following tones—a following mid tone is flat compared with a preceding mid tone while a following high tone glides up and also does not rise to quite the same pitch as a preceding high tone. It is very important to realise that these effects remain even when owing to elision a high tone comes onto the syllable that originally bore the low tone.

Expressions of time and place consisting of a noun preceded by the preposition ní will provide plenty of examples to illustrate this point. In English prepositions are necessary in some time expressions, optional in others and absent in yet others, e.g. 'he came at 2 o'clock, he came (on) Wednesday, he came yesterday'. Similarly in expressions of place, e.g. 'he is at the cinema, he is (at) home, he is outside'. In Yoruba the preposition ní is used with *all* expressions of place and time of this sort, though this may be obscured by the fact that it is often written as one word with the following noun, e.g. nílẹ 'at home', nínú '(at) inside'. The noun 'today' is ọ̀nì but 'I saw him today' is mo rí i lóní. Similarly the noun 'outside' is ọ̀dẹ but 'I saw him outside' is mo rí i lóðẹ.

In the ordinary orthography there are no special signs for shewing these modified tones, but we shall here use the tone marks seen on the second syllables of lóní and lóðẹ when modified tones occur without any obvious low tone to cause them. Most words containing such tones can easily be analysed into their component parts, e.g. kówẹ 'to study' is from kọ iwé 'to learn book' and jádẹ 'to get out' is from já ọ̀dẹ 'to reach to outside'. In the speech of some Yorubas one can actually hear a sharp fall at the end of the preceding high tone syllable, but even if

such a fall is not audible the modification of the following tone bears witness to what we may call a latent low tone preceding it.

It remains to ask whether any difference can be heard on a *low* tone to shew that the preceding syllable (onto which a high tone has been thrown) was originally low, not mid. For example, are there two different pronunciations underlying the written form *ó l'òkò méjì* according to whether it means 'he has two canoes' (*òkò*) or 'he has two spears' (*òkò*)? Many Yorubas, though certainly not all, definitely do make a difference. In *l'òkò* 'has canoe' the syllable *l'ò* has level high tone while the syllable *kò* has the fall in pitch which we normally get on a low tone after high and, to a lesser degree, after mid tone. In *l'òkò* 'has spear', however, there is a sharp fall in pitch at the end of *l'ò* while *kò* has level low pitch, shewing that the syllable preceding it must originally have had low tone. The difference between the two is, indeed, very like the intonational difference in English between '(a) black bird' and '(a) blackbird' when answering the question 'what is that?'. No special sign has been introduced in this case, so the learner must be careful to check on the underlying basic words in the few examples which occur. Note that in some fixed phrases containing *òkè* 'up', e.g. *sòkèsódò* 'up and down' (*sí òkè sí odò*), the distinction has been obliterated, *sòkè* being pronounced as if derived from *sí òkè*.

We shall need to use the signs for modified tones on certain commonly occurring words which have two forms, a longer form with a low tone prefix and a shorter form without the prefix but with the effect of its low tone remaining on the high or mid tone of the following syllable. These words are *èyí/iyí* and *yí* 'this', *iyen* and *yèn* 'that', *òkan/ìkan* and *kán* 'one' and *èwo* and *wò* 'which?'. (The pairs *èyí/iyí* and *òkan/ìkan* are dialectal variants.) The longer forms are used independently while the shorter forms are always dependent on a noun or other word.

èyí tóbi jù, this/this one is too big
ápótí yí (k)ò tóbi tó, this box is not big enough
iyen (k)ò wù mí rárá, that does not attract me at all
èmu yèn (k)ò dùn rárá, that palmwine is not tasty at all
òkan soṣo ni mo fé, it is one only I want
ojú kán soṣo l'ò ní, he has only one eye
èwo l'ò fé? which do you want?
ewúrè wò l'ò rà? which goat did he buy?

We have already remarked that when a modified high tone follows a high tone it does not rise to quite the same pitch. We can hear this in *lóní* 'today' and *ilé yí* 'this house'. Where modified high tone follows a mid tone the glide starts rather below the level of the mid tone and rises to slightly above it but not as high as an unmodified high tone. When a modified mid tone follows a high tone, e.g. as in *lódè* 'outside', *ilé yèn* 'that house', there is a wider interval drop than when the mid tone is unmodified, e.g. as in *tóbi* 'be big', *l'òko* 'at the farm'. After a preceding mid tone it sounds perceptibly flat, e.g. *èmu yèn* 'that palm-wine'.

To recapitulate, in a sequence of words pronounced as a single intonation group a modified tone is always slightly flatter than the preceding *tone of the same rank*, regardless of whether the low tone producing the modification is obviously present or not. An intonation group may be a whole sentence, if that is not very long, or a phrase or clause forming part of a longer sentence.

ELISION

We have used some examples of elision in our discussion of modified tones, e.g. *lódè* from *ní òde* and *jàdè* from *jà òde*. Elision occurs very frequently in Yoruba between a verb or the preposition *ní* and a following noun. Unfortunately the elisions which occur in normal speech are not always shewn in writing. Quite a number of elided forms have come to be written as one word, e.g. *lódè*, *jàdè* above, while others are written with an apostrophe, e.g. *lóri* and *l'óri* from *ní orí* 'on top'. In the

examples given we see that, whereas *ní* elides its vowel before *òde* (and also *n* appears as *l*), *jà* retains its vowel. There are no simple rules for deciding which vowel will be elided though we can make a rough generalisation that the commoner, more easily recognisable word will elide its vowel. The rules about tone, however, are fairly simple.

(a) A high tone always survives whether the vowel which originally carried it survives or not, e.g. *lódé*, *kówě* 'to study' (from *kọ iwé* 'learn book').

(b) When a mid or low tone verb is involved the tone of the verb can be disregarded; it is always the tone of the initial vowel of the noun which survives, e.g. *kówě* 'to write' from *kọ iwé* 'write book'; *kàwé* 'to read' from *kà iwé* 'read book'; *fọṣọ* 'to wash clothes' from *fọ aṣọ*; *korin* 'to sing' from *kọ orin* 'sing song'. (Note the two different words *kọ*.)

We see from these examples that when involved in elisions the distinction between mid and low tone verbs is neutralised. Before a noun object this is so even if no elision takes place, for in that case both classes of verbs are said on a mid tone. Thus, 'he bought cloth' would be heard as *ó r'áṣọ* or *ó ra aṣọ* and 'he bought bananas' as *ó r'ògèdè* or *ó ra ògèdè*, though in the Vocabulary 'to buy' is given as *rà**. The same neutralisation occurs also before emphatic pronouns, which we have already seen behave grammatically like nouns, e.g. *ó lu èmi ṣá* 'he hit me at any rate' (*lù*). But in writing Yoruba the correct practice is always to give such words their dictionary tones, leaving the reader to make adjustments when necessary. The distinction between mid and low tone verbs which take an object actually appears in two cases:

(a) When the verb is followed by an unemphatic pronoun object, e.g. *ó fọ ọ* 'he washed it', *ó jẹ ẹ* 'he ate it'.

*Before a noun beginning with a consonant, of course, it must always be so, e.g. *ó ra kòkó* 'he bought cocoa'.

(b) When a noun object precedes the verb, e.g. *eran ni mo jẹ*, *eran ni mo rà* 'it was meat I ate/bought', *emu tí nwọn mu*, *emu tí nwọn tà* 'the palm-wine which they drank/sold'.

VOCABULARY

<i>àwòrán</i> , picture	<i>pé</i> , to be complete; to be profitable
<i>omódé</i> , child	<i>méjì</i> , two
<i>òkùnrin</i> , man	<i>mètá</i> , three
<i>obinrin</i> , woman	<i>mérin</i> , four
<i>aná, láná</i> , yesterday	<i>létà</i> , letter
<i>rí . . . rà</i> , to find to buy	<i>isẹ</i> , work
<i>orin</i> , song	<i>àti</i> , and
<i>àbí</i> , or	<i>kọ</i> , to write; to sing

EXERCISE 5

Translate into English: *kíl'ò rí nínú àwòrán yí? mo r'omódé kán; mo r'igi ọpẹ kán; mo r'ókùnrin kán àt'obinrin méjì; mo r'agùtàn mètá àt'ewúré mérin; èwo ni nwọn fún ẹ? àpótí wò ni nwọn gbé wá? mo r'ókán rà l'ọjà láná; mo r'emu púpọ rà fún wọn; aṣọ yèn (k)ò nípon tó; àwòrán yèn (k)ò wù mí rárá; aṣọ kán soṣo l'ó wọ; lye (k)ò bá mí lára mu; tal'ó lè ràn wá l'ówó? isẹ yí le púpọ; isẹ wó l'ẹ ṣe láná? owó yí (k)ò pé; omódé yí (k)ò lè ṣe ẹ; taní fún ẹ l'ówó yí? orin wò ni nwọn kọ? a kọ létà méjì; ọbọ ni mo rí lórí igi yèn àbí eiyè ni? fádákà l'èyí àbí wúrà ni? taní dà omi yí nù?*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

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6

STILL MORE ABOUT TONES
QUESTION WORDS (2)

If we compare the two sentences *eja'pò l'òjà lóní* 'fish is plentiful in the market today' and *eja (k)ò pò l'òjà lóní* 'fish is not plentiful etc.' we shall hear in the first, but not in the second, a high tone on the last syllable of *eja*. So too, comparing *ògèdè'wón lóní* 'bananas are scarce today' with *ògèdè (k)ò wón lóní* 'bananas are not scarce today' we hear in the first sentence, but not in the second, a rise in tone from low to high on the last syllable of *ògèdè*. But in *ilá pò lóní* and *ilá (k)ò pò lóní* we hear no difference—the second syllable of *ilá* 'okro' has a basic high tone. These added high tones are not shown in the ordinary orthography. We shall here adopt the special device of writing a high tone mark *after* the syllable on which the high tone is heard, e.g. *eja'pò, ògèdè'wón*.

When the subject noun is qualified in any way, then it is the final syllable of the last qualifying word which is modified in this way, i.e. the syllable which immediately precedes the verb. Examples of this are *aşo yèn nípon* 'that cloth is thick', *aşo funfun'wón* 'white cloth is expensive', *aşo funfun yèn'wón* 'that white cloth is expensive'. But if we put the negative *kò* in front of the verb the modification does not take place, e.g. *aşo yèn (k)ò nípon*. We can in fact make a simple rule that a high tone is added to the final syllable of the subject wherever it is grammatically possible to put the pronoun *ó**. We say *ó wón, ó pò* but, as we have seen, we cannot use this pronoun in front of *kò*; for 'it is not expensive, it is not plentiful' we say simply *kò wón, kò pò* and in accordance with our rule the modification does not take place in front of *kò*. Similarly, *ó* cannot be placed in front of *ní* 'it is/was' and *kó* 'it is/ was not'—these words need to be

*This high tone, however, is not often audible before the *ní* prefix described in Lesson II.

STILL MORE ABOUT TONES

preceded by the *emphatic* pronouns—and again in accordance with our rule the modification is absent.

We find that in this situation again *emphatic* pronouns behave as nouns. We say *èmi'rí i* 'I (at any rate) saw it' but *èmi (k)ò rí i* 'I (at any rate) did not see it' and *èmi ni* 'it was me'.

When a mid tone is modified in this way the result is indistinguishable from a high tone when the preceding syllable has low or mid tone, but a glide from mid to high is heard if the preceding syllable has high tone. For example, *eja'wón* sounds as *ejá wón* and *èmi'rí i* sounds as *èmi rí i*, but *òkúta'le* does *not* sound as *òkútá le*. A very interesting point in connection with this difference is that if through elision a high tone is thrown onto a syllable which was originally *mid*, then the glide from mid to high is clearly heard, e.g. in *ó l'èja'wón* 'he says fish is dear' the tone on *-ja* is heard as mid rising to high. This variation according to whether or not a high tone precedes may be compared with the similar variation in mid tone verbs followed by the third person singular unemphatic pronoun noted on p. 20.

In slow, careful speech the upward glide from low to high heard in such a sentence as *ògèdè'wón* can be clearly distinguished, as starting from a relatively lower point, from the upward glides of *èkò'wón* 'pap is dear' and *èlùbó'wón* 'yam-flour is dear', but in quicker speech the distinction is not maintained. This ties up with what we learnt about the tones of verbs with a third person singular pronoun (p. 21).

YES AND NO QUESTIONS

Questions of this sort are sometimes expressed in Yoruba merely by raising the general pitch of the voice; this, combined with the obviously expectant attitude of the speaker, is enough to shew that a question is being asked. More usually, however, special words are used, placed at the beginning or end of the sentence. There is no difference in the order of words between a question and

a statement, but the pitch of the voice is usually rather higher.

1. The word *ṣé* at the beginning of a sentence usually shews that the speaker is asking for confirmation of an idea he already has in his mind; he thinks he knows what the answer is going to be. This idea is often expressed merely by intonation in English.

ṣ'ó dára? (*ṣé ó dára*), it's nice, I think?

(The speaker is expecting some such answer as *ó dára púpò* 'it is very nice'.)

ṣé kò dára? it's not nice then?

(The speaker has perhaps seen some expression of disapproval and is expecting some such answer as *kò dára rará* 'it's not nice at all'.)

Agreement with the suggestion contained in this sort of question, whether positive or negative, is most simply made by answering *en*. It is important to notice here the difference between Yoruba and English. In English we express agreement with 'yes' in answer to a positive question but with 'no' in answer to a negative question, e.g. 'yes, it's very nice'; 'no, it's not nice at all'. Yoruba says *en, ó dára púpò*; *en, kò dára rará*. As in English, it is rather abrupt merely to express agreement and leave it at that; as in the examples given above, an appropriate sentence is usually added; in fact agreement is often expressed by means of the sentence alone, e.g. *ṣ'ó dára? ó dára*. Another way of expressing agreement is to say *bèni* (*bēni*) 'it is so' (*bè* 'so' is here written as one word with *ni*). This, however, is more generally used to express agreement with a *statement* somebody has made.

Disagreement is most simply expressed by saying *en-èn*, to which an appropriate sentence is usually added, e.g. *ṣ'ó dùn? en-èn, kò dùn rará*. Often the appropriate sentence is used without a preceding *en-èn*. The actual sounds represented by the written form may vary somewhat; a commonly heard form might be better shewn by writing 'm-m, i.e. two glottal stops pronounced with the

lips closed. Other expressions of disagreement are *ó tí* or *ó tí o* and *bèkò*. The latter means 'it is not so' and is generally used to disagree with a statement, while *ó tí* could be translated literally as 'it fails'. The addition of *o*, as we shall see later, makes it more exclamatory.

The word *ṣé* usually elides its vowel where possible, e.g. *ṣ'ógèdè'pò lóní* 'I hope bananas are plentiful today?'. (For the tone of *ṣ'ó* see p. 30.) With *ó* 'he/she/it' it produces *ṣ'ó*, while with *o* 'you' we get *ṣó o*, actually written *ṣ'ò*, and even *ṣ'o*. Similarly with *a* and *ẹ* we get *ṣ'a*, *ṣ'a* and *ṣ'ẹ*, *ṣ'ẹ*.

2. Doubtful questions are expressed by putting *ṣé* at the beginning of the sentence or *bí* at the end, e.g. *ṣé ọ̀ṣu'pò lóní?* or *ọ̀ṣu'pò lóní bí?*, the difference being purely dialectal. The speaker half expects to be contradicted, a nuance which English again tends to convey by intonation. When the form of the question is negative there is usually a strong suggestion that the answer will be positive, cp. in English, 'am I not right? yes, you are right'.

ṣé elides its vowel in much the same way as *ṣé*. *ṣé ọ̀ṣu'pò* gives *ṣ'j'ó* while *ṣé ọ̀ṣu'pò* gives *ṣ'j'oo* (*ṣ'j'ò*), with level mid tones on *j'oo* because of the preceding low tone, cp. the verb and pronoun tones on p. 20.

3. If the questioner has an open mind the two alternatives are posed, e.g. *ó tóbi àbí kò tóbi?* 'is it big or not?'. Note that in Yoruba the second alternative always forms a complete sentence, though it need not contain a full repetition, e.g. *ó wà nínú àpótí àbí bèkò?* 'is it in the box or it is not so?'.
Not infrequently the first alternative is suppressed and *àbí* is used to introduce a question which suggests an after-thought, e.g. *àb'ó wúwo jù?* 'or is it too heavy?', *àbí kò lè kà á?* 'or cannot he read it?'.
àbí elides with following words in the same way as *ṣé*, *àbí ó* giving *àb'ó* and *àbí o* giving *àb'oo* (*àb'ò*), e.g. *ó tán àb'ó kù?* 'is it finished or does it remain?' = 'have you said all you want to say or not?', *o fẹ àb'ò* (*kò fẹ?*) 'do you want (it) or not?'.

VOCABULARY

òrò, words, talk, matter, affair	igò, bottle
tésàn, station	oba, king, crowned ruler
jinnà, to be far	omo, child
jinnà sí, to be far from (Yoruba 'to')	otí, liquor
erù, load	ilú, town, territory, country
òrombó, orange	òyinbó, white man
gbágudá, cassava	àgbàdo, maize
igbà, time	tutù, to be fresh, cold, damp
ajá, dog	tútù, fresh, etc.
gbóná, to be hot	rorò, to be fierce
sìsì, 6d	dáadáá, well, to a high degree, properly
rí, formerly	maa, expresses intention

EXERCISE 6

Translate into English: ñjé òrò yí yà nyín l'ènu? sé àpótí yí kò wúwo jù? ñjé è lè wá lóní? s'ó lágbara dáadáá? o lè yá mi ní sísì bí? tésàn Ibàdàn 'tóbí púpò; Ibàdàn 'jinnà dîè sí Oşogbo; Oşogbo kò tóbí tó Ibàdàn; ní igbà kan rí oba kán wà, ó bí omo métá; igò otí métá 'pòjù; ògèdè 'wón púpò ní ilú òyinbó; mo maa rà àgbàdo àti ògèdè; ñj'ájá yí rorò? ñj'ómi yí gbóná tó? àbí owó yí kò tó? sé nwón lè ká á dáadáá? s'è maa ràn mí l'ówó? àgbàdo tutù 'dùn púpò; ògèdè l'o maa rà l'ójá àbí òrombó ní? nwón fún è àbí nwón kò fún è? ó ní gbágudá l'òun 'maa rà; àwa'le kọ ọ.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

7

NOUNS

We have made frequent use of nouns to illustrate the rules of tone change and elision; it is now time to deal with them more systematically and in greater detail.

Nouns are always words of two or more syllables and they generally begin with a vowel, e.g. eja 'fish', ògèdè 'banana' though a certain number begin with a consonant, e.g. bātà 'pair of shoes', kókóró 'key'. The initial vowel syllable may have mid or low tone but never high tone. The other syllables may be on any of the three tones, so that even in nouns of two syllables quite a variety of patterns is possible. Examples of pairs of disyllabic nouns differentiated by tone are:

èkọ, gruel	okọ, husband
èkọ́, education	okọ́, hoe
òbẹ, stew	onà, decoration
òbẹ́, knife	onà, road
òpó, post	àgbòn, coconut
opó, widow	agbòn, wasp

Many nouns of three syllables are found in two forms—a full form and a reduced form in which the middle syllable loses its consonant and has its vowel assimilated to that of the preceding syllable. This produces a long vowel which has the tones of the two syllables of the full form, e.g. òtítító, òótító 'truth'; agogo, aago 'clock, watch'; egungun, eegun 'bone'; egúngún, eégún 'masquerader'; àdirò, ààrò 'hearth'; àtítàn, ààtàn 'refuse heap'. The use of these forms is to some extent a matter of dialect but, in general, the reduced forms are most commonly used in the spoken language, while the full forms often occur in books. There are, however, some nouns of which only reduced forms are in common use, even in books, e.g.

oògùn 'medicine', *òórùn* 'smell'. Notice that some nouns are distinguished by the difference between long and short vowels, e.g. *ààlà* 'boundary', *àlà* 'variety of white cloth'; *ààyè* 'life', *àyè* 'chance, opportunity'; *ààjà* 'fairy, whirlwind', *àjà* 'ceiling'. Long vowels are not confined to the first syllable; they can occur also in other positions, e.g. *ibòòji* 'shade', *málúú* 'ox'.

3. Yoruba nouns are like the English noun 'sheep' in having no separate forms to distinguish singular from plural. Where it is necessary to shew plurality the emphatic pronoun *àwọn* 'they' is placed in front of the noun, e.g. *àwọn ọkùnrin* 'the men', but in many situations where English uses a plural Yoruba does not use *àwọn*, though in written Yoruba there is a tendency to follow English idioms. Yoruba also has no words which correspond closely with the English articles 'the, a/an', though *kán* 'one' and *náá* 'that (mentioned)' cover some of their meanings. The main differences between Yoruba and English usage on these points are brought out in the following sections.

(a) English makes a fundamental difference between nouns denoting liquids, substances and materials on the one hand and nouns denoting countable things on the other. This difference is seen in the sentence 'I want to buy a knife, some dusters, some milk, some flour and some boot-polish'. With countable things like knives and dusters English cannot avoid giving some information as to the number of the objects in question we are going to buy—we must at least state whether it is one or more than one of them that we want. With the milk, flour and boot-polish we can, if we wish to, give this information by talking about bottles, pounds and tins, but we are not forced to give this information as in the case of the knife and dusters. Yoruba here makes no distinction; *everything* is treated as in English we treat a substance. For example, in answer to *kíl'ò maa rà?* 'what are you going to buy?' I could reply *mo maa rà wàrà, èlùbó àti ọbẹ* 'I am going to buy milk, yam-flour and knife', i.e. I state

the sort of things I want to buy but I give no information as to the quantity or number I want of any of them.

The same difference between the two languages is seen in answers to the questions *kín'iyí?* 'what is this?' and *kín'iwọnyí?* 'what are these?'. In English we would say 'it is meat, it is an ant, they are ants' where in Yoruba we would say *eran ni, èrà ni, èrà ni*. The Yoruba answer restricts itself to giving information about the nature of the object in question—very logically, since the questions themselves shew that the questioner is fully aware of the number of objects he is enquiring about. Yoruba *can* make a distinction between *èrà ni* 'it is an ant' and *èrà ni wọ́n* 'they are ants', but this distinction would not necessarily be made in answering the questions given.

(b) We make a distinction in English between 'she is washing dishes' and 'she is washing the dishes'; we use the article 'the' with both singular and plural when we are thinking of a particular individual or object or set of individuals or objects that we can identify. We speak of 'the king', 'the doctor', 'the fire' (i.e. one in a particular room), 'the blankets' (i.e. those on a particular bed). Yoruba does not make this distinction; *fọ̀ àwọ* means both 'to wash dishes' and also 'to wash the dishes', while 'the king, the doctor' are just *ọba, dọ́kítà*. But Yoruba sometimes makes a distinction which we do not make in English; whereas 'I washed the dishes' is *mo fọ̀ àwọ*, 'I saw the chiefs' is *mo rí àwọn ijọyè*. The distinction is that the dishes are thought of collectively while the chiefs are thought of as a group of individuals. As a rough generalisation we can say that *àwọn* is used more frequently with nouns denoting human beings than with other nouns but there is no fixed rule about this. For example, in *ó pa ọmọ wọn àti iyàwó wọn* 'he killed their children and wives' we have 'children' and 'wives' treated as collectives without *àwọn*, while 'where are my books?' can be translated *iwé mi dá?* or *àwọn iwé mi dá?* according to the way we think of 'books'. *àwọn iwé mi* means 'my (various) books'.

(c) When a noun is used in conjunction with a word denoting number or quantity, if *àwọn* is absent the English

translation will be indefinite, e.g. **mo rí òkùnrin méjì** 'I saw two men', **mo rí òpòlòpò ènià** 'I saw a lot of people/many people', **mo rí orìsirìṣi ñkan** 'I saw a variety/various things'. If **àwọn** is used the translation will be definite, e.g. **àwọn òkùnrin méjì náà** 'the two men (mentioned)', **àwọn òkùnrin mètá yí** 'these three men', **àwọn ọmọdẹ mérin tí ó dé** 'the four children who arrived', **òpòlòpò àwọn ènià** 'a lot of the people'.

In these examples with numerals we find that **àwọn** is used when the noun is followed by a qualifying **náà**, **yí** or relative clause. This will, in fact, be so even if no numeral is present, e.g. **àwọn ọmọdẹ náà** 'the children (mentioned)', **àwọn obinrin yí** 'these women', **àwọn àgùtàn tí ó kù** 'the sheep which remain'. In other words, nouns qualified in this way are not treated as collectives.

(d) In making a general statement in English we can use either the singular or plural, e.g. 'a goat is very stupid, goats are very stupid'. In Yoruba we use the bare noun, e.g. **ewúré gò púpò**. Here again the bare noun is used collectively.

(e) **kán** 'one' is used when an indication of number is an important part of the information to be conveyed, e.g. **mo rí òkùnrin kán lódé** 'I see a man outside'. Note the difference between the situation here and the one exemplified in the second paragraph of (a); it is important here to state not only the nature of the object but also its number. Another example is **nígàkan (ní ìgbàkan) ọba kán wá** 'once upon a time (at one time) there was a (certain) king'.

Notes:

(1) You will have noticed that 'these' in the examples was **iwònyi** when used independently but **àwọn . . . yí** when used with a noun. This difference will be explained later (p. 195). Further details will also be given of the use of **àwọn**, **kán** and **náà**.

(2) Relative clauses (which are explained in detail later, p. 87) are introduced by the word **tí**. If this is the subject

of the clause, as in **àwọn ọmọdẹ tí ó dé** 'the children who arrived', it is often followed by the pronoun **ò** 'he/she/it'.

VOCABULARY

wó , to collapse	àkàṣù , portion of porridge
dí , to block up	àgbònrín , antelope
gùn , to climb, ride, mount	ewé , leaf
kojá , to pass	kò , to build, construct
ọdẹ , hunter	abà , farm-hut
ẹkùn , leopard	fèrè , flute, whistle
dáradára (dáadáa) , fine,	ihò , hole
good	ṣòṣòbù , shop
aláràbarà , of many	irú , sort
colours	eranko , animal
ńlá , big, important	mélò , how many?
ipádé , meeting	iwájú , front

EXERCISE 7

Translate into English: **igi kán wó dí ọ̀nà oko láná; a kò lè gùn ú kojá; ọdẹ t'ó pa ẹkùn láná n'iyi; mo rí aṣọ dáadáa kán l'ọjá; àwọn eégún wọ aṣọ aláràbarà; kí' àwọn obinrin yí maa rà? nwọn maa rà ata àti èlùbò; irú eranko wò n'iyi? àgbònrín ni; ọkọ Adùkẹ rà ọkọ kán l'ọwọ Ọjọ; ọ̀nà Ìbàdàn dà? òun n'iyi; ọ̀nà ara aṣọ yí dára púpò; ewé ni nwọn fi kọ àwọn abà yí; mo rí fèrè kan rà ní ṣòṣòbù kan lóni; fèrè náà gùn, ó ní ihò mérin; kí' o tún rí nínú àwòrán yí? mo rí màlúù ńlá kán àti àgùtàn kékeré méjì; àwọn oba ẹ ipádé ńlá kán ní Ìbàdàn; ẹ́ mo lè rà ọ̀bẹ níbí? àkàṣù ẹkọ mélò l' àwọn ọmọ ilé-ẹkọ (ilé-iwé) ẹ? ọkọ mèlò l'ọkọ obinrin yí maa rà? mo rí òkùnrin mètá n'iwájú ilé; kí' àwọn òkùnrin náà maa ẹ?**

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

8

NOUN COMBINATIONS
POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Combinations of two or more nouns are widely used in Yoruba to express a great variety of relationships.

- (a) Possession:
filà Àkàndé, Akande's cap
oko Àiná, Aina's farm
- (b) Space:
inú àpótí, the inside of the box
orí igi, the top of the tree
- (c) Time:
alé òní, evening of today, this evening
oúnjẹ àárọ̀, morning food
- (d) Use:
àpótí aṣọ, box for clothes, clothes box
iwé èrì, paper for testimony, testimonial
- (e) Material:
ṣòkòtò àrán, trousers of velvet
ọ̀bẹ̀ ata, pepper stew

We can combine some of the above examples to form longer groups, e.g. inú àpótí aṣọ, 'the inside of the clothes box', oúnjẹ alé òní, 'this evening's food'. Notice that Yoruba expresses all these different relationships by the same simple order of words. Because of this the same combination of words can sometimes have different meanings in different contexts, e.g. ọ̀rọ̀ Ọ̀jọ̀ can mean 'Ojo's words' or 'business/matter about Ojo'. Where the second noun is descriptive, e.g. iwé èrì, there may actually be slight differences of stress which distinguish such combinations in speech form possessive groups such as iwé Ọ̀jọ̀. There is also in such combinations a tendency to run

NOUN COMBINATIONS

the two words together, e.g. Ilé iwé 'school' (lit. 'home of books') is pronounced iléewé.

If the second noun (or any following noun) in a group begins with a consonant the final vowel of the preceding noun is modified. This is given an extra unit of length, i.e. a short vowel becomes long and a vowel already long becomes still longer. This extra unit (which is not shown in the normal spelling) is given a mid tone whatever may be the tone preceding it.

filà Túndé, 'Tunde's cap', is pronounced filàa Túndé
ọ̀mọ̀ Táíwò, 'Taiwo's child', is pronounced ọ̀mọọ Táíwò
ilé Bìsì, 'Bisi's house', is pronounced iléé Bìsì
málúú Tòkùnbọ̀, 'Tokunbo's ox', is pronounced
málúúu Tòkùnbọ̀

The low to mid long vowel of words like filà in this situation may also be heard as a long level mid tone, e.g. filaa Túndé. Note that the words tani 'who?' and kini 'what?' also have this effect, e.g. bàtà tan'iyi? 'whose pair of shoes is this?' (bàtaa) and àwòrán kìn'iyi? 'picture of what is this/what is this a picture of?' (àwòránan becoming àwòranan) because of the low tone on -wò-, as elsewhere, cf. p. 20).

Where in English we use a genitive form independently, as in e.g. 'John's is no good', Yoruba puts a little word ti in front of the noun, e.g. ti Ọ̀jọ̀ (k)ò dára. This ti is normally elided when possible, so that our example would be pronounced t'Ọ̀jọ̀. Yoruba frequently uses a noun preceded by ti where English uses such phrases as 'matter of, business of', e.g. t'Ọ̀jọ̀ yí sù mí 'this business about Ojo has tired me/I am tired of this business about Ojo'. It occurs in the common phrase t'òótọ̀? 'really?', more literally 'matter of truth?'

If this ti form is used after another noun (in which case its consonant initial will modify the final vowel of that noun in the way already described) the effect is equivalent to that of a stressed genitive in English, e.g. filà t'Ọ̀jọ̀ n'iyi 'this is Ojo's cap', i.e. not Aina's or some

other person's, while *filà Òjó n'iyí* means 'this is Ojo's cap/here is Ojo's cap' without any extra stress on 'Ojo'.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

The unemphatic forms are:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
(-) <i>mi</i> , <i>mi</i> , my	(-) <i>wa</i> , our
(-) <i>rẹ</i> , <i>ẹ</i> , your	(-) <i>nyín</i> , your
(-) <i>rẹ</i> , (-) <i>ẹ</i> , his/her/its	(-) <i>wọ̀n</i> , their

When carefully pronounced one hears before all these pronouns a lengthening (not written) of the final vowel of the preceding word. Before *mi* and *rẹ* 'your', the added element has a low tone and before the other forms a mid tone. In the usual colloquial pronunciation *rẹ* and *rẹ* lose their *r*; the extension of the vowel is not heard before *ẹ* but its flat mid tone bears witness to an original low tone element in front of it, as does also the flat tone of *mi*.

omọ mi dà? (*omọ̀ mi*, *omọ mi*), where is my child?
şé ilé rẹ n'iyí? (*ilèè rẹ*, *ilé ẹ*), is this your house?
ẹ̀wù rẹ dà? (*ẹ̀wù rẹ*, *ẹ̀wuu ẹ*), where is his gown?
ilé wa kò tóbi (*ilée wa*), our house is not large
ilú nyín jinnà (*ilú=iluu nyín*), your town is far
ọ̀rọ̀ wọ̀n kò dọ̀gba (*ọ̀rọ̀ wọ̀n*), their words are not equal, consistent

When a possessive pronoun, being the last word of a subject group (as described on p. 34), has a high tone added to it, it is usually very difficult for a learner to hear the difference between *ẹ* and *ẹ̀*, the distinction being now between mid rising to high or high and low rising to high. It is helpful in this situation to pay special attention to differences which can be heard on the preceding syllable, i.e. the final syllable of the noun.

filà ẹ̀'sonù, your cap is lost
filà ẹ̀'sonù (*filaa*), his cap is lost

ilé ẹ̀'jinnà, your house is far
ilé ẹ̀'jinnà (*ilée*), his house is far
oko ẹ̀'kún, your farm is full (of weeds)
oko ẹ̀'kún (*okoo*), his farm is full (of weeds)

As with nouns, there is a *ti* form which can be used independently or after a noun to shew emphasis. The *ti* is written as one word with the pronoun.

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>tèmi</i> , mine	<i>tiwa</i> , ours
<i>tirẹ</i> , <i>tiẹ</i> , yours	<i>tinyín</i> , yours
<i>tirẹ</i> , <i>tiẹ</i> , his/hers/its	<i>tiwọ̀n</i> , theirs

Note that the first syllable of these forms has in each case the tone of the extension before the corresponding unemphatic forms—low tone in the first two persons of the singular, but otherwise mid tone.

tèmi n'iyí àbí tirẹ ni? is this mine or yours?

tiwa dà? where is ours?

oko tiwọ̀n kò tóbi tó tiwa, their farm is not as big as ours (is not big reach ours)

tirẹ'dára púpọ̀, hers is very nice

We have already seen that emphatic pronouns are really a special sort of noun, so it is not surprising to find that they can be used as possessives just like any other noun.

ọ̀rọ̀ iwọ̀ àtí Àkàndé, the matter of you and Akande
ẹ̀bí ẹ̀mi níkanşoşo ni, it is the fault of me alone

When *ti* is used with an emphatic pronoun it shews greater emphasis than the *ti* form of the corresponding unemphatic pronoun. This difference tends to be shewn by a change of stress in English.

tiwa náá'dára púpọ̀, ours is very nice too
t'áwa náá'dára púpọ̀, ours too is very nice

(For *náá* with the meaning 'too' see p. 197.) Note that in the 1st pers. sing. this distinction cannot be made.

VOCABULARY

òdì, reverse side	apá, arm; part, direction
kejì, second, other	isàlẹ̀, bottom part
títì, street	àárín, centre, middle
dòtì, to be dirty	ìròhìn, news
òfì, loom	ìṣaàsùn, cooking pot
yàtò, to be different (sí 'to')	kòbòdù, cupboard
ìwé ọkọ, ticket	èrò, people (collective);
fẹ̀ràn, to like	èrò ọkọ 'passengers',
àkàrà, fried bean-cake	èrò ọ̀nà 'passers-by'
sọkalẹ̀, to put down, get down	nígbàwo, when?
aiyé, world	(ní igbà wo)
ìgbésí aiyé, life	erèé, variety of bean
baba, father, senior person	itàn, story
	iyá, mother
	bàbá, Father

EXERCISE 8

Translate into English: ìwé èrì rẹ̀ dà? òun n'lyí; ilé(e) Tundé n'iyen l'òdì kejì(i) títì; inú àpótí aṣọ yí dọtí púpọ̀; nígbàwo l'ò maa rà ìwé ọkọ? aṣọ Adùkẹ̀ kò dára tó tẹ̀mì; tí Bisi'wù mí púpọ̀; tí bàbá mí tóbi dáadàa; ñjẹ̀ ẹ̀ fẹ̀ràn àkàrà erèé? diẹ̀ nínú àwọn èrò ọkọ' sọkalẹ̀ ní Ọ̀ndó; a lẹ̀ ká itàn igbésí aiyé rẹ̀ nínú ìwé ìròhìn yí; àwòrán ara ògiri yí kò wù mí rárá; sẹ̀ apá isàlẹ̀ ilé naà l'ò maa gbé? ẹ̀wù mí'wà l'apá òkè kòbòdù; ilé òdì kejì títì yẹ̀'ga púpọ̀; àárín igbooro ilú ni mo maa gbé nìsìsiyi; òfì obinrin' yàtò sí t'okúnrin; oko bàbá wa'jinnà púpọ̀ sí tinyín; iyá mí l'ó rà aṣọ yí fún mí; apá kejì itàn yí dùn púpọ̀.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

9

YORUBA GREETINGS AND PROVERBS

The Yoruba are a very punctilious people and attach great importance to the proper use of greeting formulas, of which they have a great many. Apart from enquiries after the health of various members of the family and references to the time of day, their greetings always make some mention of the special circumstances in which the person addressed is found. The commonest type of greeting is of the form 'you are greeted for morning, for work, for trouble, for enjoyment etc.'. These greetings always have two forms—a singular, familiar form and a plural, polite form which is also to be used in speaking to more than one person. In the familiar form the pronoun *o* 'you' is usually omitted but in the polite, plural form the pronoun *ẹ* 'you' is always present. A typical pair are *kú isẹ, ẹ* *kú isẹ* 'you are greeted for work'; it will be seen that *kú* 'be greeted' is followed directly by the appropriate noun. This *kú* is irregular as a verb because there is no elision with a following noun; instead of that, in common greetings either the vowel of *kú* or the vowel of the noun is assimilated. The rule is that a following *i*- is assimilated to the *-u*, otherwise *-u* is assimilated to the following vowel. Thus *kú isẹ* is heard as *kúusẹ*, while *kú àbò* 'greetings on coming, welcome' is heard as *káàbò*. Where an elision is not made, then the greeting is more formal, so that whereas *káàbò* is equivalent (sometimes) to not much more than a perfunctory 'how do you do?', *kú àbò* is equal to 'I am very glad to see you'. The plural will, of course, be substituted for the singular according to circumstances.

Just as in English we raise the voice in a greeting when we want to call the attention of the person concerned so

too in Yoruba, but in addition to that a little word *ò* is added at the end of the greeting. For example, in calling out a greeting as we pass to people working at the side of the road we must say *ẹ kú iṣẹ ò!* Raising the voice by itself is not enough; the final *ò* is the signal to the people working that they are being addressed. (We shall see in the following chapter that this *ò* is not confined to greetings; it occurs in all sorts of situations where we would tend to raise the voice in English.)

A greeting which contains *kú* is always acknowledged in the first place with a long drawn out *o* (rising from low to mid tone), after which we often add some appropriate remark which may itself be a greeting of the same form, in fact a repetition of the original greeting, e.g. *ẹ kārò o!* (*káárò* from *kú áárò*) 'good morning!' is often answered by *ò, ẹ kārò*. It will be noticed that the signal *ò* is not necessary in the answer.

We now give a list of the commoner greetings and enquiries. As these are given in the polite (plural) form you must remember to make the necessary adjustments for the familiar form—drop the *ẹ* before *kú* and change *ẹ* to *o* in the enquiries. Remember too to add *ò* at the end if you want to call somebody's attention.

ẹ kārò, good morning

Besides the form *áárò* (*áwúrò*) used in greetings, there is another form *óórò* (*ówúrò*) 'morning' which is a dialectal variant frequently found in contexts other than greetings.

ẹ k'ásán (*kú ásán*), good day, good afternoon

Apart from greetings, the form *òsán* is generally used. This word originally meant the main part of the day when the sun was well up and it is still used in certain phrases to mean 'day' in contrast with 'night'. Yorubas who speak English—and they are many—tend to use it in the greeting as equivalent to English 'afternoon'.

ẹ kūròlẹ (*kú iròlẹ*), greetings for early evening

This is said from the time that the sun is beginning to set until about nightfall.

ẹ k'alẹ (*kú alẹ*), greetings for late evening
ó d'ārò (*ó di áárò*), good night

This greeting might be translated literally 'it becomes/will be morning (that we shall see each other again)'. Various phrases beginning with *ó di* are used in 'farewell' situations, e.g. *ó d'òla* 'until tomorrow', *ó d'igbà* 'until (some other) time'. As a reply to *ó d'ārò* one says, *ò, ó d'ārò*, adding sometimes *kí Olórún ṣọ wa ò!* 'may God preserve us'. (For *kí* introducing a wish see p. 74.)

ẹ kú iṣẹ, greetings for work

This may be said either when one comes on people working or as equivalent to 'well done, you have done a good job' on the completion of a task.

ẹ k'ábò (*kú àbò*), greetings on arrival

This can be equivalent to 'glad to see you' or 'glad to see you back'. If you are being welcomed to a house you can reply *ò, ẹ kú ilé* 'greetings to the household'. In returning to your own house this latter can be used to announce your arrival, in which case the *reply* will be *ẹ k'ábò*.

ẹ kú ijókò, greetings for being seated

This is said on entering a room where a party or meeting is to be held and finding some people already seated. *Ijókò* is a noun derived from the verb *jókò* 'to sit down, be seated'.

ẹ kú idúró, greetings for standing

This may be said when passing people who are standing about waiting for something or other.

ẹ kú ináwó, greetings for spending money

This may be said by the recipient of a present, however small, or by a guest to the host at a party or, in fact,

on any occasion when money has been spent. Where the expenditure has been small one may reply *kò tó nkánkan* 'it does not amount to anything', while a host at a party may say *ẹ kú àbáṣe* 'greetings for taking part', i.e. 'thank you for coming along'. *ináwó* is derived from *ná owó* 'to spend money', while *àbáṣe* is derived from *bá* 'to join with' and *ṣe* 'to do'.

ẹ kú irójú, greetings for carrying on under difficulties

This is said to a person who has suffered bereavement or loss. The verb *rójú* has the idea of doing something though one has no joy in doing it.

ẹ kú àṣẹhìndè, greetings on death of old person

This greeting is bound up with the old Yoruba belief that an old member of a family who died would soon be reincarnated in a new baby (see the chapter on Yoruba names, p. 216.) It means something like 'greetings for living on in expectation'. *ẹhin* is 'back, behind' and *ṣẹhin* (*ṣe ẹhin*) means 'to live on after'. *dè* is a verb meaning 'to await'.

ENQUIRIES

There are two points to note in connection with enquiries after health. One is that in some cases the forms of enquiry differ somewhat in different parts of the country, though of course it does not matter if a foreigner does not happen to use the local form. The other is that whereas in English we thank a person for making an enquiry, in Yoruba one gives thanks to God for being well. This is the meaning of the commonly heard phrase *a dúpẹ* 'we give thanks'—'we' here is used in a general sense equivalent to 'one'. The Yoruba for 'thank you' is quite different, being *o/ẹ ṣe é* or *o/ẹ ṣeun*, literally 'you have done it' or 'you have done something' (*ṣe ohun*). This is not used in answer to enquiries.

ṣ'áláfià l'a jí? it is in health we have woken?

a à jüre bí? (jí rere), have we not woken well?

The word *áláfià*, which is derived from Arabic, means 'health of body and mind, wellbeing'. The answer to either enquiry is a *dúpẹ*.

àwọn omọdẹ (k)ò jí bí? have not the children woken?

The answer will be *nwọn jí, a dúpẹ* 'they have woken, thanks be to God'.

Later on in the day the enquiry will be simply *ṣ'áláfià ní?* or *ṣé dáadáa ní?* answered by a *dúpẹ* or by this phrase tacked on to *áláfià ní, dáadáa ní* as the case may be. Enquiries may then be made about various members of the family, as *bàbá ñkọ?* *iyá ñkọ?* *iyàwó ñkọ?* 'what about father, mother, wife?'. The answer may be *ó wà* or *ó mbe*. *wà* and *mbe* are dialectal variants meaning 'to exist', so the answer means in effect that the people enquired after are quite well. After *àwọn omọdẹ ñkọ?* *àwọn iyàwó ñkọ?* 'how about the children, the wives?' the answer will of course have a plural pronoun—*nwọn wà, nwọn mbe*.

To someone arriving from a journey one may say *ṣ'áláfià l'ẹ dé?*, it is in health you have arrived? *dáadáa k'ẹ dé bí?* (*kọ ẹ*), have you not arrived well? (the *kọ* here is the negative of *ní* 'it is'.)

Two other common phrases, of a rather different type, are *àgò, onilé ó?* 'may I come in?' and *níbo l'ó dà báyí?* 'where are you off to?'. The answer to the first query, which may be translated 'permission to enter, householder?', is *àgò'yà o* 'permission to enter is given'. The second query means literally something like 'where will it be/does it become so?', *dà* being the form which *di* (as in *ó di àárò*) takes when it is not followed directly by a noun. The answer might be *mo ñlọ s'ójà ní* 'I am going to the market (it is)'. The form of the verb is explained later on p. 60.

To finish off this section on enquiries, there is the idiomatic *kò tó ijọ mètá?* 'it does not amount to three days?', used on meeting a friend whom one has not seen for some days—the 'three' here is not to be taken literally. To this there is a fixed answer, *ijọ kán pèlú* 'one day as well'.

PROVERBS

The Yoruba have a great store of proverbs which, strictly speaking, should only be quoted by elders since it requires a great deal of experience to know which proverb is applicable in any particular situation. If a younger person quotes a proverb in the presence of an elder, he gets round this difficulty by pretending that what he has said resembles a proverb but is not really one! The elder accepts the apology with a prayer that the speaker will live long enough to quote more.

We have not yet covered enough grammar to deal with proverbs at this point, but a number of them are given in the later Exercises. It will be enough here to observe that, like English proverbs, they can be divided into two types: those that make straightforward statements about life, e.g. 'pride comes before a fall', and those that generalise from a particular type of experience, e.g. 'you can take a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink'.

10

EXCLAMATIONS

COMMANDS AND PROHIBITIONS

We saw in the last chapter that a little word *ò*, added at the end of a greeting, has the function of calling the attention of the person to whom the greeting is addressed. This *ò* is, in fact, along with a general raising of the voice one of two devices which the language uses to produce an exclamatory effect with all sorts of utterances. The second device is to lengthen the final syllable. This extra length has low tone when the final syllable is high or mid and mid tone when the final syllable is low. The extra length is not shewn in the ordinary spelling, so one has to learn to add it on automatically before an exclamation mark when *o* is not used.

èmi kẹ̀! (*kẹ̀ẹ̀*), me indeed!
ó tóbi! (*tóbii*), it is big!
ó lè ẹ̀ é! (*éé*), he can do it!
bẹ̀ni! (*bẹ̀niì*), yes!

The difference in meaning between the two types of exclamation is conveyed in English, as so often, by differences of stress and intonation. The main point to remember is that without *ò* an exclamatory sentence gives an idea of the attitude of the speaker but does not so directly call the attention of the listener. For example, *ó tí dé ó!* 'he has come!' would be said in calling out to other people, a situation where in English we often cause the voice to rise at the end of the sentence, while corresponding to *ó tí dé!* we might have 'he's come!' with a sharp fall on the word 'come'.

Exclamatory sentences of both types often contain a word *mà* between the subject and the verb. This adds an emphasis often associated with surprise.

ó mà tóbi ò! how big it is!
 kò mà lè se é! he can't do it!
 èmi mà rí i ò! well, I saw it!
 ẹ mà se é ò! thank you very much!
 ẹ mà kú iṣẹ ò! greetings, you have worked hard!
 Ojó mà ni! why, it's Ojo!

Notice that putting mà in between the subject and the verb does not affect the situation with regard to the addition of a high tone to the final syllable of the subject. If this happens without mà it happens with mà and vice-versa.

ẹja mà wọn púpọ̀ lóni ò! fish is terribly dear today!
 ẹja mà ni! why, it's fish!

COMMANDS

The simple stem of the verb is used in commands in which the completion of the action is envisaged. If no pronoun is put in front of the verb the command is addressed to a single person in a familiar way, as when speaking to a child or a servant. When speaking in a more polite way to a single person or when speaking to several people the pronoun ẹ must be used.

wá, ẹ wá, come
 wá níbí, ẹ wá níbí, come here
 (níbí is pronounced níbì)
 fetisilẹ̀, ẹ fetisilẹ̀, pay attention
 jù ú nù, throw it away
 ẹ mú u wá, bring him in

If *máa/maa** is put in front of the verb, the completion of the action is not in the speaker's mind. There are three possible meanings in English:

- (a) starting to do something—inceptive
- (b) carrying on doing something—continuative
- (c) repeating an action an indefinite number of times—iterative or habitual.

* Some Yorubas say *máa* and others *maa*.

For example, *máa lẹ* can mean 'be going, go away somewhere else' (you are only interested in the person starting the action); 'carry on going' (e.g. said to a porter who shews signs of wanting to stop); 'repeat going' (e.g. in *máa lẹ kí i lójoojúmọ̀* 'go to greet him every day' contrasted with *lẹ kí i lólá* 'go to greet him tomorrow').

In certain phrases *máa* conveys politeness. When your host has accompanied you, a parting guest, some yards on your way, you say to him ẹ *máa padà níbí* 'be turning round here'. It would be very abrupt to say ẹ *padà níbí* 'turn round here', cp. 'you had better be going now' in English, which is politer than 'you had better go now'. Similarly, if a person has been waiting to speak with you you say to him *máa bọ̀* 'be coming now'. This situation is quite different from the one in which *wá níbí* is used—there the person addressed has no idea of coming to you until you call out to him.

PROHIBITIONS

These are expressed by putting *má* in front of the verb, e.g. *má rà á* 'don't buy it'. When ẹ is used this is put in front of *má*, e.g. ẹ *má kà á* 'don't read it'. This *má* is followed by modified high and mid tones, e.g. *má wá lólá* 'don't come tomorrow', *má ṣi i* (pronounced *má ṣi i*, see p. 20) 'don't open it', *má lẹ* 'don't go'. With some Yoruba speakers one can actually hear on the short syllable *má* a sharp fall from high to low tone. Even if one cannot hear this one assumes it was there originally to account for the modified tones (which are automatic after the low tone at the end of the falling syllable). A low tone after *má* has the usual fall which is heard on a low tone following a high tone, e.g. *má bẹ̀rù* 'don't be afraid'.

Learners must be very careful to distinguish between *má* and *máa/maa*, e.g. in *má lẹ* 'don't go' and *máa/maa lẹ* 'go away'. *má* and *máa* are occasionally used together, e.g. *má maa se bẹ̀ẹ̀ mó ò!* 'don't be acting (doing) so any more!'. This combination is not, however, frequent.

The verb following *má* often has a prefix *i-* which corresponds in meaning with English 'yet', e.g. *má ilọ* 'don't go yet'. (Some Yorubas would write this *mái lọ*.) In addition to the *i-* we sometimes find also a word *tí*, e.g. *má tí ilọ* (which may be written *má tìlọ*). This addition of *tí* is a dialectal variant which makes no difference to the meaning. It should be noticed that in English we sometimes say 'don't go' when we really mean 'don't go yet'; this cannot be done in Yoruba—it is quite incorrect to say *ẹ má lọ* when you really mean *ẹ má ilọ*.

Commands and especially prohibitions are often said in an exclamatory way in English, e.g. 'don't go yet!' and similarly in Yoruba we often find *ò* added, e.g. *ẹ má ilọ ò!*, *ẹ dúró dè mí ò* 'wait for me!' *má gé e lulẹ o!* 'don't cut it down!'. Occasionally *má* is used with the exclamatory *má*, e.g. *má mà tún ẹ bẹẹ mó!* '(for heaven's sake) don't do so any more!'. The form with *ò* is naturally by far the commoner because in using commands and prohibitions we are trying to get a message across but, as the last example shews, situations can occur where the other type of exclamation is heard.

Instead of *má* one sometimes finds in books a form *máše*, with no difference in meaning, e.g. *máše rà á* 'don't buy it'. This is made up of *má* and the verb *še* 'to do', so that *máše rà á* is literally 'don't do buy it'.

VOCABULARY

<i>rọra</i> , to be gentle, gently	<i>geleṭe</i> , at ease
<i>yára</i> , to be quick, quickly	<i>iwòsàn</i> , medical treatment
<i>kalẹ</i> , to be placed on ground	<i>ilé iwòsàn</i> , hospital
<i>ẹlẹgẹ</i> , delicate, breakable	<i>nígbàgbogbo</i> , always, all the time
<i>ná</i> , first of all, for a moment	<i>sunkún, sọkún</i> , to weep
<i>níbí</i> , (at) here	<i>jọ</i> , to be together
<i>ibí</i> , here	<i>kó . . . jọ</i> , to gather together
<i>ibi</i> , place	<i>iná</i> , light, fire

<i>tan'ná (tàn)</i> , to put on light	make happy
<i>dá'ná</i> , to make, light a fire	<i>yára</i> , room
<i>mú . . . n'ínú dùn</i> , to	<i>gbọdọ</i> , must
	<i>báyí</i> , like this

EXERCISE 10

Translate into English: *ẹ mà kú ináwó ò! o mà káábò ò! ọgèdẹ mà wọn púpọ ní ilú yí ò! kò mà wúwo rárá! ẹ rọra gbé e kalẹ níbí; ẹ mà mà wọ ọ ò! ohun ẹlẹgẹ l'ó wà ninu rẹ (ní inú rẹ); máa fọ ọ dáadáa nígbàgbogbo; ẹ dúró ná, ẹ má tí ilọ ò! ẹ máa ràn àwọn òbí nyín l'ọwọ; ẹ má sunkún mó; kó gbogbo rẹ jọ s'ibi iná; má tí itan'ná ò! má ipẹ é wá ò! ọrọ yí mà yà mí l'ẹnu púpọ o! iròhìn yí mà mú mí n'ínú dùn púpọ o! Táíwò l'ó mà gbé e lọ! má mà jẹ ẹ ò! májèlé ní! má maa jókò geleṭe báyí nígbàgbogbo ò! gbogbo nyín, ẹ fetisilẹ dáadáa; ẹ kò gbọdọ dá'ná níbí ò! ẹ yára gbé e lọ sí ilé iwòsàn; má tí ipa'ná nínú yàrá kéjì.*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

THE N- FORM OF THE VERB

We commonly find in statements and questions verb forms which have *n-** prefixed to the stem of the verb. This has much the same force as the *máa* used in commands; it adds the idea of action in progress or of repeated, habitual action. We must, of course, continue to bear in mind that the time referred to may be either present or past according to the context.

kíl'o ñse nisisiyí? what are you doing now?

kíl'o ñse nìgbànáá? what were you doing then/at that time?

mo ñlọ kí i lójoojúmọ, I go to greet him every day
nìgbàtí mo wà l'Èkò, mo ñlọ kí i lójoojúmọ, when I was at Lagos, I used to go to greet him every day

It is instructive to note that because this form has the two meanings, progressive and habitual, Yorubas who are learning English generally use the English progressive where they should use the habitual, e.g. 'we are having our lunch in the park when it is fine' instead of 'we have our lunch . . .'. We must be careful to avoid in Yoruba the opposite mistake of using the simple stem form of the verb to express the habitual. We say *mo kọ létà sí i láná* 'I wrote a letter to him yesterday' but *mo ñkọ létà sí i lóṣṣe* 'I write a letter to him weekly'.

We shall see later (p. 101) that some Yorubas use other forms to express the habitual idea, but the use of this *n-* prefix is the commonest and simplest way of doing so. When it is felt necessary to stress the fact that the form is being used in the habitual sense the word *maa* is placed

* For the actual sounds represented by this *n-* refer back to what was said about homorganic nasals on p. 7. Before *b* it is written as *m*, e.g. *mo mbọ* 'I am coming'.

in front of the verb, e.g. *mo* maa ñkà á lójoojúmọ* 'I read it every day'. Note that most Yorubas who use this form say *maa*, not *máa*.

When the *n-* prefix is used with a progressive sense the phrase *l'ówó* 'in hand' is often added after the verb to bring out the immediacy of the action.

nìgbàtí mo ñjókò l'ówó, as I was in the act of sitting down

ó ñkà á l'ówó, he is in the middle of reading it

nwón ñfọ ó l'ówó, they are in the middle of washing it

With verbs denoting actions which take place in the mouth *l'enu* 'in mouth' is sometimes used instead, e.g. *kíl'o ñje l'enu?* 'what are you eating?'.

The *n-* form of verbs whose simple form denotes a quality is used with various additions to convey the meaning that the quality is coming into being or is being intensified.

(a) *ó ñtòbí sí i,* it is getting bigger

ó ñlé sí i, it is getting harder

This *sí i*, which we can translate literally 'to it', occurs also in such phrases as *fún mi ní méjì sí i* 'give me two more', *lù ú l'èkkan sí i* 'hit it once more', *bù díẹ sí i* 'add some to it/add some more'. The 'to it' in these expressions means 'to the state/number already existing'.

(b) *ó ñgbóná bọ,* it (e.g. water) is getting hot

ó ñtutù lọ, it (e.g. water) is getting cold

ó ñlé bọ, it (e.g. tyre) is getting hard

ó ñkú lọ, he is dying

ó ñjí bọ, he is waking up/coming to

The verb *bọ* 'come, approach' is added when the progression is thought of as towards a desired state while *lọ* 'go' is added in the opposite situation, cp. in English, 'it is going cold'. The use of these words is not, however, essential as one may hear such expressions as *oúnje yí ñtutù!* 'this food is going cold!'.

* Many Yorubas pronounce the pronouns *mo, o, a, ẹ,* on a low tone before this prefix.

A point of pronunciation not shewn in the spelling must be mentioned here. Some Yorubas would pronounce *ó ñtutù lẹ* as *ó ñtutùú lẹ*, *ó ñlé bẹ* as *ó ñléé bẹ* and *ó ñkú lẹ* as *ó ñkúú lẹ*, i.e. a high tone extension precedes the second verb in each case. Not all Yorubas do this, however; some pronounce the sentences as they are written. We can regard this high tone extension as, in effect, a repetition of the high tone *ń* prefix of the main verb. It is a fairly general dialectal variation that some Yorubas repeat prefixes in a sequence of verbs while others do not. In this case some Yorubas actually repeat the *n* and would say, e.g. *ó ñtutù ñlẹ*, but this is not common.

The *ń-* form is sometimes used, possibly through the influence of English, to refer to an event in the future, e.g. *mo ñlẹ s'Ékò lólá* 'I am going to Lagos tomorrow'.

In translating it is important to remember that there are some ideas which are treated as actions in English but as states in Yoruba, as was briefly mentioned on p. 19. Common examples of this are:

- ó jókò*, he sat down/is-was sitting down
ó dúró, he stopped/is-was waiting
ó ðùbùlẹ, he lay down/is-was lying down
ó wọ aṣọ dádú, he put on dark clothes/is-was wearing dark clothes
ó dé filà, he put on a cap/is-was wearing a cap
ó ðí táì, he put on a tie/is-was wearing a tie
ó wé gèlẹ, she put on a head-tie/is-was wearing a head-tie
ó ró aṣọ pupa, she put on a bright cloth/is-was etc. (Yoruba style)
ó fí dígí s'ójú, he put on spectacles/is-was wearing spectacles

Note how in the above examples Yoruba uses a specific verb with the various articles of clothing. One 'covers' a cap, 'ties' a tie, 'twists' a head-tie, 'drapes' a cloth in the Yoruba style, 'puts glass to eye' and 'gets into' made-up clothes like gowns and coats. We can also use *wọ* with

ṣòkòtò 'trousers', but often we find instead *bẹ* 'insert into narrow opening'.

The *ń-* prefix is used with verbs of this type in two different ways.

(a) used by itself it gives habitual meaning, e.g. *mo ñfí dígí s'ójú nígbàgbogbo* 'I always wear spectacles'. This meaning can be made more obvious by adding *maa*, e.g. *mo maa ñfí táì ní ṣòṣò* 'I wear a tie in church'.

(b) with *l'ówó* added after the verb it denotes the process leading up to the state shewn by the simple form, e.g. *mó ñwé gèlẹ l'ówó* 'I am/was in the act of putting on my head-tie', *ó ñjókò l'ówó* 'he is in the act of sitting down'.

Another point to note is that where in English we add a descriptive participle in '-ing', e.g. 'they ran away crying', Yoruba uses a complete verb phrase—*nwọn sálo nwọn ñsunkún* 'they ran away they were crying'. Other examples are *mo jókò mo ñsímí* 'I was sitting down resting' and *a dúró a ñronú* 'we stood thinking'. If the subject of the first verb is third person singular some Yorubas do not put a subject *ó* before *ń-*, e.g. *ó jókò ó ñsímí* or *ó jókò ñsímí* 'he sat resting'.

NEGATIVE FORMS

The negative *kò* which we have used with the simple form can be used also with the *ń-* form, but only in a negative habitual sense.

- kò ñlẹ s'Ékò l'ósòṣò*, he does not go to Lagos every week
ng kò ñjẹ é nígbànáá, I used not to eat it at that time
nwọn kò ñfún mí l'ówó, they do not give me money

We shall see later (p. 101) that some Yorubas use a slightly different form for the negative habitual—*kí í-* instead of *kò ń-*, e.g. *kí ílẹ s'Ékò l'ósòṣò*. As the tone patterns are the same the difference to a Yoruba ear is very slight. Note that the addition of *maa* before *ń* after *kò* is very rare.

If we translate an English negative progressive into

Yoruba we may be surprised to find that we have to use the same form as when we translate an English simple past tense.

- ng kò ṣiṣẹ́ lóní, I am not working today
 ng kò ṣiṣẹ́ láná, I was not working/did not work yesterday
 ng kò ṣiṣẹ́ káńkán l'òṣẹ́ t'ó kọ́já, I did not do any work last week

It is thus the context which decides which tense we must use in English to translate this form. With *lóní* 'today' we must obviously use the present progressive. With *láná* 'yesterday' we may in English use either the past progressive or the simple past, which is a slight stylistic difference which we cannot reproduce in Yoruba. If the Yoruba verb is followed by *l'òwò*, e.g. *ng kò ṣiṣẹ́ l'òwò*, we shall have to use the present or past progressive—'I am/was not actually working'—and so on.

The same various possibilities occur with verbs which denote states or qualities, e.g. *kò tutù* may mean 'it is/was not cold', 'it is/was not getting cold' or even 'it did not get cold'. Similarly *kò gbóná sí i* may mean 'it is/was not getting hotter', 'it has/had not got hotter' or 'it did not get hotter'. But the addition of *bò* or *lò* would restrict the translation to the progressive, e.g. *kò gbóná bò rárá* means 'it is/was not getting hot at all'.

VOCABULARY

àbètélẹ̀, bribe	ẹ̀lú, indigo plant
ògá, master, head	aró, indigo dye
olópá, policeman	lásán, bare, useless
wá, to seek, want, prepare (food)	sùn, to sleep
òkèèrè, distant point	kírí, to go about
wò, to look at, watch	sáré, to run
retí, to expect, wait for	pépèpé, trifling
ẹ̀wá, beans	apeja, fisherman
iná, fire, flame	àtùpá, lamp
òsán, daytime, afternoon	nígbàwo, when?

EXERCISE 11

Translate into English: owó àbètélẹ̀ ní ògá àwọn olópá nńwá; mo dúró sí òkèèrè mo nńwò ògá mi; ó jókò ó nńretí òrẹ̀ rẹ̀; èmi ní mo nńwá oúnjẹ fún wọn; iṣẹ̀ wò l'ò nńse níbí? nígbàwó l'ẹ̀ maa nńlọ s'ílẹ̀? oúnjẹ wò l'ẹ̀ maa nńje l'òsán? iná àtùpá yí nńkú lọ; ináwó mi nńga sí i lójoojúmọ̀; ẹ̀lú ní nńwọn fi nńse aró; ó nńtà ojà pépèpé; àwọn omodé nńsáre kírí ojú ònà; omi orí iná nńgbóná bò dáadáa; kò nńfún wọn l'ẹ̀wá l'òwùrò; orí ilẹ̀ lásán ní nńwọn nńsùn l'òko; o nńkòwé ní àbí o nńkàwé ní? obinrin Ègbá kán l'ó nńtà á; iṣẹ̀ apeja ní mo nńse nńisisiyí; mo nńkà létà yí l'òwò; nńwọn maa nńwò aṣọ funfun nígbàgbogbo.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

12

VERBS WITH LENGTHENED VOWELS REPORTED SPEECH

There are some verbs in common use which are pronounced with a long vowel when they are followed by a second verb in the sort of situation where the corresponding English verb is followed by an infinitive, e.g. **mo fẹ́(ẹ́) rà á** 'I want to buy it'. This lengthening is not usually shewn in the ordinary spelling, but it will appear in the early part of this book as above.

1. **mo fẹ́(ẹ́) máa lọ**, I want to be going (now)
nwọ̀n fẹ́(ẹ́) kí wa, they want to greet us
but **kíl'ò fẹ́?** what do you want?
2. **wá(á) jẹun**, come to eat (= and eat)
but **wá níbí**, come here

wá is often used in Yoruba, like 'come' in English, to convey the idea that an event is the culmination of things that have gone before. In this use the lengthening also takes place, e.g. **mo wá(á) mọ̀ pé . . .** 'I have come to know that . . . , I now realise that . . . '.

3. **mo ńlọ(ọ) sùn**, I am on my way to lie down
ó lọ(ọ) gbà owó rẹ, he went to get his money
but **níbo l'ò ńlọ?** where are you going?

The extension of **lọ** may be either on a mid tone (as written) or on a high tone.

4. **kò tó(ó) ẹ́ ẹ́**, he is not fit to do it
ẹmu yí tó(ó) mu, this palm-wine is ready to drink
but **kò dára tó tẹ̀mi**, it is not as good as mine
tó means 'to be enough, to reach the standard of, to be fit'.

5. **kò ní(í) lọ**, he will not go (lit. he has not to go)
but **kò ní owó (l'ówó)**, he hasn't got any money

For this use of **ní(í)** in the negative of the future see p. 94.

6. **kò yé(é) kígbẹ**, he did not stop shouting (cease to shout)
7. **ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sí(í) jẹ ẹ́**, he began to eat it

The extra length given to the vowel in these cases is best regarded as really a prefix of the following verb, which we can think of as an infinitive form like English 'to go', etc. It is sometimes actually written in a conventional way as a prefixed **í-**, e.g. **wá íjẹun**. Note that the following verb may be either the simple form or be preceded by **máa**.

We may mention here two verbs which do *not* take this lengthening. These are **lè** 'can', e.g. **mo lè ẹ́ ẹ́** 'I can do it', and **jé** 'to agree to, be ready to, think of', e.g. **ng kò jẹ ẹ́ bẹ́ẹ́** 'I would not think of acting so'.

REPORTED SPEECH

1. The verb **ní** is used to report something that has just been said and is usually best translated by the English 'says', e.g. **ó l'ó dáa** 'he says it's all right'. It can be used to quote the actual words spoken, in which case it is followed by a slight pause and there is no elision; otherwise, as in the example given, it elides in the same manner as the word **ẹ́** (p. 37).

A feature of reported speech in Yoruba is that the *emphatic* pronoun **òun** is used to render the 'I, me, my, mine' of direct speech and similarly the *emphatic* **awọ̀n** is used to render 'we, us, our, ours'. Thus while in English the sentence 'he says he's going home' is ambiguous because it can mean that a person is talking either about his own intentions or about somebody else's intentions, in Yoruba the two situations are clearly distinguished. In Yoruba the two situations are clearly distinguished. **ó l'òun ńlọ s'ílẹ́** shews that a person is talking about his

own intentions while *ó l'ó ñlọ s'ílẹ* shews that he is talking about somebody else. The following sentences illustrate this use in detail.

mo ñlọ s'Ékò lólá, I am going to Lagos tomorrow
ó l'òun ñlọ s'Ékò lólá, he says he is going etc.
ó fún mi l'ówó, he gave me money
ó l'ó fún òun l'ówó, she says he gave her money
mótò mi bájé, my lorry is out of order
ó ní mótò òun bájé, he says his lorry etc.
tèmi l'ó dára jù, mine is the nicest
ó ní t'òun l'ó dára jù, he says his is the nicest
a kò (a à) rí i, we did not see him
nwọn l'áwọn kò rí i, they say they did not see him
kò fún wa ní nkánkan, he did not give us anything
nwọn ní kò fún àwọn ní nkánkan, they say he did not etc.

ílẹ wa n'iyí, here is our house
nwọn n'ílẹ àwọn n'iyí, they say here is their house
tiwa kò dára tó èyí, ours is not as good as this
nwọn ní t'áwọn kò dára tó èyí, they say theirs etc.

2. In asking questions with *kíni* and *tani* the verb *wí* is used, e.g. *kíl'ó wí?* 'what does/did he say?'; *tal'ó wí bẹẹ?* *tani wí bẹẹ?* 'who said so?' *wí* is the word used for reporting anything which is not immediate. It must be followed by *pé*, which is itself a verb meaning 'to say' used independently by some Yorubas.

In general Yoruba it has become reduced to being an introductory word in reported speech like English 'that', e.g. *mo mò pé ó lẹ ká á* 'I know that he can read it'. With *wí* it has come to be written as one word—*wípé*—and this in turn is tending to be used merely as an introductory word, e.g. *mo mò wípé* is a common variant for *mo mò pé*. It should be noted that this introductory word *pé* cannot be omitted in Yoruba as we omit 'that' in colloquial English, e.g. *mo mò pé ó dára* 'I know it's good'; it does however frequently elide, e.g. *mo mò p'ó dára*. It follows in elision the same pattern as *ní* above.

The examples already given shew that *pé*, which

literally means 'to say', is used to report thoughts and ideas. Some common expressions in which *pé* (or *wípé*) occurs are:

ó wípé òun lẹ ẹ ẹ, he said he could do it
mo rò pé ó tóbi jù, I think it is too big
mo rí i pé kò wúlò mó, I see (it) that it is no longer useful
mó wòye pé ó pé jù, I realised that it was too late
nwọn sọ fún mi pé kò pé rárá, they told (to) me that it was not late at all
kò dájú pé òun l'ó ẹ ẹ, it is not certain that it was he did it
ó là á yé mi pé òótọ ní, he explained (it) to me that it was the truth
mo rántí pé iwọ l'ó fún mi, I remember that it was you gave (it) to me

The verb *sọ* 'to speak, tell' occurring in the examples above is frequently combined with the word *ọrọ* 'words' in the compound verb *sọrọ* 'to speak'.

ó sọrọ sí mi, he spoke to me
nwọn bá mi sọrọ, they spoke with me
kò lẹ sọrọ, he cannot speak
ọrọ tí mo sọ, the words which I said/spoke

When *wí* is preceded by *bá* it may have one of two meanings, 'to rebuke' or 'to refer to'.

bàbá mi bá mi wí púpọ, my father told me off properly
tani nwọn múbá wí? who are they referring to?

VOCABULARY

olẹ, thief
rántí, to remember
rán . . . l'etí, to remind
òjò, rain
rọ, to fall (rain)
kọ, to write
dàgbà, to grow up
wòran, to watch
pẹ, to be late, long

dùn, to pain
dùn . . . nínú, to cause sorrow to
gbà, to receive, take, get
ẹrọ, machine
omi ẹrọ, piped water
orúkọ, name
onijó, dancer

EXERCISE 12

Translate into English: ó l'óún'fẹ́(ẹ) máa lọ; nwọn l'áwọn'fẹ́(ẹ) wá(á) kí wa lólá; mo wá(á) mọ pé olè ni; ó l'óún kò jẹ ẹ bẹẹ rárá; àwọn omọdẹ kò yé(é) sunkún ní gbogbo ojọ náá; ng kò wọye pé èmi ni nwọn mbá wí; mo mọ dáadáa pé nwọn jì owó náá gbé ni; a kò lè mọ dájú pé òjò kò ní(i) rọ lólá; nwọn wípé àwọn'bá a l'ónà oko; nwọn kò ní(i) pé(é) dé Ilorin; mọtò yí kò ní(i) gbà gbogbo wa; ó yà mí l'ènu pé kò sí omi ẹrọ ní ilú nyin; nwọn kọ létà sí i pé àwọn'fẹ́(ẹ) rí i; tani nwọn mbá sọrọ nibẹ yẹn? omobinrin yì dàgbà tó(ó) lọ s'ilé oko; mo rántí pé iyá mí l'ó fún mí; ng kò lè rántí orúkọ rẹ; ó dùn mí nínú pé ng kò rí àyè dúró wòran àwọn onijó; ó rán mí l'èti pé kò sí owó tó; mo bá wọn wí púpọ pé nwọn kò ọ̀ṣiṣe dáadáa.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

13

DEPENDENT VERB FORMS

We are using the term 'dependent' here to cover forms of the verb which are preceded by the word *kí*. These forms have much in common with the forms used in direct commands and prohibitions because (a) the progressive and habitual sense is expressed by the addition of *máa*, and (b) the negative word used is *má*. A very common use of these forms is actually in reported commands and prohibitions, and also after verbs expressing obligation, permission and wish, which have something of the same general idea.

ó ní kí n rà á, he says I am to buy it (or) he told me to buy it

nwọn ní kí m máa lọ, they told me to go away

mo ní kí o má kà á, I told you not to read it

ó yẹ kí a lọ kí i, it is proper that we go to greet him (or) we ought to go to greet him

kò yẹ kí o wí bẹẹ, you ought not to say so

nwọn fẹ́ kí ẹ máa lọ, they want you to go away

nwọn kò jẹ́ kí n rí i, they did not let me see it

It has become a convention now to write *jẹ́* and *kí* as one word *jékí*.

The unemphatic subject pronouns used after *kí* differ in two respects from those used with the independent forms so far described: (a) *mo* is replaced by *ng*, *n*, *m*, the actual pronunciation depending on the quality of the consonant which follows (regardless of how it may happen to be written); (b) *nwọn* may be heard on either high or mid tone and, in line with this variation, nouns and emphatic pronouns may or may not have the final high tone which we have seen (p. 34) would be obligatory if there were no introductory *kí*. Many Yorubas

who do not require a high tone in this position pronounce a syllable *ó* after *nwọn*, emphatic pronoun or noun, as the case may be, e.g. *ó ní kí nwọn ó máa lẹ* 'he told them to go away'. This *ó* may be considered a reduction of *k'ó* from *kí ó*. In written Yoruba which follows the tradition of the Bible translation we find that when *kí* is followed by a noun, emphatic pronoun or *nwọn* a second *kí* is added along with *ó* 'he/she it'.

ó ní kí ọ̀ḍẹ k'í ó pa á, he told the hunter to kill him
ó ní kí nwọn k'í ó fún ọ̀ḡḡḡ náá l'ówó, he told them to give the child money

In some styles of colloquial Yoruba even the *kí* at the beginning of the clause is dropped.

nwọn ní m máa lẹ, they told me to go away
nwọn ní 'o máa lẹ, they told you etc.
nwọn ní 'ó máa lẹ, they told him etc.
nwọn ní 'á máa lẹ, they told us etc.
nwọn ní 'ẹ máa lẹ, they told you etc.
nwọn ní nwọn 'ó máa lẹ, they told them etc.

Note that while *kí o* and *kí ẹ* are reduced to *k'ó* (*k'ó*), *k'o*, 'o* and *k'ẹ* (*k'ẹ*), *k'ẹ*, 'ẹ respectively, *kí a* is reduced to *k'á*, 'á. *kí ó* is, of course, naturally reduced to *k'ó*, 'ó. Reduced forms with the *k* dropped are kept distinct from statement forms by the absence of elision, e.g. *nwọn l'ó rà á* 'they say he bought it'; *nwọn ní 'ó rà á* 'they told him to buy it'.

Other common uses of these forms are:

1. *kí* followed by the verb *tó* 'to reach, attain to'† corresponds to English 'before' at the beginning of a clause.

mo sàń á dáádáá k'í n tó jẹ ẹ, I washed (rinsed) it well before I ate it

* Note that an apostrophe is used here to mark the elision, but this might not be marked at all in ordinary Yoruba spelling.

† Many Yorubas lengthen the vowel of *tó* in this construction, see p. 66.

fẹ ọ dáádáá k'í o tó fi pamó, wash it well before you put (it) away

ó gbà á l'ówọ mi k'í n tó lè kà á, he took it from me (my hand) before I could finish reading it (read it finish)

ó kú k'í ọ̀ḡḡ rẹ tó délé, he died before his son reached home

As in English, the 'before' clause may come first.

k'í nwọn tó lè gbé e lẹ sí ilé-lwòsàn, ó ti kú, before they could take him off to hospital he was already dead

(For the *ti* used before *kú* here see p. 76.)

2. *kí* followed by *baà* expresses purpose.

sọ̀rọ̀ sókè dáádáá k'í m baà lè gbọ, speak up well so that I may hear

nwọn tí i mólé k'í ó má baà lè sálo, they locked him up so that he might not be able to run away

má fún aago yí l'ókùn púpọ̀jù k'í ó má baà bàjẹ, don't over-wind this watch, so that it does not spoil/go out of order

3. In a double command or prohibition, direct or reported, the second verb takes *kí*.

jókó k'í o simi, sit down and rest

ẹ wólé wá k'í ẹ bá wa s'iré díẹ, come in and chat with us a bit

ẹ má jókó k'í ẹ máa sọ̀rọ̀ lásán tíí, don't sit down and be talking idly on and on

nwọn ní k'í ẹ wólé wá k'í ẹ jókó, They say you are to come in and sit down

A very similar use of dependent *kí* clauses is seen in sentences of the following type:

a kò ńwọ aṣọ àlálá k'í a jókó ní isọ̀ epo, we do not put on fine white clothes and sit down at the palm-oil stall

a kò lè sisẹ̀ tíí k'í a má simi rárá, we cannot work on and on and not rest at all

tani'lè l'ówó l'ówó kí ebí'pa á? who can have money (in hand) and go hungry (that hunger strike him)?

4. kí clauses are often used with question words, especially *şé*.

şé kí n şí i? ẹn, şí i, shall I open it? yes, open it

şé k'á gbé e wá? shall we bring it in?

kí m máa kà á ñşó bí? am I to go on reading it?

Questions of this sort may be expanded by the use of verbs such as *fé* 'to want', *yẹ* 'be proper', *ní* 'to say'.

şé o fé kí n şí i? do you want me to open it?

şé ó yẹ k'á gbé e wá, ought we to bring it in?

şé ó ní kí m máa kà á ñşó? did he say I was to go on reading it?

Similar expansions are possible with sentences which express a prayer or wish, e.g. *kí Ọlórún (ó) şó wa ó!* 'may God watch over us!', which could be expanded as *a gbádúrá pé kí Ọlórún (ó) şó wa* 'we pray that God may watch over us'.

VOCABULARY

<i>ówó</i> , honour	<i>fi . . . pamó</i> , put aside, away
<i>b'ówó (bù ówó)</i> , to honour	<i>dè</i> , to await (as second verb)
<i>ñşó</i> , (shews continuance of action)	<i>padà</i> , to return
<i>pátápátá</i> , completely	<i>imòrán</i> , advice
<i>kánnáá</i> , same	<i>lẹşẹkẹşẹ</i> , immediately
<i>ibítí</i> , where (place-that)	<i>pàşẹ (pa aşẹ)</i> , to give order
<i>tẹlẹ</i> , to follow	<i>àrùn</i> , disease
<i>yọ . . . l'ẹnu</i> , to trouble, worry	<i>tànkálẹ</i> , to spread about
<i>kíákíá</i> , quickly	<i>fi . . . ránsẹ</i> , to send (thing)
<i>wáyá</i> , wire, telegram	<i>rán . . . n'isẹ</i> , to send (person)
<i>tẹ wáyá</i> , to send a wire	<i>fi . . . hàn</i> , to shew, reveal
<i>hàn</i> , be obvious	
<i>pamó</i> , to keep safe	

EXERCISE 13

Translate into English: ó ní k'ò fún òun l'ówó; nwọn ní k'ẹ má tí ilọ ó; a fẹ k'ẹ ràn wá l'ówó diẹ k'ẹ tó lọ s'ilẹ; ó yẹ k'á máa b'ówó fún àwọn òbí wa nígbàgbogbo; ó ní kí àwọn obinrin ó máa lọ ñşó; kí n tó lè bá a, ó tí sálọ pátápátá; ibi kánnáá ni k'ò máa fi kọkọró yí sí kí m baà lè máa mò ibit'ó wà; ẹran ni k'ò máa sè fún mi lálẹ; òun ni k'ò máa tẹlẹ nígbàgbogbo; kí n jù ú nù ni àbí kí n fi pamó ni? k'á dúró dè é ni àbí k'á padà lọ sí ibi isẹ wa? imòrán mi ni pé k'ò san owó náà lẹşẹkẹşẹ; ó pàşẹ kí nwọn má jẹkí àrùn náà tànkálẹ; nwọn şe bẹẹ kí àrùn náà má baà yọ àwọn ará ilẹ wọn l'ẹnu; ó tẹ wáyá pé kí nwọn fi pónùn méjì ránsẹ kíákíá; nwọn fẹ kí n fi gbogbo rẹ hàn àwọn; şé k'á dà á nù?*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

*For the use of *ni* at the end of a clause see p. 157

TI FORMS OF THE VERB

When *ti* occurs in front of the simple verb stem it can generally be translated by 'already' or 'now', though these words might not necessarily be used in the most natural English rendering of the sentence in which it is present. For example, on enquiring after somebody at the office one might be told *ó ti lẹ s'ílé* 'he has (already) gone home', and on enquiring after somebody ill in hospital one might be told *ó ti kú* 'he is (now) dead'. The addition of *ti* represents the state referred to as having come into being some time, however brief, before the actual time of reference, which as usual may be either in the present or the past, so that, e.g. *ó ti kú* may be also translated 'he was then/already dead'. To appreciate the difference between the simple form and the *ti* form requires some thought because in this case Yoruba makes a distinction which we do not always make in English. When we do, we usually employ variations of stress and intonation. The following examples will help to bring out the difference.

(a) *hèjé o rí òrẹ rẹ lónl* and *hèjé o ti rí òrẹ rẹ lónl* may both be translated 'have you seen your friend today?', but the first question shows that the questioner has an open mind as to whether or not you will be seeing your friend in the course of the day, while the second shows that he assumes you will be seeing him some time. The first question may also be translated 'did you see your friend today?' and is not likely to be asked until towards the end of the day. It expects the answers *mo rí i* 'I've seen him, I saw him' or *ng kò rí i* 'I haven't seen him, I didn't see him', while the other expects *mo ti rí i* 'I have seen him' or *ng kò rí i* 'I haven't yet seen him'.

(b) If someone is filling up your glass you say *ó tó* 'it is

enough' when the liquid reaches the required level, but you say *ó ti tó* if the pourer shows any sign of adding more. You also say *ó ti tó* to refuse more food or drink when you have had enough.

(c) If you called at a friend's house you might be told *ó lẹ s'Ékò* 'he's gone to Lagos' if the speaker assumed that you did not know of your friend's intentions, but *ó ti lẹ s'Ékò* if he assumed that you did.

(d) If you went to catch a train and were actually on the platform when the train came in, you could say *òhò dé* 'the train has come'. If however you were still outside the station when it steamed in you would be more likely to say *òhò ti dé*.

With verbs denoting qualities or states *ti* shows that a process of becoming is now complete or makes a contrast with a preceding situation.

ó ti le dáadáa nisisiyí, it is now nicely hard

ó ti dàgbà tán, he is now quite grown up

ó ti tóbi jù, it is now too big

ó òtí tẹlẹri, şugbón ó ti mó dáadáa nisisiyí, it was dirty before, but it is now nice and clean

ó òdú tẹlẹri, şugbón ó ti funfun nisisiyí, it was dark in colour before, but it is now white

When *ti* and *rí* are used together the effect is to emphasise the previous existence of a state no longer in being. For example, in answer to the question *nibó l'ò ògbé?* 'where are you living?', one might say *mo gbé Ibadán rí, şugbón Abẹkúta ni mo ògbé nisisiyí* 'I used to live at Ibadán, but I am now living at Abẹkúta', but in answer to *şé Ibadán l'ò ògbé?* 'is it at Ibadán you are living?' one might say *mo ti gbé Ibadán rí, şugbón Abẹkúta ni mo ògbé nisisiyí* 'I have lived/used to live at Ibadán, but etc.'. Another example is *şé o fẹ(é) kà iwé yi? mo ti fẹ(é) kà á rí, şugbón ng kò fẹ mó* 'do you want to read this book? I did want to read it, but I don't want (to) any more'. The use of *rí* is not absolutely essential to convey this meaning, e.g. it could be omitted in the last example.

In certain phrases where the verb is followed by *jù* 'to

surpass, be too much' *tí* has the effect of producing emphasis without reference to time, e.g. *ó tí pòjù* 'it is too much', *ó tí dára jù* 'it is too nice' are polite remarks which are made on receipt of a gift; *ó tí pòjù* can also be used as a comment on an unpleasant experience. *ó pòjù* is used where no special emphasis is thought necessary, e.g. in commenting on the price first asked for an article offered for sale.

tí WITH *á*- PREFIX FORMS

There are two uses:

(a) Used with *rí* it shews that a habit existing in the past has now ceased.

mo tí (maa) ñkà iwé ìròhìn yì rí, I used to read this newspaper once

mo tí (maa) ñmù sigá rí, sùgbón ng kò mu ú mó, I used to smoke cigarettes once, but I do not smoke (it) any more

(b) Used with *látí* 'from' it shews that an action or habit which began some time previously to the time of reference is still going on.

mo tí ñsísé lát'ááró, I have/had been working since morning

mo tí (maa) ñkà á látí odún méta sèhìn, I have been reading it since three years ago

nwón tí ngbé Ibadán lát'èsín, they have been living at Ibadán since last year

tí FORMS PRECEDED BY *kí*

These are commonly used with *yẹ* to shew that an obligation existed in the past.

ó yẹ k'á tí rà á nìgbánáá, we ought to have bought it at the time

ó yẹ kí n tí ẹ é tán kí n tó lọ s'ilé, I ought to have finished it before going home

Contrast with the second example above *ó yẹ kí n ẹ é tán kí n tó lọ s'ilé* 'I ought to finish it etc'.

NEGATIVE FORMS

The commonest negative form corresponding to *tí* with the simple form has *kò* followed by the prefix *i-* which we have already come across in prohibitions, e.g. *má ilọ* 'don't go yet'. Here too the prefix may be preceded by the word *tí*, e.g. as in *má tí ilọ*. This *tí* itself in the speech of some Yorubas may take the prefix *i-*, e.g. *kò í tí ilọ* 'he has not yet gone'; this is another case of the repetition of a verb prefix mentioned on p. 62. As with *má*, variations of spelling are not uncommon, e.g. *kòlọ* for *kò ilọ*, *kò tí dé* for *kò tí idé* 'he hasn't yet arrived'.

kò ilẹ tó, it is not yet hard enough

a kò tí lí rí, we have not yet found it

nwón kò í tí isan owó náà fún mí, they have not yet paid me the money

ng kò tí idé Ibadán rí, I have never yet been to Ibadán

Besides its use in sentences which contain a negative word *tí* may be used in questions, often rhetorical, which expect or imply a negative answer.

nwón tí ifún wa ní nkánkan rí? have they ever yet given us anything?

ó tí ilẹ kọ orúkọ ara rẹ? can he even yet write his own name?

It sometimes also occurs in relative clauses with the negative word in the main clause.

kò sí ẹni t'ó (tí ó) tí lí rí, there isn't anyone who has yet seen him

(for the construction of relative clauses see p. 87.)

kò occurs occasionally with *tí* in sentences where 'previously, already' would be appropriate in English.

kò tí fẹ(ẹ) pè é wá, he had not previously/at first wanted to call him

enití kò bá ti sanwó kò lè wólé, anybody who has not already paid cannot enter
(for **bá** see p. 97.)

kò followed by **ti** and the **n-** prefix form with **rí** denies the previous existence of a habit which may subsequently have developed.

kò ti ñpuró rí, he *used* not to tell lies
ng kò ti ñmu sigá rí, I *used* not to smoke cigarettes
nwon kò ti ñwọ'sọ òyinbó rí, they *used* not to wear European clothes

If we want to translate an English sentence like 'I have not been working since morning' the negative is placed outside the phrase, e.g. **lát'áárọ kọ ni mo ti ñsìsẹ** 'it is not since morning that I have been working' or **ki iṣe pé mo ti ñsìsẹ lát'áárọ** 'it is not (the case) that I have been working since morning.'

VOCABULARY

látí , from, since	iwà , behaviour
ojó , day	búburú , bad
Sátídé , Saturday	wọ . . . l'èwù , to be on
nkán , something	like a garment
bí , like, as	kọ . . . s'órí , to learn by
àṣe , authority, command	heart
iwé àṣe , licence	nitorípé , because
yẹ . . . wò , to examine	àkókò , time, period
òwò , trade	òtútù , cold, coldness
kòkó , cocoa	ètò , arrangement
kòkó rírà , cocoa-buying	sìlẹ , beforehand
pádé , to meet	rín , to walk
enikan , somebody	jinnà , to be far
òpópó , road, street	òdómọbinrin , girl
ibẹ , there, that place	ijọsì , the other day
gbàgbé , to forget	sòkalẹ , to dismount, get off
ká , to pluck, gather	bèrẹsì(i) , to begin
bọ sí , to turn out, come to be	irọ , lie, error, vain thought

EXERCISE 14

Translate into English: a ti ṣe gbogbo iṣe t'ò ní k'a se; mo ti rí enití mo ñwá; ó ti máa ñwé gèlè rí; ng kò lti lri i látí ojọ Sàtlde t'ó kojá; a kò lti lri i látí nkán bí ọṣẹ méjì sẹhin; ng kò wí fún u pé mo ti gbà iwé àṣe rí; mo ti yẹ gbogbo rẹ wò pátápátá; òwò kòkó rírà ni ọkọ' ti ñṣe rí; iwà búburú ti wọ ọmọdé yí l'èwù púpọ; a ti kọ gbogbo rẹ s'órí dáadáa; mo ti rà aṣo t'ó nípọn nitorípé àkókò òtútù ni; mo ti ṣe ètò owó sílẹ fún iyawó mi; a kò lti rín jinnà púpọ kí ó tó pádé ọrẹ rẹ ọdómọbinrin kán; enikan'sọ orúko ọpópó ibẹ fún mi ní ijọsì, sùgbón mo ti gbàgbé orúko náa; gbogbo àwọn èrò ọkọ'ti sòkalẹ; nwon kò lti ibèrẹsì(i) ká kòkó wọ; irọ pátápátá ni ohun tí mo ti ñrò' bọ sí.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

15

SOME COMMON VERBS MORE ABOUT EMPHASIS

Various commonly occurring verbs often have to be translated by such prepositions as 'to', 'for', 'with', 'from' in English. Some of these have already cropped up in examples; the three commonest are described in more detail here.

1. *fi*

(a) As a main verb it means 'to put, place', e.g. *fi . . . silẹ* 'to put down, leave', *fi . . . lẹlẹ* 'to put on the ground', *fi . . . pamọ* 'to put safe, put away'. Note that *fi* in this sense is used of light, smallish objects, while *gbé* is used of larger, heavier objects and *kó* of several objects thought of collectively. Another point is that *gbé . . . kalẹ*, not *gbé . . . lẹlẹ*, is generally used of putting a heavy object down on the ground, cp. *gbé . . . kaná (ká iná)* 'to put (pot) on the fire'. *ká*, which seems to imply a clumsier, less careful setting down than *lé*, occurs also in *sọ . . . kalẹ* 'to put down a load', *sọkalẹ* 'to descend, dismount, get off'.

fi has the peculiarity that an unemphatic 'him/her/it' is not usually expressed after it, e.g. for 'put it down, leave it' one says *fi silẹ* (or *fi 'ilẹ*, see p. 143).

(b) It is often used in an instrumental sense, in which case the translations may vary considerably.

abẹ ni mo fi gé e, it was a razor I put cut it = I cut it with a razor

kil'o maa fi owó yí rà, what will you put this money buy? = what will you buy with this money?

ó fi mí rẹrín, he laughed at me

ó fi ẹran náà jẹ, he ate up the meat

ó fi àkàrà jẹ ẹfọ, he ate vegetables with bean-cake (the vegetables being the main dish)

osù méló l'ò fi kọ isẹ náà, how many months did you spend learning the work?

ni gbogbo igbà tí mo fi wà ní Lónḍòn, kò wá(á) kí mí, during all the time I spent (being) in London, he did not come to greet me

Notice how in the above examples the second (main) verb is added in the same simple form as *fi*, while in English we use a form in '-ing', e.g. 'spend learning', or an infinitive, e.g. 'it was a razor I used to cut it'. Where action in progress or habit is expressed, the commonest practice is to put *fi* in front of *n-* or *máa n-* if it has no following object, e.g. *kil'o fi máa ńgé e* 'what do you cut it with?' and vice-versa, e.g. *kil'o máa nífi owó rẹ rà* 'what do you buy with your money?'. Some Yorubas, however, have this order even in the first example, i.e. *kil'o maa nífi gé e*. The same variations hold good for *maa* expressing intention, but other particles (negative, future) always precede *fi*.

Other examples of the use of *fi* are given on pp. 163f, 174f.

2. *fún*

(a) We have seen that as a main verb it has the meaning 'to give, hand over to', the English second object being introduced by the preposition *ní*, and that, as *ní* cannot be followed by an unemphatic pronoun, 'give me it' is simply *fún mí*. With pronouns other than the 3rd pers. sing. an alternative construction with *fi* is used, e.g. *ó fi mí fún u* 'he took me gave him' = 'he gave me to him'. This construction is also often used with nouns, especially if they are qualified in any way, e.g. *ó fi owó náà fún mí* 'he gave me the money'.

(b) As a second verb (cp. *fi . . . fún* above) it is generally translated by a preposition.

nwọn tà á fún mí, they sold it to him

rà á fún mí, buy it for me

nwọn sá fún u, they ran away from him

mo yera fún u, I kept away from him/avoided him
 ó kún fún owó, it is full of money
 owó wá fún mi, there is money (available) for me

Bilingual Yorubas tend to use **fún** rather indiscriminately to translate 'for', e.g. **ó gbé ibè fún odún mètá** 'he lived there for three years' instead of **l'odún mètá**. Other examples of this tendency are **kò lè sòrò fún ayò** 'he could not speak for joy' and **kil'o wá fún** 'what have you come for?'

3. bá

(a) Used by itself it has the meaning 'to meet, come upon, find (a person)'.
 mo bá a n'ílè rẹ, I found him at his house
 mo bá a l'òná oko, I came up on him on the farm-road
 oṣa kò bá mi, the arrow did not hit me

(b) When followed by another verb it has the vague meaning of 'to be in association with' and is often translated by a preposition.
 mo bá a sòrò, I spoke with him
 bá mi kí i dáadáa, greet him for me well = give him my kind regards
 bá mi lọ s'òjà, go for me to the market
 nwón bá mi ẹ é, they helped me do it
 iyá wón mbá wón lọ, their mother is going with them
 wá(á) bá mi rà, come and buy from me (said by market stall-holder)

Notice that in describing action in progress or habitual action **ń-** and **maa ń-** are prefixed to **bá**, e.g. **mo maa mbá a lọ** 'I always go with him'.

(c) We often find in narratives sentences beginning with **ni** (l') followed by **bá** before the main verb, e.g. **ni ó bá lọ s'ílè** 'so with that (the circumstances earlier described) he went off home'. This use is really very like that described in (b), except that here the association is with circumstances, not with people.

Other uses of **bá** are mentioned in later chapters.

MORE ABOUT EMPHASIS

We have seen that the **ní** which introduces a second object is dropped when that object is brought to the front for emphasis, e.g. **nwón fún mi l'owó** but **owó ni nwón fún mi**. The situation is rather different when an adverbial qualifying phrase made up of **ní** plus a noun is brought to the front in this way.

(a) In expressions referring to points of time some Yorubas drop the **ní** while others retain it, e.g. **mo rí i láná** 'I saw him yesterday', **áná/láná ni mo rí i** 'it was yesterday I saw him'. But if the reference is to duration of time **ní** is replaced by **fi** in front of the main verb, e.g. **mo simi ní wákátí kán** 'I rested for an hour', **wákátí kán ni mo fi simi** 'it was for an hour I rested'.

(b) If the noun refers to place **ní** is dropped and a verb **ti** 'to come from' or **gbé** 'to be at' is introduced in front of the main verb, e.g. **mo bá a l'òná oko** 'I came on him on the farm-road', **òná oko ni mo ti bá a** 'it was on the farm-road etc.' and **nwón wá l'Èkó nísisiyí** 'they are at Lagos now', **Èkó ni nwón gbé wá nísisiyí** 'it is at Lagos they are now'. The distinction between the two verbs is that **ti** is generally used where the main verb denotes instantaneous action while **gbé** is used where there is an idea of duration, but some Yorubas actually use both together, e.g. **Idánrẹ ni mo gbé ti rà á** 'it was at Idanre I bought it'.

(c) When the noun refers to price **ní** is just omitted, e.g. **mo rà á ní şilè mètá** 'I bought it for three shillings', **şilè mètá ni mo rà á** 'it was for three shillings etc.'. Compare also **eélò ni nwón útà á** 'for how much are they selling it?'

(d) When the noun denotes an instrument (as it does in a few expressions) **ní** is dropped and **fi** is introduced in front of the main verb, e.g. **ó lù mí ní kùmò** 'he hit me with a stick', **kùmò l'ó fi lù mí** 'it was a stick he hit me with'.

(e) **sí** is substituted for **ní** in a **mò ó l'òba** 'we recognise him as king', **òba l'a mò ó sí** 'we recognise him as king'.

Comparing the various examples above we see that there are two rather different constructions. In trans-

forming an unemphatic into an emphatic sentence *ní* is either (i) just omitted or occasionally retained, or (ii) has its place taken by various different words, i.e. *tí*, *gbé*, *fí*, *sí*.

VOCABULARY

<i>ara ẹ̀ni</i> , one's self	<i>rù</i> , to carry
<i>tún . . . ẹ̀</i> , to mend, repair	<i>wọ̀nyí</i> , these
<i>he</i> , to pick up (single thing)	<i>ẹ̀kún</i> , tears, weeping
<i>ẹ̀nikẹ̀ni</i> , anybody	<i>olúkúlùkù</i> , <i>oníkálùkù</i> , each
<i>ẹ̀nu iṣẹ̀</i> , at work	<i>túká</i> , to scatter, separate
<i>ki iṣẹ̀</i> , it is/was not	<i>ipádé</i> , meeting
<i>jàgídijàgán</i> , hooligan	<i>f'etí bà</i> , to mention to
<i>ké sí</i> , to call out to	<i>f'orí lé</i> , to set out on
<i>ljetá</i> , day before yesterday	<i>lé</i> , to be on
<i>agogo ọ̀wó</i> , wrist-watch	<i>àṣẹ̀jù</i> , excess
<i>èèrì</i> , dirt	<i>idálẹ̀</i> , being away from home
<i>ọ̀mọ̀lanke</i> , hand-cart	<i>dámọ̀ràn (dá imọ̀ràn)</i> , to advise
<i>pọ̀nùn</i> , £1	

EXERCISE 15

Translate into English: àkàrà ni mo fi nṣẹ̀ ẹ̀; kíni nwọ̀n maa fún mi? Ilú òyinbó ni mo gbé kọ̀'ṣẹ̀ náà; ọ̀wọ̀ ara ẹ̀ni l'á fi nṣẹ̀ nkán ara ẹ̀ni ẹ̀; ojú ara mi ni mo fi rí i; ibi yí ni mo ti rí i he; Ọ̀lọ̀run bá mi ẹ̀ ẹ̀, ẹ̀nikẹ̀ni kò rí mi; a bá a l'ẹ̀nu iṣẹ̀ rẹ̀; ó sọ fún mi pé òun ki iṣẹ̀ jàgídijàgán bẹ̀; mo bá ọ̀gá mi lọ̀ sí Ọ̀gbómọ̀ṣọ̀; mo fún u ni pọ̀nùn mārùn fún iyá mi; ṣílẹ̀ mẹ̀rin ni nwọ̀n tà á fún mi; ènià rere ni gbogbo wa' mọ̀ ọ̀ sí; nwọ̀n bù ẹ̀mu dīẹ̀ fún u; bá mi ké sí Ọ̀jọ̀ pé k'ó wá kíákíá; ljetá ni mo tó rí i; níbo l'ó ti rí agogo ọ̀wọ̀ yí rà? àpótí yí kún fún èèrì; ọ̀mọ̀lanke ni mo fi nṣẹ̀ igi kiri; ó kó gbogbo nkán wọ̀nyí fún ọ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀; ẹ̀kún ni olúkúlùkù'fí túká nínú ipádé yí; ó yẹ̀ kí n fi etí rẹ̀ bà á; a fi orí lé ònà l'jẹ̀bù; ó yẹ̀ k'á maa sá fún àṣẹ̀jù; ọ̀dún mēfá ni mo fi wá ní idálẹ̀: mo bá a dāmọ̀ràn pé k'ó má lọ̀.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

RELATIVE CLAUSES

1. Relative clauses are introduced by a word *tí* (except as explained in paragraph 6 below) and always follow the noun or pronoun they qualify. As in English, this introductory word serves for both singular and plural, e.g. *ọ̀kúnrin tí* 'the man who', *àwọ̀n ọ̀kúnrin tí* 'the men who'. This *tí* elides with following vowels according to the patterns of *ṣé* and *ní* 'to say'. Relative clauses precede the qualifying words *yí* 'this', *wọ̀nyí* 'these', *yẹn* 'that', *wọ̀nyẹn* 'those' and their variants, also *náà* 'the . . . in question', but follow other qualifying words.

ìṣu tí mo rà láná náà, the yam (in question) which I bought yesterday

abẹ̀ kékeré tí mo rí he yí, this small knife which I have picked up

ẹ̀ranko méjì t'á (tí a) pa, the two animals which we killed

owó t'ọ̀ba'fún mi (tí ọ̀ba), the money which the ruler gave me

Ilú t'ó (tí ó) nṣẹ̀, the town in which he is living

àwọ̀n ènià t'ẹ̀ (tí ẹ̀) rí nibẹ̀, the people you saw there

2. In the above examples *tí* is the object of the following verb; where it is the subject there are complications.

(a) If the word qualified by the relative clause is a noun, *tí* must be followed by the subject pronoun *ó* 'he/she/it' if the verb form is one with which that pronoun can be used, e.g. *ọ̀mọ̀dé t'ó (tí ó) rí i* 'the child who saw him', *obinrin t'ó maa rà á* 'the woman who will buy it', but *ọ̀mọ̀dé tí yíó* wá* 'the child who will come', *obinrin tí kò rà á* 'the woman who did not buy it'. With *n-* forms some Yorubas put in *ó* while others do not, e.g. *ọ̀dún*

* For the future particle *yíó* see p. 92.

t'ó ògbò, ọdún tí ńbẹ̀ 'the year that is coming, next year'. The singular pronoun *ó* is normally used even though the preceding noun is accompanied by *àwọn*, e.g. *àwọn aláàrù t'ó gbé e wá* 'the porters who brought it'. No difference occurs, either, where *ó* cannot be used, e.g. *àwọn ènià tí kò sanwó* 'the people who have not paid (money)'. The use of the pronoun *nwón* 'they' in relative clauses of this type has the effect of emphasising the idea of plurality; it shews that the speaker has in mind a number of individuals rather than a collective group, e.g. as in *àwọn aláàrù tí nwón gbé e wá* contrasted with *àwọn aláàrù t'ó gbé e wá* above. (It should be noted, however, that in written Yoruba the use of *nwón* is sometimes due to nothing more than a mistaken idea that it is more 'grammatical'.)

(b) If the qualified word is an emphatic pronoun of the first or second persons, the corresponding* unemphatic pronoun is placed after *tí*.

èmi tí mo fún ẹ ní gbogbo owó yí, I who gave you all this money

ìwọ t'ò jì owó mi gbé, you who stole my money

àwa t'á fẹràn rẹ, we who love him

ẹnyin t'ẹ ẹ (kò) fẹ(ẹ) lọ mó, you who don't want to go after all

(c) The third person singular *òun* does not often occur with the relative *tí* in direct speech since 'he who', 'the person who', 'the one who' is rendered by *eni tí*, often written *enití*, e.g. *enit'ó rí i* 'the person who found it'. It does, however, occur regularly in indirect speech representing *èmi* 'I', e.g. *èmi tí mo rí i páápáá kò rí nkánkan gbà* 'I who found it even did not get anything' would become *ó ní òun tí òun rí i páápáá* etc. 'he said he himself who found it even etc.'.

The plural *àwọn* occurs more frequently with relative clauses than *òun* because, besides representing *àwa* 'we' in indirect speech, it also functions as the plural of *eni*, e.g.

* Occasionally the *third* person pronoun *ó* is used.

the plural of *enit'ó rí i* is *àwọn t'ó rí i* 'those who found it'. (Here again the repetition of the plural pronoun, e.g. *àwọn tí nwón rí i* emphasises the idea of plurality.)

This usage, it should be noted, is not confined to cases where *tí* ties up with the subject of the clause; it holds good in all situations, e.g. *enití mo rí níbẹ̀* 'the person I saw there', *àwọn tí mo rí níbẹ̀* 'those I saw there', and see also the examples below.

3. Yoruba has no special possessive relative word corresponding to English 'whose'; it uses *tí* followed by the appropriate possessive pronoun, e.g. *omodé tí filà rẹ̀ sọ̀nù* 'the child that its cap is lost, the child whose cap is lost'.

ọkùnrin tí mo wọ sí ilé rẹ̀, the man at whose house I lodged

èmi tí bàbá mí tí kú, I whose father was dead

àwa tí oko wa jinnà, we whose farm is distant

ápótí tí inú rẹ̀ dọtí, the box with the dirty inside

àpò tí kò sí nkánkan nínú rẹ̀, the bag with nothing inside it

Note that with *àwọn* either the plural *wọn* or the singular *rẹ̀* may be used, the latter conveying the idea that the several individuals are thought of as forming a collective group, e.g. *àwọn tí ilé rẹ̀ ńjóná* 'those whose house is on fire'.

4. Other words besides *enití* which have *tí* joined to the antecedent are *èyítí* 'the one that' (*not* 'this one that'), *íbití*, *níbití* '(at) the place that, where', *ìgbàtí*, *nígbàtí* '(at) the time that, when'.

èyít'ó sanra ni mo fẹ̀, I want the fat one (the one that is fat)

mo bá a nńbit'ó dùbúlẹ̀ sí, I found him where he had lain down

nígbàtí nwón dé inú ilé ọúnjẹ̀, when they came into the dining-hall

5. A succession of verb clauses in a relative construction must each be introduced by *tí*.

àpótí t'ó tóbi t'ó sí mọ́, a box which is big and (also) clean
 básíkùlù t'ó jì gbé t'ó sí wá tà fún ẹ̀lòmíràn, the bicycle which he stole and then sold to someone else
 ẹnítí nwọ̀n jì mọ̀tò rẹ̀ gbé tí nwọ̀n sí wá tà á fún oniṣòwò kan, lit. 'the person that they stole his lorry that they then sold it to a trader', i.e. 'whose lorry was stolen and then sold to a trader'.

For the use of *sì* as a connective with verb clauses see p. 203. Added *tí* clauses are not, however, necessarily linked by *sì*, e.g. *nígbàtí ọ̀bá'díde tí ó lọ sínú ààfin tí ó simi tán* 'when the king had arisen and gone into his palace and had finished resting'.

6. In spoken Yoruba *tí* is often omitted, e.g. *aṣọ mo rà láná n'iyí* 'this is the cloth I bought yesterday', *mgbà mo rí i (nìgbàtí)* 'when I saw him', *mgb'ò rí mi (nìgbàt'ó)* 'when he saw me'. It cannot be omitted where its omission would produce ambiguity, e.g. *màlúú tí (k)ò ní irù* 'a cow which has no tail'. Proverbs are often found in two forms, a literary and a colloquial form, e.g. *ẹnít'á fẹ́ l'a mọ́, a à (kò) m'ẹnít'ó fẹ́ 'ni* 'we know whom we love, we do not know who loves us (lit. a person)' is also quoted as *ẹ̀ni a fẹ́ l'a mọ́, a à m'ẹ̀ni'fẹ́ 'ni*. Note that in the colloquial form the high tone of *t'ó* is heard on the preceding syllable, but not the high tone of *t'á* (*táa*) where *tí* is the object.

7. It is important to note that relative clauses introduced by *tí* have the same pattern as emphatic sentences containing *ní* such as are described in the preceding chapter. There is the same absence of *ní* before a second object, e.g. *owó tí mo fún u* 'the money which I gave him'; the same use of *tí* or *gbé* when the antecedent refers to place or position, e.g. *ibítí mo gbé nṣiṣẹ́* 'the place where I am working', *ṣọ̀bù tí mo tí rà á* 'the shop where I bought it'; and the same use of *fí* and *sí*, e.g. *oṣù méfà tí mo fí kọ́ ọ́* 'the six months I spent learning it', *irú ẹ̀nià tí mo mọ́ ọ́ sí* 'the sort of person I know him to be'.

VOCABULARY

<i>igba</i> , 200	<i>ewu</i> , danger
<i>fáàrí</i> , airs, display	<i>fà</i> , to draw on, cause
<i>fí . . . ẹ́ fáàrí</i> , to put on airs at	<i>isọ́</i> , stall
<i>le koko</i> , to be very hard	<i>ẹ̀gbọ̀n</i> , elder relative
<i>kejì</i> , second, following	<i>agolo</i> , tin
<i>ọ̀fẹ́</i> , gratis, free	<i>t'orí (tí orí)</i> , to act for
<i>jé</i> , to be	<i>ṣòro</i> , to be difficult
	<i>simi, sinmi</i> , to rest

EXERCISE 16

Translate into English: *gbogbo ohun tí ẹ́ wí ní mo gbọ́; àpótí tí mo rí nínú ilé wọ̀n n'iyí; ẹ̀ran tí mo sè fún oúnjẹ alá n'lyen; nwọ̀n gbé ẹ̀rù aṣọ tí owò rẹ̀ tó igba pónùn lọ; kò tó ẹnít'ó lè fí mí ẹ́ fáàrí kán; mo n'wò gbogbo àwọ̀n tí n'kọ́já; nwọ̀n n'ṣòrọ́ sínú kìní kán tí nwọ̀n n'pè ní 'microphone'; mo lọ bá àwọ̀n ọ̀rẹ́ mí t'á jọ n'ṣe oṃo ilé-iwé; ẹnítí kò tí ikú, a kò mọ́ àrùn tí yíó pa á; ng kò fẹ̀ràn ọ̀rẹ́ rẹ́ tí ojú rẹ́'le koko yẹn; nìgbàt'ó dí ọ̀jọ́ kejì t'á dé Ibadàn, a rí mọ̀tò t'ó lè gbé wa dé Ilorin l'ọ̀fẹ́; obìnrin tí a wí yí tí bí oṃo méta fún ọ̀kọ́ rẹ́; àwọ̀n méjì t'ó jẹ́ ọ̀kùnrin nínú wọ̀n tí dàgbà dáadáa; ẹ̀yít'ó burú t'ó sí l'ẹ̀wu n'pa ọ̀rọ́ yí ní pé a kò mọ́ ohun t'ó fà á; isọ́ ẹ̀gbọ̀n mí obìnrin kán tí a tí lè rí eja inú agolo rà'wà l'ọ̀já; òkúta t'ó fí lù oṃo náà pa n'lyí; ẹ̀nyin t'ẹ́ lówó dáadáa lè rà á; a kò rí oúnjẹ́ t'ó kù tí a dí sínú ẹ̀rù iyàwò mí; ẹnítí a n't'orí rẹ́ kú, kò wò ẹ̀ni l'ọ̀jú rere; aiyé t'á gbé wá yí ṣòro púpọ́.*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

EXPRESSING THE FUTURE

The situation is complicated by the existence of alternative dialectal forms.

1. In books and in some northern dialects a particle **yió** is used. This, like the negative **má** used in prohibitions, is followed by modified high and mid tones though no falling tone may be heard on the word to cause automatic modification, e.g. **yió wǎ** 'he will come', **yió lẹ** 'he will go'. This **yió**, by the way, is one of a certain number of words* in which an **i** is superfluously written with **y**. The consonant is energetically pronounced and gives an impression of **yi** but the word could actually be spelt more simply **yó**. The unemphatic pronouns used before **yió** are the same as those used before **kò**, i.e. 'I' is **ng**; there is no pronoun representing 'he/she/it' and **nwọn** has mid tone. **yió** (**yó**), like **kò**, loses its consonant when a subject precedes and the resulting 'ó is assimilated to a 'we' and ẹ 'you'.

yió lẹ lólá, he will go tomorrow
ng ó wǎ lólá, I shall/will come tomorrow
sé o ó wǎ lólá? will you come tomorrow?
a á (ó) lẹ lólá, we shall/will go tomorrow
sé ẹ ẹ (ó) wǎ lólá? will you come tomorrow?
nwọn ó wǎ lólá, they will come tomorrow
Táiwò ó wǎ lólá, Taiwo will come tomorrow

2. Widely used in spoken Yoruba but not often written are forms with a particle **á** replacing **yió**. This **á** has a plain high tone which does not cause any modification. Note that **a** is short when preceded by a noun (as in the last example below), but *long* when the meaning

* The other words are **aiyé** 'world', **ẹiyẹ** 'bird', **àiyà** 'chest, breast'.

EXPRESSING THE FUTURE

is 'he/she/it will . . .'. **nwọn** 'they' has high tone before **á**, but the final syllable of a noun does not appear to be raised to high tone in this position.

áá wá ní iròlẹ òní, he will come this evening (evening of today)

màá wá l'òwúrọ ọlá, I will come tomorrow morning
sé óá wá lólá? will you come tomorrow?

áá wá n'iròlẹ ọlá, we will come tomorrow evening

sé ẹẹ wá l'álẹ òní? will you come this evening?

nwọn á wá l'áago méjì, they will come at 2 o'clock

ọdẹ á wá l'ótúnla, the hunter will come the day after tomorrow

3. The addition of **maa** after either of these particles produces a future progressive or habitual. (Only **maa** on level mid tones is heard here because **màá** would in any case be pronounced **maa** after **yió**—since it is followed by modified tones—while those who use the particle **á** seem always to use the pronunciation **maa**.)

ng ó maa kà á nso, I will carry on reading it

á maa wá lójójumọ, she will be coming every day

nwọn ó maa gbà pọ̀nùn mewa lósòsòsẹ, they will be getting £10 a week

It should be noted that Yoruba uses the simple future, not the progressive, to shew a settled arrangement for a point of time in the future, e.g. 'I shall be going to Lagos tomorrow' is rendered by **màá lẹ/ng ó lẹ s'Èkó lólá**.

4. The addition of **ti** produces a form which corresponds to the English future perfect (or pluperfect).

á ti lẹ sílẹ k'á tó(ó) dé'bẹ, he will have gone off home before we arrive there

nwọn sọ fún mi pé yió ti kúrò ní Lóndòn k'ó tó(ó) lẹ rí lẹtà mi gbà, they told me he would have left London before he could get my letter

This form cannot, however, be used in translating such sentences as 'I shall have been married six months on Sunday'. This becomes **ó di ọsẹ mẹfà l'ọjọ isinmi t'ó**

m̀b̀ò tí mo tí gb̀éyàwó 'it becomes six weeks on the day of rest that is coming that I have married'. The same form of expression is also used for such sentences as 'I shall have been working two years by the end of this month', which becomes **ó di ọ̀dún méjì ní iparí oşù yí tí mo tí ǹs̀is̀é** 'it becomes two years at the end of this month that I have been working'. A future perfect progressive or habitual is, however, used in such sentences as **enit'ó bá fíté etí silẹ̀ yíó tí maa gb̀ọ̀ oríşíríşí ọ̀rọ̀ bẹ̀ẹ̀** 'one who keeps his ears open will have been hearing various reports of that sort' (**tẹ . . . silẹ̀** 'spread out . . . down, completely'; for **bá** see the following chapter).

5. In relative clauses, after the emphasising word **ní** and occasionally elsewhere many Yorubas use the word **máa** to signify intention.

işé tí nwọ̀n máa şe'le, the work that they are going to do is hard

kíl'ẹ̀ máa şe nìbẹ̀? what are you going to do there?
gb̀águdá ní mo maa rà, it is cassava I am going to buy
mo rò pé ọ̀jò' maa rò lóní, I think it is going to rain today

máa used in this sense is sometimes used in conjunction with a second **máa** used in the habitual sense.

kíní nwọ̀n máa máa şe nìbẹ̀? what are they going to be doing there?

NEGATIVE FORMS

6. Both **yíó** and **á** can be preceded by negative particles. **kí**, which we can regard as a modified form of **kò**, is used before **yíó** while **kò** is used before **á**. **kí yíó** was used in the translation of the Bible and it is still quite widely used in written Yoruba, but the commonest negative form in spoken Yoruba makes use of the verb **ní** 'to have', e.g. 'I will not go' is rendered by **ng kò ní(i) lọ** 'I do not have a going' (for the lengthening of **ní** see p. 67).

ng kò ní(i) rà á, I won't buy it
şé o kò (ş'õ ò) ní(i) bá wa lọ? so you won't go with us?

EXPRESSING THE FUTURE

kò ní(i) tà á fún wa, he won't sell it to us
a kò (a à) ní(i) lè şe e, we shan't be able to do it
şé ẹ̀ kò (ş'ẹ̀ è) ní(i) fún mí? so you won't give it to me?
nwọ̀n kò ní(i) jẹ̀ ẹ̀ n'iyà, they won't punish him

Besides the above simple form Yoruba has also (a) a negative future habitual, (b) a negative future perfect.

- (a) **a kò ní(i) maa wá nígbàgbogbo**, we shan't be coming all the time
kò ní(i) maa rí wọ̀n lójoójumọ̀, he will not be seeing them every day
(b) **kò ní(i) tí ilọ s'ilé**, he will not yet have gone home
nwọ̀n kò ní(i) tí ità á, they will not yet have sold it

USE OF THE FUTURE IN WISHES AND PRAYERS

7. Wishes and prayers are usually exclamatory sentences containing a verb in either the future form or the dependent form, the standard response being **àmin ó** 'so be it!'. Many such expressions are conventionally used on particular occasions, e.g. **ire á ká rí (ká orí) ò** 'may good fortune come to each in turn' (said at a wedding), **èhin wọ̀n ó dára ó** 'may their absence turn out well' (said on the death of an old person—it refers to the Yoruba belief that an old person may be re-incarnated in a baby born soon after), **ẹ̀ ẹ̀ tà o** 'may you have sales' (said to a trader), **kí Ọ̀lórún má kọ̀ àtúnrí ò** 'may God not reject a further meeting' (said sometimes at leave taking).

For another form of prayer see p. 185.

VOCABULARY

ààb̀ò , half	àáké , axe
sin , to bury	kàn , to touch, affect
òkú , corpse, dead person	gún , to pound, stab
danindanin , important, tightly	iyán , pounded yam
kedere , clearly	ìgb̀éyàwó , wedding
dá . . . padà , to return loan	nílátí , to have to
	şàájú , to precede, go before

lyókù, remainder
 síwó (sí ọwó), to stop
 work
 alágbáfọ, washerman
 sá, to dry, air
 lò, to use, spend
 lò, to grind, iron clothes
 miràn, mii, other
 kò, to come up against
 àgbákò, sudden misfortune
 síwájú, in front, forwards
 gbádùn, to enjoy, feel well
 tí, on and on

esè, leg, foot
 jàmbá, accident
 àisàn, illness
 méjèjì, both
 t'ọkọt'aya, husband and
 wife
 àjèjì, strange
 dá . . . l'ọjú, be certain to
 gbúrò, to have news, hear
 noise
 àlejò, guest
 àdúgbò, quarter of town
 pèsè, to prepare

EXERCISE 17

Translate into English: tani maa sanwó ọkọ? ní agogo méréni ààbò iròlẹ̀ ní nwọn yió sin òkú; a kò ní(í) rí nkán danindanin rà lóní; kinni nwọn maa jẹ l'ówùrò yí? yió hàn sí ọ kedere k'ò tó kà iwé nàà tán; n'ijò wò l'ò maa dá àáké nàà padà? eélò ní nwọn maa maa fún ẹ l'òsòdòsù? èyítí nwọn ó maa wí ni pé ọrò yí kò kàn àwọn; ilẹ̀ á ti sù tán k'á tó dé'lé; iṣu tí mo maa fi gún'yán n'lyí; mo maa sọ fún bàbá mi pé k'ó rà irú rẹ̀ fún mi; nwọn nilátí wá ọ̀nà tí nwọn ó fi maa jẹun; àwọn ijòyè ní yió sàájú, àwọn lyókù ó sì tẹ̀lẹ̀ wọn; ẹ̀ è ní(í) r'àyè bá a sòrò lóní mò, ó ti jẹ̀ jù; nwọn ò ní(í) tí iṣiwó n'ibi iṣẹ̀ wọn; maa gbé agbádá yí fún alágbáfọ̀ pé k'ó bá mi fọ̀ ọ̀ dáadáa; yió sá a dáadáa k'ó tó lẹ̀ ọ̀; maa dúró dè mótò miràn (mii); yió lò tó ọ̀sẹ̀ méjì níbẹ̀; mo rò pé ọ̀ ó gbádùn ibẹ̀ púpọ̀; tani maa jókò síwájú? yió mò pé a kò gbàgbé sá; nwọn ò ní(í) máa kọ̀rin bèè lẹ̀ títí; fílà á pẹ̀ l'òrí, bàtà á pẹ̀ l'èsẹ̀! ẹ̀ è ní(í) kò àgbákò! ẹ̀ è ní(í) rí àisàn tàtí jàmbá o! àwọn méjèjì tí nwọn ó di t'ọkọ t'aya yí, ẹnítí mo mò dáadáa ní wọn; ó lè jẹ̀ pé ohun tí ẹ̀ ó rí yió ẹ̀ àjèjì l'ọjú nyín; ó dá mi l'ọjú pé ng ó lè là á yé nyín; mo ti gètúrd pé nwọn ó ẹ̀ igbáyàwó alárinrin l'ádúgbò wa; ó l'óun ó yára pèsè nkán àlejò sílẹ̀.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

18

DEFINITE AND INDEFINITE CLAUSES

In a variety of clauses we often find an auxiliary verb *bá* placed between the subject and the main verb of the clause. This word, which we can translate as 'happens/happened to' has the effect, where it occurs, of turning what would otherwise be a definite clause into an indefinite clause. Since the future is necessarily uncertain, this often means altering the time reference from the past to the future, but this is not so in all cases, since there can be uncertainty also about the past or present—one may be uncertain whether something did or did not happen, for example. We shall work out this distinction first of all in relation to relative clauses, of which we have already had a number of 'definite' examples.

The difference is clearly seen in the pair of sentences:

màá/ng ó fún ẹnít'ó rí i ní sísí, I will give the person who found it 6d

màá/ng ó fún ẹnít'ó bá rí i ní sísí, I will give anybody who finds it 6d

We can make the second sentence still more indefinite or general by substituting *ẹníkẹ̀ni* for *ẹnì*, i.e. *màá fún ẹníkẹ̀ni t'ó bá rí i ní sísí* 'I will give anybody at all who finds it 6d'. (This form of reduplication with the insertion of *k* and a high tone on the following syllable can be applied to any noun, e.g. *eja* 'fish', *ejakẹ̀ja* 'any fish'. More details are given on p. 209.) 'Anybody who has found it' will be *ẹnít'ó bá tí rí i* but 'whoever found it', on the other hand, will be *ẹnít'ó wù k'ó rí i* (lit.) 'the person that it pleases that he found it'. The point to note is that such a sentence as 'I will give whoever found it 6d' can be rephrased as 'I will give the person who found it—

whoever he may be—6d'. A definite, particular person has found it but the speaker is at the moment ignorant of his identity. This phrase can itself be made indefinite by the addition of *bá*, e.g. *máá fún ẹnít'ó bá wù k'ó ríi ní sísí* 'I will give anybody who finds it—whoever he may be—6d'. A variant form is *ẹnít'ó wù t'ó bá rí i*.

Further examples, with various time references, are added here to bring out the distinction.

ẹnít'ó tí kà á, the person who has already read it
ẹnít'ó bá tí kà á, anyone who has already read it
ẹnít'ó ñpariwo, the person who is making a noise
ẹnít'ó wù t'ó ñpariwo, whoever it is is making a noise
ẹnít'ó bá ñpariwo, anybody who is making a noise
ẹnítí kò lè lẹ, the person who cannot/could not go
ẹnítí kò bá lè lẹ, anybody who cannot go
ẹnít'ó maa ẹ é, the person who is going to/intends doing it

ẹnít'ó bá maa ẹ é, anybody who is going to/intends doing it

ẹnítí yíó dǔró tí mí, the person who will stand by me
ẹnítí yíó bá dǔró tí mí, anybody who will stand by me
omòdé tí kò tí igbà tirẹ dà? where is the child who has not yet received his (share)?

omòdé kómòdé tí kò bá tí igbà tirẹ, k'ó bó s'ibí, any child who has not yet received his share, let him come here

ẹnítí kò bá tí gbà tirẹ nísíyí kò ní(i) ẹun lóní ọ!
 anyone who has not already now had his share will not (have anything to) eat today!

ẹnít'ó bá ñkà iwé iròhin yí lójoojúmọ yíó mọ pé . . ., anyone who reads this newspaper every day will know that . . .

awon òfin titun tí Ijọba bá ẹ l'ó wà nínú iwé iròhin yí, any new laws that the Government makes (it is) are in this newspaper/gazette

Time clauses introduced by *nígbàtí*, *igbàtí* '(at) the time that' are actually relative clauses; these provide many examples of the distinction.

nígbàtí mo rí i, mo kí i dáadáa, when I saw him, I greeted him cordially (well)

nígbàt'ò bá rí i, bá mi kí i dáadáa, when you see him, give him my kind regards (for me greet him well)

nígbàkígba t'ò bá rí i, máa bá mi kí i dáadáa, whenever you see him, always give him my kind regards

nígbàkígba t'ò (k)ò bá lè wá, k'ò maa sọ fún mi, any time you are not able to come, you should always tell me

Notes:

(a) *bá* is placed after the negative particle *kò* and the future particle *yíó/á* but before *tí, tí, máa, ñ-, i-* and *í-*.

(b) Where the verb form, either in the relative clause or in the main clause, refers to action in progress or to repeated, habitual action, the uncertainty associated with the use of *bá* refers to the numbers involved or the frequency of the action. For 'anybody' in 'anybody who is making a noise' or 'anybody who reads this paper every day' we can substitute 'everybody' without radically altering the meaning. On the other hand, 'anyone who finds it' is more or less equivalent to 'if anyone finds it' and 'when you see him' (to the Yoruba, at least) is equivalent to 'if and when you see him'.

VOCABULARY

ijàngbòṅ, trouble
gbòṅ, to be wise
iyé, quantity, value
wonú, to go in
pa, to make (money)
itúmò, meaning
àgbàlágbà, elderly person
òfò, bereavement
omoléhìn, follower, junior
atẹhinkú, death out of turn
ṣàisàn (ṣe aisàn), to be unwell
nígbàt'ó (bá) ẹ, presently

isinkú, funeral
wádí (wá idí), to make enquiries
ogbà, yard, garden; fence
ogbà olópá, police station
k'ágò (ké ágò), to say
ágò, onilé ọ
itẹ, throne, bird's nest
pẹlú, as well, to accompany
jéwó, to confess
ofò, incantation, charm
ijà, fight, quarrel

ijà, fight, quarrel
 ojú á rí nkán, to
 experience something
 unpleasant

dà . . . kọ, to direct . . .
 towards
 d'ojú ijà kọ, to challenge

EXERCISE 18

Translate into English: nígbàtí owó bá tán, ijàngbòndé n'iyen; ẹnít'ó bá rò pé òun'ti gbón tán, kò fẹ gbà ìmòràn; ẹ lè fi iyekíye t'ó bá wù nyín fún mí; ẹnít'ó wù t'ó bá wónú yára yí, k'ò lé e jádè lèsèkésè; mo máa nífi iyekíye tí mo bá pa ránşé sí iyáwó mí; gbogbo nkán tí kò bá yé ẹ tán, k'ò bèrèrè itúmò rẹ l'ówò mí; nígbàt'ó bá dí pé àgbàlágba nşẹ ọfọ ọmọlẹhìn rẹ bá yí, a máa níki i pé ó kú àtẹhinkú; igbàkígba t'ó bá nşàisàn, k'ò yára máa ránşé pé dọkítà wá; nígbàt'ó bá şe, nwọn á şe isinkú bàbá wọn; ọmọdẹ t'ó wù t'ó bá npariwo, máa je ẹ n'iyà dáadáa; máa şe èyítí mo bá lè şe; nígbàtí nwọn bá wádí tán, nwọn ó padà lọ sí ogbà olópá; ẹnít'ó bá máa wólé nilátí k'ágò tẹlẹ; èyít'ó bá tí bàjẹ nínú wọn k'ò jù ú nù; nígbàtí ọba' bá dide lóri itẹ rẹ, kí ẹnyin náà dide pèlú; ẹnítí kò bá jẹwọ, ojú rẹ á rí nkán; ó máa npe ọfọ sí etí ẹnít'ó bá wá dà ojú ijà kọ.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

HABITUAL VERB FORMS

We have seen that the habitual idea is commonly expressed with the *ní-* prefix, sometimes with the addition of *máa*. We deal here with some alternative forms which occur in books and are also used by some Yorubas in speech.

1. Instead of the negative *kò ní-* some Yorubas use *kí í-*, e.g. *kò nńwá(á) kí mí lójoojúmọ, kí iwá(á) kí mí lójoojúmọ* 'he does not come to greet me every day'. This form is also used after the relative word *tí*, e.g. *ẹní tí iwá lójoojúmọ dà* 'where is the person who comes every day?', and also after the emphasising word *ní*, e.g. *òun ní ifún wọn l'óúnjẹ* 'it is she who gives them food'. (Note that *ní í-* is actually pronounced *ní í-*.) This *í-* is normally assimilated in pronunciation to a preceding vowel, though this assimilation may not be shewn in writing. For example, in *aago meló l'ẹ ilọ(ọ) sùn* 'at what o'clock do you retire to sleep?' *ẹ í-* is pronounced *ẹ ẹ-*; in *báyí l'a íşe ẹ* 'it is like this we do it' *a í-* is pronounced *a á-*; in *aşọ tí iyáwó iwọ* 'the clothes which the bride wears' *ó í-* is pronounced *ó ó-*. We can in fact say that what we have here is a prefix which is conventionally written as *í-* but which is actually heard as an extension on high tone of the final vowel of the preceding word.

The main verb is sometimes preceded by *máa*, in which case *í-* is prefixed to this as well, though owing to the assimilation this may not be obvious, e.g. *ohun tí Ójọ ímáa írà* 'what Ojo always buys' would be pronounced colloquially as *ohun t'Ójọ ómáa árà*. The same repetition of the prefix occurs too with other auxiliary verbs which may precede the verb, e.g. *işu kí isí iwọn níbẹ rárá* 'and yams are not scarce there at all', *bí a ití íşe é n'iyí* 'this is how we do it' (for *sí* and *tí* see pp. 203 and 178f.)

2. In positive unemphatic sentences we find in books a particle *a*, often strengthened by the addition of *máa*, the combination being written either *a máa* or *amáa*. This particle is like the negative particles *kò*, *ki* and the future particles *yió*, *á* in not requiring a pronoun in front of it in the third pers. sing., e.g. *a máa fún mi l'ówó lósòsè* 'he gives me money every week'. As this is for many Yorubas a bookish form which they do not use in their own every day speech, it is generally used in an artificial way with the long (emphatic) pronouns even where one would expect the short (unemphatic) forms, e.g. *èmi a máa wẹ lójoojúmọ* 'I have a bath every day'. For some Yorubas, however, it is a colloquial form and these make a distinction between the use of emphatic and unemphatic pronouns in the normal way. The colloquial forms with unemphatic pronouns which are mostly used are given in the sentences:

- m'á máa wẹ agbádá l'ójó isinmi*, I wear an agbada gown on Sundays
a máa wẹ sòkòtò pénpé l'óko, he wears short trousers on the farm
à máa lẹ(ọ) kí i lósòsè, we go to greet him weekly
nwon a máa tà á fún àwon òyinbó, they sell it to the Europeans

The second person pronoun forms are *ò* and *ẹ*, but these are not common since sentences with these pronouns are generally emphatic, e.g. *sé işu l'ẹ ígbìn s'óko yí* 'is it yams you plant in this farm?' (for this use of *sí* see p. 141).

It may be thought that there is some danger of ambiguity between this particle *a* and the future particle *á*, but in ordinary speech there is no difficulty since it is only those Yorubas who use the future in *yió* who use the habitual *a*.

3. A word *sáábà* 'usually' often occurs in habitual sentences, e.g. *kò nsáábà wá l'ójó isinmi/ki isáábà íwá l'ójó isinmi* 'he does not usually come on Sundays', *a à nsáábà fún won l'ówó* 'we do not usually give them money'

(*sáábà í-*, of course, will be actually pronounced *sáábà á-*). When *maa* is used the order is not absolutely fixed, e.g. *mo maa nsáábà rí i*, *mo sáábà maa rí i* are both used for 'I usually see him'.

4. In general descriptions of behaviour, whether referring to the present or the past, the simple future is used, cp. 'if you touch a wasp it will sting you' in English. It is as if a single typical example is described as representative of the whole group, e.g. *ní igbà láílái, bí omọkúnrin bá rí omọbinrin t'ó wù ú, yió/á bá a sọrọ*; *bóyá kò ní(i) fún u l'ési lésèkésè* 'long ago, if a young man saw a girl, he would talk with her; perhaps she would not give him an answer immediately'. If we substitute *lódè òní* 'at the present day' for *ní igbà láílái*, then the whole description, without any further alteration, applies to the present, i.e. 'if a young man sees a girl etc.'.

VOCABULARY

<i>sáábà</i> , usually	<i>ebi</i> , hunger
<i>bí . . . bá</i> , if	<i>fi . . . sùn</i> , to report . . .
<i>bí . . . tí</i> , as, how	to
<i>iyà</i> , suffering, punishment	<i>yo</i> , to come out, bring out
<i>je</i> , to afflict (with <i>iyà</i>)	<i>ẹjọ</i> , case (in court)
<i>ariwo</i> , noise	<i>olúwarẹ</i> , person concerned
<i>kówẹ (kọ iwé)</i> , to study	<i>ọràn</i> , matter, affair
<i>lrési</i> , rice	<i>onílẹ</i> , householder
<i>şài</i> , to fail to	<i>rẹ</i> , to go
<i>tójú</i> , to prepare, look	<i>dá . . . silẹ</i> , to cause,
after	found
<i>bẹ . . . l'ówẹ</i> , to ask for—	<i>elẹpo</i> , oil-seller
<i>ówẹ</i> , cooperative help	<i>àlá</i> , white cloth
<i>lùlù (lù ilù)</i> , to drum	<i>àlá</i> , dream
<i>pitàn (pa itàn)</i> , to tell	<i>lá</i> , to dream
stories	<i>apó</i> , quiver
<i>gbìn</i> , to plant	<i>ibínú</i> , anger
<i>ọkàn</i> , heart	<i>ohùn</i> , voice
<i>tàn . . . je</i> , to deceive	<i>obi</i> , cola-nut
<i>ájọ</i> , travel	<i>ápò</i> , bag, pocket, purse

EXERCISE 19

Translate into English: a kò nsáàbà maa wò aṣò òyìnbó; a kì ilò ó l'áiyé isisiyi; ng kì ijékí iyà kán jẹ ajá yì rará; ariwo tí nwọn npa kì ijékí ènià lè kówě rará; oḅè ata l'a maa nsáàbà jẹ nígbànáá; nwọn kì isáàbà ijẹ irẹsi l'áārò; àgbè kì isàl tójú óúnjẹ fún àwọn t'ó bá bẹ l'òwè; kíl'e maa nṣe lálalalè? à maa lùlù, à maa pítàn, à sì maa jó; kí'l'ò maa ngbin s'óko yì? m'á maa gbìn àgbàdo àti èwà; okàn kì itàn mí jẹ; bí ènikan'ba kojá, kò ní(i) yò sí i; bí ènikèni'ba dá ljà sílẹ, nwọn á lọ fi ejọ olúwarè sùn àwọn olópá; ebi kì iwonú kì òràn miràn wò ó; àjò kì idùn kì onilé má rẹ ilé; a kì iwò aṣò alá k'á jókò sí isò elépo; alá tí ajá bá lá, inú ajá ni ígbé; ilú kì ikéré k'ó má ní ààtàn; ibinú ni iyọ qfà l'ápò, ohùn rere ni iyọ obi l'ápò.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

20

THE NUMERALS

The lower Yoruba numerals are easy to understand and simple to operate but as we get into higher numbers we find that they get very complicated, so much so that many Yorubas now cannot use them and turn to English. The system developed during the time that cowry shells were used as currency. These were arranged in piles and strings of varying amounts and by additions and subtractions any required sum could be arrived at. This explains why subtraction plays such an important role in the system. Cowry shells have now disappeared from use as money but various expressions survive which bear witness to their former importance. One form of the numerals actually contains the word *owó* 'money', originally 'cowry money', fused with the basic numeral word; this is the form which is generally used in teaching arithmetic to Yoruba children.

The various forms of the numerals are:

(a) The basic form, used in counting. Apart from *eni* 'one', all the numerals in this form have a *low* tone initial vowel. For practical purposes a learner hardly needs to master this form since he can do the counting in English in his head, but a knowledge of the form helps one to understand how the other forms are built up.

(b) The 'total' form, derived from the basic form (except in the case of 'one', which is a completely different word) by adding *m* and substituting a *high* tone for the initial low tone, e.g. *èjì, méjì* 'two'. The word for 'one' has two forms—*òkan* (dialect variant *ikan*) used independently, e.g. *òkan kò dára* 'one is no good', and *kán* used with a preceding noun, e.g. *eja kán kò tó* 'one fish is not enough'. The other 'total' forms are used indifferently either with nouns (including emphatic

pronouns) or independently, e.g. *ṣilẹ̀ mètá'tó* '3/- is enough', *mètá'tó* 'three are enough'.

(c) The 'cowry' form, in which the word *owó* is fused with the numeral. Apart from *oókán* 'one cowry', in which merely the *w* is dropped, the vowels of *owó* are assimilated to the initial vowel of the numeral while retaining the tone pattern, e.g. *eéjì* 'two cowries'.

(d) The ordinal form, which has a low tone prefix vowel when used independently but which drops this prefix when used with a noun, though the effect of its low tone is retained on the mid tone of the following syllable. As this mid tone itself has been superimposed on the low tone of the basic form (except in the case of 'first') we hear a sequence of modified tones, e.g. in *omọ̀ kẹ̀tá* 'the third child' the modified tone of *kẹ̀-* shows the influence of the low tone prefix of the independent form *ẹ̀kẹ̀tá*, while the further modification on *-tá* shows the influence of the suppressed low tone of the basic form *ẹ̀ta*. It is actually possible, e.g. in *omọ̀ mí kẹ̀tá* 'my third child', to have a sequence of three successively flattened mid tones.

The complete series of numerals up to 10 is:

	<i>Basic</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Cowry</i>	<i>Ordinal</i>
1	<i>enì</i>	<i>ọ̀kan, kán</i>	<i>oókán</i>	<i>ẹ̀kíni, kíni</i>
2	<i>èjì</i>	<i>méjì</i>	<i>eéjì</i>	<i>ẹ̀kejì, kẹ̀jì</i>
3	<i>ẹ̀ta</i>	<i>mètá</i>	<i>ẹ̀ẹ̀tá</i>	<i>ẹ̀kẹ̀tá, kẹ̀tá</i>
4	<i>ẹ̀rin</i>	<i>mẹ̀rin</i>	<i>ẹ̀ẹ̀rin</i>	<i>ẹ̀kẹ̀rin, kẹ̀rin</i>
5	<i>árún</i>	<i>márún</i>	<i>aárún</i>	<i>ẹ̀karún, kàrún</i>
6	<i>ẹ̀fá</i>	<i>mẹ̀fá</i>	<i>ẹ̀ẹ̀fá</i>	<i>ẹ̀kẹ̀fá, kẹ̀fá</i>
7	<i>ẹ̀je</i>	<i>mẹ̀je</i>	<i>eéje</i>	<i>ẹ̀kejẹ, kẹ̀jẹ</i>
8	<i>ẹ̀jọ̀</i>	<i>mẹ̀jọ̀</i>	<i>ẹ̀ẹ̀jọ̀</i>	<i>ẹ̀kejọ̀, kẹ̀jọ̀</i>
9	<i>ẹ̀sán</i>	<i>mẹ̀sán</i>	<i>ẹ̀ẹ̀sán</i>	<i>ẹ̀kẹ̀sán, kẹ̀sán</i>
10	<i>ẹ̀wá</i>	<i>mẹ̀wá</i>	<i>ẹ̀ẹ̀wá</i>	<i>ẹ̀kẹ̀wá, kẹ̀wá</i>

From here on we shall give only the 'total' forms except in cases where the other forms present some irregularity.

11	<i>mókánlá</i>	11 to 14 are contracted forms meaning '1 over 10' etc.
12	<i>mẹ̀jílá</i>	

- 13 *mètálá*
- 14 *mẹ̀rinlá*
- 15 *mẹ̀ẹ̀dógún*
- 16 *mẹ̀rinlílógún*
- 17 *mètádílógún*
- 18 *mẹ̀jídílógún*
- 19 *mókándílógún*
- 20 *ogún*

15 is a contracted form meaning '5 short of 20' and 16 to 19 are longer forms meaning '4 short of 20' etc., *dí* being a variant of *dín* 'to reduce, be short of'.

ogún '20' is a noun like English 'a score' and is placed before any accompanying noun, e.g. *ogún ènià* '20 people, a score of people'. The ordinal is expressed by a relative clause, e.g. *èyí t'ó ẹ̀ ogún* 'the one that makes 20, the twentieth', or *ogún* may be placed *after* the noun, e.g. *ènià ogún* 'the twentieth person'. The 'cowry' form is *okòò*.

- 21 *mókànlélógún*
- 22 *mẹ̀jílélógún*
- 23 *mètálélógún*
- 24 *mẹ̀rinlélógún*
- 25 *mẹ̀ẹ̀dógbọ̀n*
- 26 *mẹ̀rinlíggbọ̀n*
- 27 *mètádílogbọ̀n*
- 28 *mẹ̀jídílogbọ̀n*
- 29 *mókándílogbọ̀n*
- 30 *ogbọ̀n*

ogbọ̀n '30' is a noun (like *ogún*) and is placed in front of its noun, e.g. *ogbọ̀n ènià* '30 people'. The ordinal is formed in the same way as with *ogún*. The 'cowry' form is *ogbọ̀n ọ̀*. *mẹ̀ẹ̀dógbọ̀n* '25' is contracted like *mẹ̀ẹ̀dógún*; there are no more contracted '5' forms after this.

From 40 up to 180 the even tens are formed by multiplying 20 by 2, 3, 4 etc. The odd tens are formed by contracted subtractions of 10 from the next higher even ten. The intermediate numbers are formed as before by adding up to 4 and then subtracting 5, 4 etc.

40	<i>ogójl</i>	120	<i>ogófá</i>
50	<i>àádótá</i>	130	<i>àádójẹ</i>
60	<i>ogótá</i>	140	<i>ogójẹ</i>
70	<i>àádórin</i>	150	<i>àádójọ̀</i>
80	<i>ogórin</i>	160	<i>ogójọ̀</i>
90	<i>àádórún</i>	170	<i>àádósán</i>
100	<i>ogórún</i>	180	<i>ogósán</i>

110 *áádófá*
56 *mérindilógótá*

153 *mètáléáádójò*

After 30 there are no special 'cowry' forms. 200 is a new basic word, *igba*, which enters into the system at 190—*igba 'dín mēwá* '200 short by 10'. 300 and 400 are basic words, but after that the even hundreds up to 2000 are multiplications of 200 and the odd hundreds are formed by subtraction.

300	<i>òḡdúnrún</i>	1200	<i>egbēfá</i>
400	<i>irinwó</i>	1300	<i>èḡḡḡḡbēje</i>
500	<i>èḡḡḡḡbēta</i>	1400	<i>egbēje</i>
600	<i>egbēta</i>	1500	<i>èḡḡḡḡbējò</i>
700	<i>èḡḡḡḡbērin</i>	1600	<i>egbējò</i>
800	<i>egbērin</i>	1700	<i>èḡḡḡḡbēsán</i>
900	<i>èḡḡḡḡbērún</i>	1800	<i>egbēsán</i>
1000	<i>egbērún</i>	1900	<i>èḡḡḡḡbēwá</i>
1100	<i>èḡḡḡḡbēfá</i>	2000	<i>egbāá (egbēwá)</i>

When the cowry currency was given up, a sack of 20,000 cowries was taken as equivalent to 5/0d, which makes 2000 cowries worth 6d. *egbāá* was, until recently at any rate, still used by some Yorubas instead of the loan-word *sísi* and *òkẹ́ kán* 'one sack' was used for 5/0d, and so on.

egbāá is now in its turn made a unit of multiplication to take us up to 20,000, with the odd thousands formed by subtraction.

3,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāaji</i>	12,000	<i>egbāafá</i>
4,000	<i>egbāaji</i>	13,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāajé</i>
5,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāatá</i>	14,000	<i>egbāajé</i>
6,000	<i>egbāatá</i>	15,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāajò</i>
7,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāarin</i>	16,000	<i>egbāajò</i>
8,000	<i>egbāarin</i>	17,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāasán</i>
9,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāarún</i>	18,000	<i>egbāasán</i>
10,000	<i>egbāarún</i>	19,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāawá</i>
11,000	<i>èḡḡḡḡbāafá</i>	20,000	<i>egbāawá</i> or <i>òkẹ́ kán</i>

In the higher numbers there is no fixed order and often there are two alternative ways of expressing a number according to whether one adds from below or subtracts from above. The system is extremely cumbersome and is now for practical purposes obsolete. Further details may be found in 'A Dictionary of Modern Yoruba', by R. C. Abraham.*

Corresponding to the numerals there is a series *èlò*, *mélò* 'how many?', *eélò* (the 'cowry' form) 'how much (money)?', *èkèlò*, *kèlò* 'which in order?'. Of these the most commonly occurring are *mélò* and *eélò*; *èlò* is occasionally heard instead of the latter.

ìṣu mélò l'ò maa rà? how many yams are you going to buy?

ènìà mélò l'ó wá sí ipadé náá? how many people came to the meeting?

eélò ní? how much is it?

eélò ní gbogbo rẹ? how much is it all?

eélò l'ò maa fún mí? how much will you give me?

To translate 'how much worth?' we add the 'possessive' prefix *oní* (see p. 183), which combined with *eélò* produces *eléélò* 'having how much (value)?'. This can be used independently or qualifying a noun.

eléélò l'ò fẹ? how much worth do you want?

eran eléélò l'ó maa rà l'òjá lóní? how much worth of meat are you going to buy in the market today?

Answers to *eélò ní?* might be *kòbò méjì* '2d', *tórò* '3d', *kòbò méréin* '4d', *sísi* '6d', *náí* '9d', *ṣìlè kan* '1/0d', *ṣìlè kan ààbò* '1/6d' ('one shilling a half'—no word 'and' is used with *ààbò*; but, on the other hand, *ṣìlè kan àti kòbò kan*, *ṣìlè kan àti tórò*, *ṣìlè kan àti náí*), *pónùn méjì ààbò* '£2-10-0', *pónùn méréin àti ṣìlè méréin* '£4-4-0'. Answers to questions containing *eléélò*, on the other hand, would be of the form *oní-kòbò méjì*, *oní-ṣìlè kan* and so on. (*oní* is in such cases actually written as a separate word.)

It should be noted that some Yorubas do not use the

* See Postscript, p. 220.

oní prefix in this way and add the price directly to the preceding noun, e.g. *eran šilè métá* '3/0d worth of meat'. If the noun is not expressed, the possessive *ti* is used, e.g. *ti šilè márùn* '5/0d's worth'.

Distribution is expressed by doubling the numeral or word denoting value. The doubled form of *òkan*, *kán* is *òkòkan*, *kòkan*.

fún wọn ní méjì méjì, give them two each
fún wọn ní šilè kòkan, give them a shilling each
nwọn tò ní métá métá, they formed up in threes
pònú méré méré ní, they are £4 each
mélò mélò ní kí n fún wọn? how many each should I give them?
eélélò ní kí n fún wọn?, how much each should I give them?

Notice the difference between *eélélò?* 'how much each?' and *elélélò?* 'how much worth?'; *eélélò* is a contracted doubled form representing *eélò eélò*. Another word with a contracted double form is *epinni* '½d', which forms *epèepinni*, as in *epèepinni ní* 'they are a ha'penny each'. Words like *tóró*, on the other hand, are doubled completely, e.g. *tóró tóró ní* 'they are 3d each'.

Another reduplicated series goes *méjèjè* 'both', *métèèta* 'all three', *méréèrin* 'all four', *máraàrún* 'all five' and so on.

fún mí ní méjèjè, give me both
òkúnrin l'àwọn métèèta, all three were boys (males)

With 15 and 25 we must use *gbogbo* 'all' and also with any numeral which does not begin with *m-*, e.g. *gbogbo méédógún l'ó ló* 'all fifteen went', *gbogbo(o) wa ogún l'a ló* 'all twenty of us went'.

Corresponding to English 'once', 'twice', 'three times', etc. we have *èèkan*, *èèméjì*, *èèmétá* and so on. The *èè-* in these words is contracted from *èrin-*, which is sometimes written. They frequently occur as adverbial extensions with *ní*, written as one word, e.g. *l'èèkan*, *l'èèméjì*. The *èè-* element is also combined with the ordinal series, e.g.

èèkíní 'the first time', *èèkéjì* 'the second time' and so on. Occasionally we find such forms preceded by *igbà* 'time, occasion', e.g. *ní igbà èèkíní tí mo rí i* 'on the occasion of the first time that I saw him'.

Fractions are of the form *idáji* 'a half', *idátá* 'a third', *idárin* 'a fourth' and so on or, alternatively, *idá métá*, *idá méré* and so on—there being no fuller form for 'a half'. Note that there are two words for 'a half'—*ààbò* and *idáji*. *ààbò*, as we have already seen, is used after whole numerals and is added on without any connecting word, e.g. *šilè méjè ààbò* '7/6d', *aago méfà ààbò* 'half past six' (for clock time see p. 114). It is also used in the expression *ààbò èkó* 'half, incomplete education' and in the proverb which begins *ààbò òrò l'a nso fún omoluwábi . . .* 'it is half a word we say to a gentleman . . .'. Examples of the use of *idáji* are *fún mí ní idáji rẹ* 'give me half of it', *ó kún dé idáji* 'it is half full' (lit. 'reach half').

In multiplication and division the word *òná* 'way' is used, e.g. *egbèrún l'òná egbèrún jẹ miliònú* 'a thousand times a thousand is a million', *pín owó yí s'òná méré dógbadógba* 'divide this money into four equally', *eélò ní òná kòkan?* 'how much is each part, section?'

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

<i>rò . . . mó</i> , to add (numbers) to	<i>eyin</i> , egg
<i>yọ . . . kúrò nínú</i> , to subtract from	<i>mòwé</i> , to be literate
<i>báńki</i> , bank	<i>èsúsú, èésú</i> , thrift club
<i>òpá</i> , stick, baton, yard	<i>dá èésú</i> , pay in to thrift club
length	<i>péré</i> , (emphasises fewness)
<i>máílì, méèlì</i> , mile	<i>sošo</i> , (emphasises singleness)
<i>lgàn</i> , piece	<i>sí í</i> , to it, more
<i>pín</i> , to divide, distribute	<i>tenumó</i> , to emphasise
<i>dógbadógba</i> , equally	<i>gbé sí</i> , to perish in
<i>àarin</i> , middle, amongst	<i>ogun</i> , war
<i>šéńjì</i> , change (money)	<i>šugà</i> , sugar
<i>kòrẹ́nsì</i> , paper money	<i>nikan</i> , alone

EXERCISE 20

Translate into English: rò eṣṣán mọ eṣṣín, ó di eélò? ó di eṣṣàlá; yọ eṣṣé kúrò nínú eṣṣíllá, ó kù eélò? ó kù aárún; mo ní oḡḡfà pónùn ní báńkí, mo gbà pónùn mārúndí-lógórin, eélò l'ó kù? ó kù pónùn mārúndí-láádótá; òpá mélé l'ó nṣe mállí (mèṣèll) kan? èṣéḡgbṣán òpá ó lé l'òḡótá; òpá mélé l'ó wà nínú igàn aṣọ yí? mo pín ṣìlè mèḡḡdógún dógbadógba láárín oḡḡdè mètá—eélò ní oḡḡdè kòḡkan'rí gbà? bí mo bá rà adíḡ mèṣíllá ní pónùn mèṣé àtí ṣìlè kan, eélò ní adíḡ kòḡkan? ṣìlè mókànlá àtí náí; ṣṣéńjì eélò ní ng ó gbà nínú kòrénṣí onípónùn mārún bí mo bá rà eṣín adíḡ ní ṣìlè mèṣídlógún? o ó gbà pónùn mṣérín àtí ṣìlè mèṣí; àwà mètèṣṣeta l'a lo(o) padé rẹ l'Èkò; àwọn mèṣéṣṣí mowé dáadáa; eṣín mélé l'e dá èṣṣú yí? àwà mṣéwá ní; mállí mélé ní láti Èkó sí Ibádán? ó jù oḡḡrún mállí lo diḡ; èḡmṣéjì péré ní mo dé ibè; fún u ní mèṣí sí i; mo tṣenumó o lṣṣèkan sí i pé o kò gbòḡ lo; idá mṣérín àwọn ará llú yí l'ó gbé s'ogun yí; eṣíllá l'ónà mārún jé oḡótá; mo fún àwọn oḡḡdè mṣéwá yí ní ṣìlè mèṣí ààbò mèṣí ààbò; ṣìlè kan péré ní mo ná; oḡḡ kánṣoṣo l'ó bí; mo rà ṣúḡà oní-ṣìlè mèṣí àtí àkà'á òyìnbó oní-ṣìlè mètá; iyánà kelò l'ápá òtún ní kí ng gtà? igi kṣétá kṣétá ní k'ò gé lùlè; èmi nikanṣoṣo ní mo únḡbé yàrá yí.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

21

SEASONS, TIMES, MEASURES

1. There are no old names for the months in common use though some may be found as antiquarian curiosities in books. In newspapers January is referred to as **Oṣù kíńí** **òdún** 'first month of the year' and so on. Yorubas tend to think more in terms of seasons rather than months. There are two main seasons, **èṣṣrún** 'dry season' from about the middle of October to the middle of April and **àkókò òjò** 'period of rain' during the other half of the year. Another name for the 'dry season' is **ògbèlè**. In the middle of the 'period of rain' there is a dry but cloudy season called **òwòrẹ**.

2. The Yoruba week consisted originally of four days and there are many recurring markets which are held every fourth, every eighth or every sixteenth day. Yoruba names have been found for the days of the seven-day week. These are used in some newspapers but they are not generally known. These are:

Sunday	Ojò àikú	Day of immortality
Monday	Ojò ajé	Day of profit
Tuesday	Ojò iségun	Day of victory
Wednesday	Ojò ríru, Ojòóru	Day of confusion
Thursday	Ojòbò or Ojò àṣṣédáiyé	Day of creation
Friday	Ojò eti	Day of failure
Saturday	Ojò àbámétá	Day of three meetings

More commonly used are names derived from English or Arabic (through Muslim influence). Sunday is **Ojò/ijó** **òṣṣé** or **Ojò** **òṣṣé** **onígabgbó** 'day of Christian weekly festival' or **Ojò isimi** 'day of rest'. The remaining days may be called **Ojò kéjì** **òṣṣé** 'second day of the week' and so on, but **Mòndé**, **Tòṣṣé** (Thursday) and **Sátídé** often

occur. The commonest names of Arabic origin are *Àlámìsì* 'Thursday' and *Jímòò* 'Friday', while *Àtúní* 'Monday', *Àtálátá* 'Tuesday' and *Àlárùba* 'Wednesday' also occur.

It should be noted that in counting days forward or backward Yoruba includes the day from which the count is made, so that in translating into English one day has to be subtracted and vice-versa. Counting forward we have *lóní* 'today', *lólá* 'tomorrow', *lótúnla* 'the day after tomorrow', *ní ojú/íjò mērin òní* 'in three days time' and so on. Counting backward we have *lóní, láná* 'yesterday', *n'íjètá* 'two days ago, the day before yesterday', *n'íjérin* 'three days ago' and so on. Note the series *íjètá, íjérin, íjarún* etc. which presumably contains the word *íjò* 'day' condensed with the numeral though the *i-* has low tone.

The 'day before Christmas' is expressed by *Kérésimesi'kù olá* 'Christmas is short (by) tomorrow', 'two days before Christmas' by *Kérésimesi' kù òtúnla* and so on. The 'day after Christmas' is expressed by *ojò kẹ́jì K.* 'the second day of Christmas', 'two days after etc.' by *ojò kẹ́tá K.* 'the third day etc.'.

3. To shew clock time we use the word *agogo, aago*, which originally meant 'bell' but has now acquired in addition the meaning 'clock, watch', e.g. *agogo owo* 'hand-watch, i.e. wrist-watch'. In asking the time one says *aago melò ní!* 'how many bells is it?'. The answer on the hour would be *aago mètá ní* 'it is 3 o'clock' and so on. Before the hour it would be *aago mètá' kù isẹ́jú mēwá* 'it is 10 minutes to 3', lit. '3 o'clock is short 10 minutes', and so on. After the hour it would be *aago mērin' kojá isẹ́jú méjilá* 'it is 12 minutes past 4', lit. '4 o'clock is past 12 minutes', and so on. The word *ààbò* is used for 'half past', e.g. *aago márún ààbò* 'half past 5', while for a 'quarter' *isẹ́jú mēédógún* '15 minutes' is general, e.g. *aago mètá' kojá isẹ́jú mēédógún ní* 'it is a quarter past 6'.

Similar expressions are used in such sentences as 'the train will start at 5 o'clock, at 12 minutes past 7, at 20 minutes to 8'—*okò á sí l'áago márún, l'áago méjé' kojá*

isẹ́jú méjilá, l'áago méjò'kù ogún isẹ́jú. A different form of expression, however, using the verb *lù* 'to strike' is used in such sentences as 'let us hurry, it is already 4 o'clock'—*ẹ jẹk'á yára, aago mērin'ti lù*—and the corresponding questions, e.g. *njẹ aago mēsán ti lù* 'is it 9 o'clock?'. Sentences like 'it is already 10 to 2' and 'it is already 10 past 2' are more complicated. The first could be *isẹ́jú mēwá pére l'ó mà kù kí aago méjì lù!* 'only ten minutes remain that 2 o'clock strike!' or one might hear *aago méjì' mà ti fẹ(ẹ) lù!* '2 o'clock already wants to strike! it remains only 10 minutes'. The second would be *aago méjì' mà ti lù!* '2 o'clock already has already struck! it has already past 10 minutes'. Note that the use of *kù* 'to remain' is not restricted to these situations; one might get an answer *ó kù diẹ kí aago mètá lù* 'it is nearly 3 o'clock' in reply to *aago melò ní*.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

4. Foodstuffs are still generally sold by value, e.g. *eran oní-şilè kan* 'a shilling's worth of meat'; in the case of things like flour this will be fixed according to the size of the container. English weights are used in selling produce like cocoa. Note *ẹsún* 'pound', lit. 'push', i.e. a degree on the bar of the weighing machines used at rail and other depots. For 'stone' and 'quarter' the borrowed words *sítónù* and *kótá* are used, but for 'hundredweight' there is *òkúta* 'stone, rock'. This can be confusing!

5. English measures of length are used; 'inch' is *ínşì*, 'foot' is *esè bàtà* 'foot of shoe', 'yard' is *òpá* 'walking-stick, baton' and 'mile' is *mẹ̀fẹ̀lì, máílì*, though in books we sometimes find *ibùşò* 'stopping point'.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

àgbẹ, farmer
olídé, holiday

mọşáláşì, mosque
parí, to complete, finish

kirùn, to recite Moslem prayers
fẹ̀, to be broad
Iléyá, Greater Bairam festival

ara mi'dá, I am well
l'òhùn (of time) next but one

EXERCISE 21

Translate into English: aago márùn ààbò l'a maa n̄s̄iwò n'ibi isẹ wa; aago mélò ni kí ng wá(á) jí nyín lólá? ó di ijò m̄erin òní kí n tó lè dá àáké nàà padà; àgbè kò n̄ri àyè jókò gelete s'ilé l'ákòkò òjò; mo rò pé a ó gbà oḷidé ni oḷún lléyá kù oṭúnla; ijò tí mo maa lọ sí ilú òyínbó kù ijò m̄éfá ni bàbá mi'kú; mo fẹ́ kí f̄erèsé kòḷkan ó ga ní esẹ batá m̄erin k'ó sí fẹ́ ní esẹ batá méji; isẹjú mélò l'ó kù n̄isisiyí kí aago m̄etá lù? nígbàtí mo rí i n'ijárùn, ara rẹ́ kò dá rárá; àwọn Imàle'maa n̄lo(o) kirùn ní m̄òs̄alás̄i ní ojò Jimòḷ; n̄wón kó omọ nàà jádè ní ijò Iṣẹgun, tí isẹ ijò k̄erindilògbòn osù t'ó kojá; mo rò pé òjò ó bèrè l'òs̄ù tí mbò l'òhùn; òkúta kòkò mélò ni n̄wón rà l'òwò rẹ́ l'ès̄in? ó tí parí gbogbo isẹ́ rẹ́ kí aago márùn to lù; ijò mélò ni oḷún Kérésimesi'fi kojá lóni? yió tó ijò m̄erin k'ó to lè padà.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT QUESTIONS

Where in English we use in direct questions such words as 'who? what? which? etc.', we generally use the same words in the corresponding indirect questions, e.g. 'who did it? I want to know who did it; which did he buy? I do not know which he bought'. In Yoruba, however, there is usually a change; the question word is dropped and the relative word **tí** is substituted, along with appropriate other changes, e.g. **nígbàwo** (ní igbà wo) l'o dé? 'at-what-time (when) did you arrive?', **ng kò m̄ò igbàt'ó dé** 'I do not know the time-that he arrived'. (You will remember that in certain cases **tí** is written as one word with its antecedent, p. 89.) We give a list of some direct question words and their corresponding relative forms. Note that all the direct question words are followed by **ni**, i.e. they are emphatic.

kíní , what?	ohun/nkàn tí , the thing that
kíl'ó fẹ́? what does he want?	
bí í léèrè ohun t'ó fẹ́ , ask him what he wants	
tani , who?	enití , the person that
tal'ẹ́ bá n̄ibè? who did you come across there?	
mo fẹ́(é) m̄ò enit'ẹ́ bá n̄ibè , I want to know who you came across there	
èwo , which one?	èyítí , the one that
èwo l'o maa rà? which one are you going to buy?	
kò fẹ́(é) sọ èyít'ó maa rà fún mi , he won't tell me which one he is going to buy	
wò , which? what?	tí , that
ilé wò l'o n̄gbé? which house do you live in?	
a kò m̄ò ilé t'ó n̄gbé , we do not know which house he lives in	
wò is the dependent form of èwo (see p. 30).	

mélò, how many? *iyé . . . tí*, the number that
 ènià mélò l'ò ñgbé Ibàdàn? how many people live at
 Ibadan?
 ñjé ẹ mọ iyé ènià t'ó ñgbé Ibàdàn? do you know how
 many people live at Ibadan?
 eélò, how much money? *iyé owó tí*, the amount of
 money that
 eélò l'ò ná?, how much did you spend?
 tani mọ iyé owó t'ó ná, who knows how much money
 he spent?
 níbo, ibo, where? *ibítí*, the place that
 níbo l'ó gbé wà? where is it?
 apá ibo l'ó gbà lọ? in which direction did he go?
 mo fé mọ ibít'ó gbé wà, I want to know where it is
 ñjé o lè sọ apá ibít'ó gbà lọ fún mí? can you tell me which
 direction he went?

In line with the last example *inú àpótí wó?* 'inside which box?' becomes *inú àpótí tí, ilé tani?* 'whose house?' becomes *ilé ẹnítí* and so on.

The question words 'how?' and 'why?' present some complications and are left to be dealt with later.

Direct questions of the type *ş'ò rí i* 'did you see him?' are made indirect in a way very similar to English, the word *bí* 'if' being used to introduce the clause.

ş'ò fé(é) rà á, do you want to buy it?
bí i léèrè b'ó bá fé(é) rà á, ask him if he wants to buy it

The indirect question, as in the above example, is generally 'indefinite', i.e. it contains *bá* between the subject and the verb, unless some part of the sentence is emphasised with *ni*. In this case the form of the indirect question may depend to some extent on the form of the direct.

sé iwọ l'ò fọ ọ? was it you broke it?
bí i léèrè b'óún l'ò fọ ọ, ask him if it was he broke it
sé işu l'ò fé?, is it yams you want?
bí i léèrè b'şu l'ò fé, ask him if it is yams he wants
ñjé işu ní? is it yam, I wonder?
bèèrè b'şu bá ní, ask if it is yam

The last example shows that the 'indefinite' *bá* used with *ni* corresponds with the tentative direct question expressed by the use of *ñjé*, while the more confident questions asked with *şé* are reflected in the absence of *bá* in the first examples.

In double questions *bá* is not used.

ògèdè l'ò maa rà àbí ọpe-òyinbó ní? is it bananas you are going to buy or pine-apples?
bèèrè bí ọgèdè l'ò maa rà bí ọpe-òyinbó ní, ask if it is bananas he is going to buy etc.

Notice the slight variation at the beginning of the second clause, where *àbí* is replaced by *bí*. The repetition of *bí* at the beginning of each clause in the indirect question is more usual, but *àbí* sometimes occurs.

Perhaps because so many Yorubas are becoming bilingual, there is a tendency nowadays towards using constructions which seem to be reflections of the English usage, i.e. the use of the direct question words, introduced by *pé* 'saying', instead of the relative *tí*, e.g. *ó bí mí léèrè pé kını mo fé* instead of *ó bí mí léèrè ohun tí mo fé* for 'he asked me what I wanted'. In some cases this 'quotation' method is actually more economical than the alternative. For example, a direct question of the type *şé kí m mú u wá* 'shall I bring it in?' would naturally be rendered *ó bèèrè bí mo bá fé kí òun mú u wá* 'he asked if I wanted him to bring it in' in the indirect form, but it could also be rendered *ó bèèrè pé şé kí òun mú u wá* 'he asked if he was to bring it in'.

The verb *bí . . . léèrè* is lit. 'ask . . . in a question (*ní èèrè*)'. In *bèèrè* the *bí* is compounded with *èèrè*, so that it means lit. 'ask question'. This can be followed by *l'ówó* 'at the hand of', e.g. *ó bèèrè l'ówó mí bí mo bá mọ ọ rí* 'he asked at my hand if I was acquainted with him (knew him before)', which is equivalent to *ó bí mí léèrè bí* etc. But *ó bèèrè nkán l'ówó mí* can mean 'he asked for something from me' as well as 'he enquired about something from me'. *ó bí mí léèrè nkán*, however, can have only the latter meaning.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

bóyá, perhaps	ilèkè, bead
yí . . . ká, to go round	ilé aiyé, the world
àkiyèsí, attention, notice	oore, good turn
sọ, to throw	yàn, to choose

EXERCISE 22

Translate into English: mo bèèrè l'ówọ rẹ pé bóyá ó lè mú mí yí ilú náà ká; ó tún bèèrè bí iyá yí tún ní ọmọ mirán l'áiyé; kò lè rántí ibit'ó fi ilèkè pamọ sí; ng kò mọ nkán tí mo maa fún wọn je; ó bí mí léèrè bí ọúnjẹ tí òun'bù'tó tàbí kò tó; mo bèèrè iye owó tí yíó tà ọkan nínú wọn fún mí; nwọn sọ itàn nkán tí ojù àwon'tí rí s'èhín fún ara wọn; ñjẹ ẹ tí pinnu àkókò t'ẹ maa lo? tan' mọ iye ọdún tí òun'maa gbé l'óri ilẹ aiyé? ó úronú ohun t'ó dé bá òun; ñjẹ o mọ iye aago tí nwọn maa ñšiwọ ní ibi-ìşẹ yí? ó bèèrè irú oore tí òun'lè şe fún mí; kò mọ èyít'ó yẹ kí òun yàn; ng kò mọ bí ibi-ìşẹ ní nwọn ñlọ bí ilẹ ní; kò lè rántí ọdọ ẹnítí àbúrò rẹ ñgbé; ó yẹ k'ò şe àkiyèsí irú aşọ tí nwọn wọ; ó bá iwé rẹ nibítí nwọn gbé sọ ọ sí.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

23

ADJECTIVES

We have seen that the basic forms of common descriptive words are verbs, e.g. kéré 'be small', ga 'be lofty'. From these verbs are regularly derived words which function like English adjectives. This is done by prefixing a high tone syllable which has the vowel í and the same consonant as the first syllable of the verb, e.g. ipò gíga 'lofty position', ọtí lílẹ 'strong liquor' (lẹ 'be hard, strong'), ọúnjẹ dídún 'tasty food', ọrà tító 'straight road', omi kíkòrò 'bitter water', ọbẹ mírú 'sharp knife.'

Some common adjectival forms are more or less irregular:

dára, 'be fine, good, nice'	dáradára (the regular dídára also occurs)
kéré, 'be small'	kékeré
tóbi 'be big'	ńlá (títóbi also occurs)
kúrú, 'be short'	kúkúrú
burú, 'be bad, nasty, wicked'	búburú and also burúkú
pọ, 'be much, many'	púpọ (pípọ also occurs)
tutù, 'be cold, damp'	tútù (perhaps from títutù)

In a few cases the adjectival form is the same as the verb:

dúdú, 'be dark, black' and also 'dark, black'
pupa, 'be red' and 'red'
funfun, 'be white' and 'white'
titun, tuntun, 'be new' and 'new'

2. Besides these common words there is a large number of adjectives which are not derived from verbs. When we want to use one of these words in a statement we generally add the verb rí, which is one of the verbs correspond-

ing to English 'to be' (see p. 154), e.g. *àwò roboto* 'a round dish', *ó rí roboto* 'it is round', *yàrá wúruwùru* 'an untidy room', *ó rí wúruwùru* 'it is untidy'. These words are all 'phonaesthetic', i.e. they convey to the Yoruba ear some idea of their meaning by their sound, just as in English such words as 'slither', 'zigzag' do. More will be said about these words later.

Some phonaesthetic words may be used with *ṣe* instead of *rí*, e.g. *ó rí ṣákìṣàkì*, *ó ṣe ṣákìṣàkì* 'it is rough, shaggy'. The non-phonaesthetic word *pàtáki* 'important'* also takes *ṣe*. The common word *díè* 'few, some', on the other hand, cannot be used in this sort of statement at all. The Yoruba for 'they are few' is *nwọ̀n kò pọ̀ rára* 'they are not many at all'.

3. Descriptive verbs made up of *ní* 'to have' plus a noun, e.g. *lágbara* 'be powerful, strong' have no adjectival forms of the sort described. One uses instead either a relative clause, e.g. *ọ̀kúnrin t'ó lágbara* 'a man who is powerful' or a noun form meaning 'one who has ...', e.g. *alágbára* 'one who has power'. These forms are explained in detail later on page 183, while the possible variations in word order—*ọ̀kúnrin alágbára* or *alágbára ọ̀kúnrin*—are referred to below.

In the case of *léwà* 'have beauty, be beautiful' the noun form in use is a completely different word—*arẹ̀wà*—so that one says either, e.g. *obinrin t'ó léwà* or *arẹ̀wà obinrin/obinrin arẹ̀wà* for 'a beautiful woman'.

It should be noted that, even where an adjectival form is in use, Yoruba often prefers to use a relative clause, which adds a certain amount of emphasis to the qualifying word, e.g. *mo rà aṣọ kán t'ó dára* instead of *mo rà aṣọ dáadáa kán*. This construction is obligatory if the 'adjective' is qualified in certain ways, e.g. one can only say *mo rà aṣọ kán t'ó dára púpọ̀*. It is also usual with a sequence of such words, e.g. for 'I saw two big black snakes' one says *mo rí eṣò méjì t'ó dúdú t'ó sí tóbi* 'I saw

* This word is used as a verb in the sense of 'to consider important', e.g. *ó pátáki ara rẹ̀* 'he considered himself important'.

two snakes which were black and also big' rather than *mo rí eṣò dúdú ńlá méjì*.

4. Words which function as adjectives can also function as nouns, e.g. *kékeré* can mean 'a small one' or 'small ones', as in *kékeré ni mo fẹ̀* 'it is a small one/small ones I want'. Any other adjectival form could be substituted for *kékeré* in this and similar sentences. Many can also be constructed with the preposition *ni*, e.g. *fún mi ní dúdú* 'give me a black one/black ones'. Some are used with *ní* in special phrases, e.g. *ní kíkún* 'in full', *ní kúkúru* 'in short', while *ni kékeré* means 'in (time of) youth'.

If we want to say 'the small one' etc. we use *èyí* followed either by a relative clause or the adjectival form, e.g. *èyít'ó kéré* or *èyí kékeré*, with no difference of meaning. The plural forms of these alternatives are *àwọ̀n t'ó kéré* and *àwọ̀n kékeré* etc. 'This small one' etc. is either *èyít'ó kéré yí* or *èyí kékeré yí*, the corresponding plurals being *àwọ̀n t'ó kéré yí/wọ̀nyí* and *àwọ̀n kékeré yí/wọ̀nyí*. (For the use of the plural form *wọ̀nyí* see p. 195).

5. It is not unusual to have nouns functioning as adjectives, e.g. *obinrin òyínbó* 'European (white) woman', *ọ̀kúnrin alágbára* 'powerful man', *ìgbimọ̀ aṣòfin* 'legislative council' (*aṣòfin* 'law-maker'). The normal order, as in the above examples, is for the qualifying noun to be placed second, but in certain combinations this can be emphasised by being placed first, e.g. *alágbára ọ̀kúnrin* 'powerful man', *òṣiṣẹ̀ ènìà* 'hard-working person'. This possibility of inverting the order of words distinguishes this sort of noun sequence from the type exemplified by *àpótí aṣọ* 'box for clothes' (see p. 44), in which there can be no variation. Inversion for emphasis is sometimes found even with adjectival forms, e.g. in the Yoruba proverb *a kì írí kékeré ànà* 'one does not see a young (lit. small) relative by marriage', i.e. all such relatives, however young, must be treated with the greatest respect.

Nouns, like adjectives, are preceded by *èyí* in contexts where a contrast is stated or implied, e.g. *èyí iyáwó* 'the younger wife' (in contrast with the senior wife) or *èyí*

ḍyínbó 'the European' (in contrast with one or more Africans who were with him).

In a certain number of common words *òkùnrin* and *obínrin* have lost their initial vowels and have been reduced to the status of suffixes, e.g. *òmòkùnrin* 'son', *òmòbínrin* 'daughter', *erúkùnrin* and *erúbínrin* 'male/female slave', *arákùnrin* and *arábínrin* 'male/female relative', *òbabinrin* 'female ruler, queen'. In more unusual combinations and where some emphasis is intended the full forms are used, e.g. *dòkítà obínrin* 'female doctor', *òmò mí òkùnrin* 'my son' (i.e. as distinct from my daughter).

6. Yoruba has nothing corresponding to the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives with which we are familiar in European languages, e.g. English 'big, bigger, biggest'. To translate 'he is bigger than I' we say *ó tóbi jù mí lẹ*, which is literally 'he is big surpass me go' (*lẹ* 'go', which brings out the idea of surpassing, going beyond, is sometimes omitted). The verb *jù* can, in fact, be used by itself in contexts where the meaning is clear, e.g. *ó jù mí lẹ* 'he is older/more important/ stronger than I'. *jù* and *lẹ* are written as one word when they come together, e.g. *èyít'ó dara jùlọ níáú wọn ní mọ fẹ* 'I want the best one of (among) them'. Notice that 'the best one' is translated by a relative clause in Yoruba; it is not possible to add *jù*, *jùlọ* to adjectival forms. Such a phrase as *èyít'ó kéré jù èyí lẹ* may be translated, according to context, as either 'the one that is smaller than this' or just 'one that is smaller than this', but for this latter we may also have *èyít'ó bá kéré jù èyí lẹ*, which we might translate 'the one that happens to be smaller than this'.

Where no comparison is intended *jù* corresponds to 'too', e.g. *ó kéré jù* 'it is too small' or, more emphatic, *ó kéré púpọ jù* (*púpọjù*). Contrast with that *òun l'ó kéré jù/jùlọ* 'he/that one is the smaller/smallest' (there being no distinction whether two or more than two are being compared). To translate 'that is the one that is too small' one says *òun l'ó kéré púpọjù*.

In a certain number of titles translated from English, e.g. *aláánú jùlọ* 'most merciful', *olólá jùlọ* 'most honourable', we find *jùlọ* added to what are actually nouns—'one who has mercy, honour'. This is a quite un-Yoruba construction. We might add that in some old-fashioned Yoruba grammars *jù* was equated with the English comparative '-er' and *jùlọ* with the superlative '-est' but this was very arbitrary and not in accordance with the facts of the language.

7. Adjectives which function as nouns, e.g. *Kékeré* used as a nickname 'Little', have the same effect on preceding words as nouns beginning with a consonant (see pp. 32, 45). For example, when such a word is the object of a preceding 'low-tone' verb, this verb is actually heard on a mid-tone, e.g. *ó wù Kékeré púpọ* 'it pleased K. very much', while a preceding noun in genitive (possessive) relationship has its final syllable extended on a mid-tone, e.g. *òmò(ọ) Kékeré* 'K's child', *filà(a) Kékere* 'K's cap'. Where *kékeré* functions as an adjective we have on the other hand *òmò kékeré* 'little child', *filà kékeré* 'little cap' without the extensions.

8. There are certain rules about the order of qualifying words. Possessive pronouns come next to the head noun unless some other word is very closely bound to it, e.g. one says *iyá mí àgbà* 'my senior mother' = 'my grandmother', but *ọwọ ọtún mí* 'my right hand'. Adjectives denoting colour and size are not so fixed in their order as in English. After these come numerals and finally demonstratives, e.g. *agbádá funfun títóbi kán* 'a big white gown', *àwọn ọmọ kékeré méjì yí* 'these two little children'.

9. *gbogbo* 'all, every' can function either as a noun or as an adjective, usually with some difference of emphasis, e.g. *gbogbo(o) wa l'a fẹ(ẹ) lẹ* 'all of us want to go, we all want to go', *àwa gboibo rí i* 'we all saw it'; *mọ ùlọ(ọ) kí i nígbàgbogbo* 'I go to greet him always/all the time', *ní gboibo igbàtí mọ lọ(ọ) kí i . . .* 'on every occasion that I went to greet him . . .' or 'on all the occasions etc.'; *fún mí ní gboibo rẹ* 'give me all of it'.

It should be noted that words like **kékeré** functioning as nouns can also be constructed with possessives in this way, e.g. **kékeré rẹ̀ wà, nílá rẹ̀ sí wà pẹ̀lú** 'there are small ones (of it) and there are also big ones (of it)'.

VOCABULARY

elédè , pig	jà sí , to come out to
pọ̀jù , to be most common	ogbón , wisdom, device, trick
gọ̀bọ̀yí much (of money)	látí , to, in order to
pọ̀ókú , little (of money)	ìbilẹ̀ , native, not foreign
òdè aiyé , the world at large	awọ , skin
èmi , life, spirit	tééré , thin
òkíkí , fame, reputation	bò , to cover
ikú , death	ikùn , belly, mind
yá , to be ready	aşeni , secret enemy
ẹ̀sín , humiliation	kọ̀lọ̀kọ̀lọ̀ , winding, twisted
tọ . . . wá , to come to	ẹ̀hìn odi , outside town
nílá , important, big	odi , town wall
lẹ̀hìn , after, behind	kàn , to knock
jà , to find out	pupa , to be fair-skinned (African)

EXERCISE 23

Translate into English: ẹ̀ran elédè àti eja tútù l'ó pọ̀jù nínú ounjẹ rẹ̀; owó gọ̀bọ̀yí ní nwọ̀n san fún mí; mo tà gbogbo ẹ̀rù mí ní owó pọ̀ókú; ohun mẹ̀rín ní gbogbo ènìà nńwá l'ódè aiyé—èmi gígùn, owó, omọ àti òkíkí; ounjẹ didùn l'ó maa nńfún mí jẹ; gbogbo àwa omọ Yorubá l'a mò pé ikú yá jù ẹ̀sín lọ; mo sí ilẹ̀kùn, mo rí àlejò nílá kán t'ó tọ mí wá; kò yẹ kí owó orí mótò yí jù igba pónùn lọ; lẹ̀hìn ojọ pipé mo já ogbón kán; aşọ t'ó dúdú jù èyí lọ díẹ̀ ní mo nńwá; oríşíríşí ọ̀nà l'awọ̀n Yorubá maa nńgbà látí kí ara wọ̀n; èyí ènìà dúdú nínú wọ̀n wọ aşọ ìbilẹ̀; awọ tééré bo'nú, kò jẹ́k'á rí ikùn aşeni; ọ̀nà kọ̀lọ̀kọ̀lọ̀ l'a gbà já s'ẹ̀hìn odi; èyí nílá l'ó wù mí jù; nígbàtí mo kán ilẹ̀kùn, arewà obinrin kán l'ó jádè sí mí látí inú yàrà; dúdú nńwù ú, pupa nńwù ú.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

EMOTIONS, SENSATIONS, AILMENTS]

The Yoruba way of expressing emotions, sensations and ailments differs from English in that the person involved is usually the grammatical object, not the subject of the verb of the sentence, e.g. the Yoruba for 'I feel cold' is **òtútù mí mí** lit. 'cold has caught me'. Another point is that the verbs used are very specialised in their meaning, e.g. in **inú bí mí** 'I feel/felt angry' it is impossible to assign a meaning to **bí** apart from its use here with **inú** 'inside'. One could give it some such meaning as 'stir up', but with the restriction that it is used in this sense only with **inú**. A third point is that in some cases a reverse order is possible, e.g. besides **inú bí mí** there is also **mo binú**. The difference in meaning is that where the person is the grammatical object the emotion is thought of as coming on him of its own volition, as it were, while where the person is the subject he is thought of as summoning up the emotion, which is entirely under his control. For this reason forms with the person as subject are usual in prohibitions, e.g. **má binú** 'don't be angry', though one might sometimes prefer to say **má jẹ́kí inú bí ọ** 'don't let yourself get angry'. Another example is **má bẹ̀rù** 'don't be afraid' in contrast with **ẹ̀rù'ba mí** 'I felt afraid'. The difference is well brought out in **ó bẹ̀rù Olórún** 'he fears God', where a deliberate choice is implied, and **ẹ̀rù Olórún'ba á** 'the fear of God is on him, he is afraid of God'.

A number of common expressions are listed here to shew the variations which occur.

- ẹ̀rù'ba mí**, I feel/felt afraid
- ẹ̀rù rẹ̀'ba mí**, I am/was afraid of him (fear of him fell on me)
- ẹ̀rù nńbà mí**, I am becoming afraid/I am always afraid

e má bèrù è (rẹ̀), don't be afraid of him
 ọ̀rọ̀ yí bà mí l'ẹ̀rù, these words made me feel afraid
 ọ̀ dẹ̀rùbà mí (dá), he frightened me (deliberately) (dá
 'cause')
 inú bí mí sí í, I got angry with him
 inú mbi i púpọ̀, he always gets very angry
 ọ̀rọ̀ yí bí mí nínú, these words/this matter made me
 angry
 ọ̀jú tí mí, I felt bashful/ashamed (face shut me!)
 má tíjú, don't be shy
 ọ̀ gbà mí l'ọ̀jú tí, it made me feel ashamed
 ọ̀ dọ̀júti mí (dá), he put me to shame/caused me to be
 shamed
 inú mí' dún, I am happy/glad (my inside is sweet)
 inú didùn, happiness
 ọ̀ mú mí nínú dún, he made me feel happy

Note that there is another *dùn* 'to pain', which occurs in the phrase *ọ̀ dún mí nínú/l'ọ̀kàn*, it pains me inside/in the heart = 'I am sorry'.

inú mí' bàjẹ̀, I am upset (my inside is spoilt)
 ara mí' bàjẹ̀, I am overcome with grief or disappoint-
 ment (my body is spoilt)
 má banújẹ̀, don't be upset
 ọ̀ bà mí nínú jẹ̀, it made me feel upset
 ara'fu mí sí í, I felt suspicious of him
 mo fura, I suspected
 nwọn rẹ̀rìn (rín ẹ̀rìn), they laughed (laughed a laugh)
 kí'ó pa wọn l'ẹ̀rìn, what made them laugh?
 ẹ̀rìn pa wọn sí ọ̀rọ̀ náà, they were overcome with
 laughter at these words
 ebi npa mí, I am feeling hungry
 ọ̀ d'ẹ̀bi pa mí (dá), he starved me
 iṣẹ̀ yí sù mí, I am tired of this work
 ọ̀rọ̀ yí t'ọ̀jú sù mí (tí), this business completely puzzles
 me
 ọ̀ sù mí, I am fed up
 ọ̀ rẹ̀ mí, I am tired
 iṣẹ̀ yí rẹ̀ mí, I have got tired at this work

àárẹ̀' mú mí, I feel tired
 ọ̀rọ̀ t'ó sọ̀' yà mí l'ẹ̀nu, what he said surprised me
 (opened me in mouth)
 ẹ̀nu' yà mí, I was surprised
 mo rí ohun iyanu lóni, I saw a wonderful thing today
 iyálẹ̀nu l'ó jẹ̀ fún mí pé ng kò rí í, it was a surprise to
 me that I did not see him
 ọ̀jú rẹ̀' bàjẹ̀, his face took on a scowl (his face was
 spoilt)
 ọ̀ b'ọ̀jú jẹ̀, he scowled
 ọ̀jú ńro mí, I feel down in the mouth (face is paining
 me)
 ọ̀ fajuro, he pulled a long face (fà 'pull')

Note the difference in these examples between *dá* and *mú*, both of which can be rendered in English by 'cause'. *dá* is used with names of parts of the body, emotions etc., e.g. *d'ọ̀júti*, *dẹ̀rùbà*, while *mú* is used with the person who is affected, e.g. *ọ̀ mú mí nínú dún* 'it caused me inside to be sweet'. Other examples of this construction are: *ọ̀ mú mí l'ọ̀kàn le* 'he caused me in heart to be strong, i.e. he reassured me', *ọ̀ mú mí l'ára dá* 'he caused me in body to be well, i.e. he cured me'. This second example has the counterpart *ara mí' dá* 'I am well'. But it must be remembered that there are many phrases in which *dá* is used in a different sense, in which case it may take as its object the person affected, e.g. *agara' dá mí* 'I am exasperated', *ọ̀ dá mí l'ágara* 'he made me feel exasperated'.

Further examples of Yoruba usage are:

kí'ó/kíní nṣe ọ̀/ẹ̀? what is the matter with you? (is
 affecting you)
 ikọ̀ nṣe mí, I have a cough
 orí nṣọ̀ mí, I have a headache (head is breaking me)
 (but *orí rẹ̀' fọ̀*, he is a fool)
 ọ̀ fọ̀ mí ní kùmọ̀ l'órí, he broke my head with a club)
 inú ńrun mí, I have a stomach-ache (inside is crushing
 me)
 inú ńlọ̀ mí, I have the gripes (inside is twisting me)
 ibà nṣe mí, I have fever

- òùngbẹ̀ ńgbẹ̀ mí, I am thirsty (thirst is drying me)
 òtútù 'mú mí, I am cold
 oorun 'mú mí, I am hot
 oorun ńkùn mí, I feel sleepy (oorun 'sleep')
 ẹ̀kún ńgbòn mí, I want to cry (tears are shaking me)
 itọ̀ ńgbòn mí, I want to go round the corner (itọ̀
 'urine')
 igrbònsẹ̀ ńgbòn mí, I want to go to the lavatory (igrbònsẹ̀
 'excreta')
 ó tẹ̀ mí l'òrùn, I am satisfied (òrùn 'neck' tẹ̀ '?')
 ó rí mí l'ára, it nauseates me
 írira, hatred
 ó ni mí l'ára, it irks me
 inira, discomfort
 ó yọ̀ mí l'ẹ̀nu, it worries me (makes my mouth come out)
 má sẹ̀ iyọnu, don't put yourself out

Yoruba has a certain number of basic nouns for feelings, emotions etc., e.g. ẹ̀rù 'fear', sùúrù 'patience', ọgbón 'wisdom', ebi 'hunger', làákàyè 'common sense', but the majority are formed by adding the prefix *ì-* to the verb stem (this being a general way of forming abstract nouns from verbs, see p. 184), e.g. itijú 'shame', ibínú 'anger', ibanújé 'sorrow', ifura 'suspicion'. But note inú *dídún* besides *idùnnú* 'happiness', and also *ara líle* besides *ilera* 'good health', corresponding to *ara mí'le* 'my body is hard, strong, i.e. I am well'. *ibẹ̀rù* exists side by side with ẹ̀rù, but with a rather different meaning, e.g. ẹ̀rù Ọlórún 'fear inspired by God', *ibẹ̀rù Ọlórún* 'having a feeling of fear/awe for God'.

There are no adjectives corresponding to 'angry', 'hungry', etc. Where the verb *ní* 'to have' is used with the name of a quality we can form a noun with the prefix *oní-* 'owner of' (see p. 183) and use this as a qualifier, e.g. *onísùúrù* 'patient person', *onilàákàyè* 'intelligent person', *ọlọgbón* 'wise person'. Otherwise we must use a relative clause, e.g. *ẹ̀nítí inú bí* 'person who is angry', *ẹ̀nítí ebi ńpa* 'person who is hungry', *ọmọdẹ̀ tí ẹ̀rù mbà* 'child who is frightened'.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| erin, elephant | orọ̀, wealth |
| ipò, position | àpára, joke, fun |
| ọlá, honour | dápára, to joke, poke fun at |
| farabalẹ̀, to be calm | ẹ̀fọ̀rí, headache |
| ọmọlúwàbí, gentleman | kórira (kó írira), to hate |
| délé, to arrive home | ikà, cruelty, cruel person |

EXERCISE 24

Translate into English: kò sí ohun t'ò lè sẹ̀ k'ò tẹ̀ ẹ̀ l'òrùn; nígbà tí mo rí erin náà l'ókèèrè, ẹ̀rù'ba mí púpọ̀; ó yà mí l'ẹ̀nu pé àwọn tí nwọn wà ni ipò ọlá lè maa gbà owó l'ówọ̀ àwọn tí kò l'ówó tó tiwọn; ẹ̀rù ọlópá kò bá mí rárá; ojù gbà mí tí fún ọ; ó ní ẹ̀rin pa òun nígbà tí òun'gbọ̀ ọrọ̀ yí; a kò gbọ̀dọ̀ bà àwọn òbí wa nínú jẹ; ẹ̀nítí ebi ńpa kò lè farabalẹ̀ gbà imòrán; kò yẹ̀ kí ọmọlúwàbí barajé bẹ́ẹ̀; ọrọ̀ t'ó sọ̀ yí bí mí nínú púpọ̀; sùúrù ni baba iwà, ibínú kò dá nkán; mo ńlọ̀ sùn, nítorípé ó pé tí oorun'ti ńkùn mí; ẹ̀nít'ó bá ní làákàyè kò ní(f) bẹ̀rù ẹ̀mí búburú kánkán; kò sí ojù isẹ̀ t'ó ní mí; kò sí ẹ̀nítí inú rẹ̀ kò dùn nígbà'tá gbọ̀ pé ẹ̀ délé l'áláfiá; ara líle l'òogùn orọ̀; àpára tí mo dá pa ọrẹ̀ mí l'ẹ̀rin; má bẹ̀rù ohunkóhun tí nwọn bá lè sẹ̀; oògùn ẹ̀fọ̀rí wà l'ápò mí; ibanújé nílá l'ó jẹ̀ fún u nígbà tí iyá rẹ̀'kú; mo kórira iwà ikà; ng kò mọ̀ ohun t'ó nse mí.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

MORE ABOUT VERBS

It has already been remarked that the meanings of monosyllabic verbs are very dependent on that of accompanying words. We have something of this in English in the case of (for example) 'do', e.g. 'do up, do away with, do down etc.' but it occurs on a much bigger scale in Yoruba.

1. To illustrate this point we will give first of all some of the various meanings of the verb *pa*, to which we may assign a vague meaning of 'to act in a sudden or energetic manner'. The list given is by no means exhaustive.

- (a) *mo p'ejò nlá kán láná*, I killed a big snake yesterday
nwón pa púpò ninú àwọn ènià ilú yí, they killed many of the people of this town
- (b) *ebi nipa mí púpò*, I am very hungry (hunger is affecting me)
òjò pa mí púpò lóní, I got soaked with rain today (rain beat on me)
- (c) *mo pitàn*, I told a story (*itàn*)
mo pàlò, I asked a riddle (*àlò*)
mo pòwe, I quoted a proverb (*òwe*)
mo purò, I told a lie (*irò*—irregular elision)
mo pariwo, I made a noise (*ariwo*)
- (d) *mo pa ilù*, I stopped drumming
kéké pa, silence fell
- (e) *mo pa obi*, I split the cola-nut
mo pa èkùrò, I cracked the palm-kernel
- (f) *mo pa sùlè mètá*, I made 3/0d
- (g) *mo pa wón pò*, I amalgamated them (*pò* 'be in a mass/group')
mo pa ilẹ̀kùn dé, I closed the door (*dé* 'cover up')

2. The last two examples shew how two verbs may be

used in sequence to convey an idea which is expressed by one verb in English. (We have already had some examples of this, e.g. *mú . . . wá* 'take hold of . . . come' for 'bring'.) In the case of *pa . . . dé*, *pa* seems to express the idea of putting the door in motion while *dé* expresses the result—the covering up of the gap. *pa . . . dé* can only be used of a door or something with an attached lid, e.g. a box or suitcase; *dé* by itself is used for something which has a detached lid. On the other hand, an added verb often needs separate translation in English, either by a second verb joined on with 'and', e.g. *nwón pa á jẹ* 'they killed and ate it', or by some more complicated arrangement of order, e.g. *nígbàtí nwón pa á tán . . .* 'when they had finished killing it . . .', or by an adverb, e.g. *nwón gbé e kalẹ* 'they put it down (settle on ground)'. Some examples of these various possibilities are given here.

(a) The second verb expresses the result of the action of the first or denotes a subsequent action—ideas which cannot always be clearly distinguished.

- ó fà á ya*, he tore it up (*fà* 'pull' *ya* 'tear')
ó so wón pò, he tied them together (*so* 'tie')
ó pa wón run, he destroyed them (*run* 'be destroyed')
ó pa á rẹ, he erased it (*rẹ* 'cut'?)
ó wò ó sán, he cured him (*wò* 'look at' *sán* 'be well')
ó tàn mí jẹ, he deceived me (*tàn* 'trick' *jẹ* 'consume')
mo rí létà kan gbà, I got a letter (*rí* 'see' *gbà* 'take')
má lẹ e lọ, don't drive him away (*lẹ* 'drive' *lọ* 'go')
ebi pa á kú, he starved to death

(b) The two verbs may together express an idea which cannot easily be cut up into two parts.

- omi'ti bà á jẹ*, water had spoilt it (*bà* and *jẹ* cannot be assigned any separate meanings)
aşo yí bá mí mu, these clothes suit me ('with me agree', but *mu* does not mean 'agree' except in this phrase)
ó para dà (pa ara), he changed his appearance (*dà* cannot be assigned a separate meaning here)

(c) The added verb may express the degree to which the action was carried out.

mo kà á tán, I finished reading it, I read it all
 mo ʃe é ti, I failed to do it
 mo ti sè é tó, I have now stewed it enough
 o ti sè é jù, you have stewed it too much
 ó gé e kù, he cut it so that there was some remainder

Such qualifying verbs may be added at the end of any sequence of verbs or of a verb phrase.

kò bá mi mu tó, it does not suit me well enough
 nígbát'ó pa wón run tán ... when he completely destroyed them ...

ó wò mí sà n tì, he failed to cure me

(d) The first verb may express the manner in which the action denoted by the second verb is carried out. For example, *jí* has the meaning 'to act on a thing stealthily', so that *ó jí i gbé* means 'he stole it' while *ó jí i wò* means 'he had a stealthy look at it', *ó jí i he* means 'he stealthily picked it up' and so on. (*jí* without any following verb is sometimes used in the sense of 'to steal'.) Another example is *tún* with the meaning of 're-', e.g. *tún u ʃe* 're-make it, repair it', *tún u sọ* 're-phrase it', *tún u kà* 're-count it'. Note, however, that when *tún* has the meaning of simple repetition the object is usually placed after the second verb, e.g. *tún ʃe é* 'do it again'.

(e) *tún* obviously cannot be used without a following verb. Other verbs with this limitation are *ti* 'come from' and *bá* when used with the meaning 'be in association with', as in *kíl'o mú t'Ìbàdàn bọ?* 'what have you brought back from Ibadan (bring from I. return)?', *bá mi kí i dáadáa* 'greet him for me cordially'.

3. We have seen (p. 22) that where in English the object of a verb is qualified by a possessive pronoun, Yoruba often prefers to make the person the direct object, adding the thing possessed as an extension with *ní*. Any following verbs are placed after the extension. Some further examples are given here.

ó fá mi l'óri, he shaved my head
 ó gbà mí l'áya, he took away my wife
 ó dà mí l'ómi nù, she poured away my water (dà 'pour'
 nù 'be lost')

omi'ta sí mi l'áso, water splashed on my clothes (to
 me on clothes)

ó fún u sí mi l'ènu, he squeezed it (juice) into my
 mouth

nwón fún u l'òrùn pa, they throttled him (squeezed him
 in neck kill)

4. If the first verb in a sequence is not followed by an object it is usually written as one word with the following verb, e.g. *ó bàjé* 'it is spoilt' (but *ó bà á jé* 'he spoiled it'), *ó sálo* 'he ran away', *ó kó wón dānù* 'he threw them away (gather pour be-lost)'. The verbs described in 2(c), however, are usually written separately, e.g. *ó ti kú tán* 'it is already dead', *ó kún jù* 'it is too full', *ó lọ tì* 'he failed to go'. But even these verbs are written as one word with preceding verb stems in nouns which are formed from them by adding a prefix, e.g. *àṣejù* 'acting to excess', *àjẹti* 'failing to eat up completely'. It is, in fact, a feature of nouns built up from verb groups that all the separate elements are brought together into one word, *ó bà mí l'óri jé* 'he spoiled my luck' but *abanilórijé* (*a-bà-ṣeni-l'óri-jé*) 'one who spoils people's luck', *ó fi mí l'ókàn balé* 'he reassured me' but *ifókànbalé* 'reassurance'. Other examples are *ikómojádé* 'ceremony of bringing out children', *iréniṣe* (*ré ... jẹ*) 'deceit', *áfẹsúnà* 'betrothed (wooed on the way)'.

5. We have had some examples of verbs with reciprocal meaning, e.g. *kọ* 'to teach, learn', *yá* 'to lend, borrow'. Further examples of this type are seen in:

mo rán a l'etí, I reminded him	mo rántí, I remember him
mo jẹ é n'iyà, I punished him	mo jiyà, I suffered punishment
ó fọ mí l'ójú, he blinded me	ó fójú, he is blind

ó sì mí l'òná, he misled me ó òná, he missed his way

6. In a few cases it is the second verb only in the sequence which has an object, e.g. *mo tẹ̀lé e* 'I followed him', *mo kọ̀lù ú* 'I collided with him', *nwọ̀n kó tí mí* 'they gathered together to attack me'. Such sequences, when they are written as one word, must be carefully distinguished from the much larger class of verbs described in the next section.

7. A number of 'verbs' of two or more syllables are actually compounds of a verb plus a noun, e.g. *sọ̀rọ̀* 'to speak, talk about' (*sọ̀* 'say' *ọ̀rọ̀* 'words'), *dárukọ̀* 'to mention' (*dá* 'make' *orúkọ̀* 'name'). The composition of these verbs is clearly brought out by the fact that they are always followed by possessives, e.g. *mo ńsọ̀rọ̀ rẹ̀* 'I am talking about it', *nwọ̀n dárukọ̀ rẹ̀* 'they mentioned you'. The final vowel of the verb will be lengthened in every case before its object where the final vowel of a noun is lengthened before a possessive, e.g. *ó dárukọ̀(ọ̀) wa* 'he mentioned us', *mo dárukọ̀(ọ̀) Táíwò* 'I mentioned T.'. Examples of such verbs are *rántí* 'to remember', *retí* 'to expect', *tọ́jú* 'to look after', *bẹ̀rù* 'to fear'.

It must be added that there are a few verbs in this class which cannot be analysed out as compounds of verb plus noun in terms of present-day Yoruba, e.g. *gbàgbé* 'to forget', *pẹ̀lú* 'to accompany'. In addition, all verbs of foreign origin are put in this class, e.g. *háya* 'to-hire', *ṣáátá* 'to disparage' (probably from Hausa).

When verbs of this type occur in relative clauses in which the introductory word *tí* is the object of the verb, a few of them are followed by a possessive pronoun (cp. p. 89) but the majority are not.

ọ̀kúnrin tí mo sọ̀rọ̀ rẹ̀ lẹ́kẹ̀n, the man I talked about just now

ọ̀rẹ̀ mí tí mo ńretí rẹ̀, my friend whom I am expecting
omọ̀dé t'ò táárí rẹ̀ sẹ̀hin ńsunkún, the child whom you pushed back is crying but

*owó tí mo ńtọ́jú dà?** where is the money I am looking after?

obinrin tí mo pàdẹ̀ l'ọ́jú ọ̀ná, the woman I met on the road

àpò mí tí mo gbàgbé s'ílẹ̀, my bag which I left (forgot) at home

ohun tí mo rántí n'iyẹn, that is what I remember
ọ̀kúnrin tí mo ṣaájú dé ibi iṣẹ̀, the man I was in front of going to work

ídánwò tí mo pààsì l'ẹ̀ṣín, the examination I passed last year

ilẹ̀ tí mo háya fún u, the house I rented for him

The same rules hold when the object is brought to the front and made emphatic with a following *ni*.

ọ̀rẹ̀ mí ní mo ńretí rẹ̀, it is my friend I am expecting
ilẹ̀ pètẹ̀ṣì ní mo háya fún u, it was a storied house I rented for him

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

<i>aṣiwèrè</i> , madman	<i>yẹ̀ . . . wò</i> , to examine (physically)
<i>igbooro</i> , built-up area	<i>toro</i> , to ask for
<i>èsi</i> , reply	<i>èrò</i> , thought
<i>pa . . . jẹ̀</i> , to kill and eat;	<i>so sí . . . l'ókàn</i> , to occur to the mind
to preclude, miss	<i>imótótó</i> , cleanliness
<i>kùn</i> , to apply (paint, powder)	<i>panumó (pa ẹnu)</i> , to keep quiet
<i>ta</i> , to shoot, splash	<i>pa . . . l'ẹnu mó</i> , to shut up
<i>èké</i> , deceit, liar	<i>sápamó</i> , to run and hide
<i>ọ̀rùn</i> , neck	<i>kábà</i> , dress
<i>mó</i> , onto, against	<i>idán</i> , majic
<i>dá . . . dá</i> , to leave to do alone	<i>ẹ̀wù</i> , coat, gown
<i>yà</i> , to turn aside	<i>nikẹ̀hin</i> , finally
<i>lálálá</i> , ever, long ago	

* For more about *dà* 'where is?' see p. 155.

EXERCISE 25

Translate into English: *aṣiwèrè ènià ni òjò igbooro ilú ñpa; ọ̀rọ̀ t'ó so yí pa èsì jẹ; ó yà mí l'ẹ̀nu pé o pa àkókò ounjẹ jẹ báyi; ọ̀dà tí nwón fí ñkùn ojú ọ̀nà ta sí mí l'ára; iwà èké tí di ẹ̀wù sí i l'ọ̀rùn; nwón kò lè já àlọ̀ tí mo pa; nwón wípé mo wá purọ̀ tàn àwọn ọ̀lọ̀pá jẹ; jẹk'á pa gbogbo owó t'á pa lóni pọ̀ mọ̀ ẹ̀yít'á pa láná; ọ̀we tí nwón pa mọ̀ mí'mú mí bínú púpọ̀; ó dá mọ̀tò ní fún'ra rẹ; ẹ̀sẹ̀ ilé t'ó tóbi yèn ni iwọ̀ nikan ndá gbé? má dǎ mí dá a ó! ó tí fà lẹ̀tá náà yà dǎnù kí n tó lè r'áyè kà á; lẹ̀hìn tí mo jẹun tán, mo tún n'wá iṣẹ̀ kiri; mo tún mọ̀tò mí kùn l'ọ̀dà; ó fà pónùn mètá yọ̀ nínú ọ̀pò rẹ; ó fí ibítí mo tí ẹ̀sìnà hàn mí; nígbà tí mo n'í Ẹ̀kó bọ̀ n'ijétá, mo yà kí ẹ̀gbọ̀n mí; oore t'ò ẹ̀ fún mí, ng kò jẹ̀ gbàgbé rẹ̀ láláí; mo rò pé mo lè háyá rẹ̀ ní pónùn mérin l'ọ̀sẹ̀; ẹ̀mi pẹ̀lú(u) wón l'a lọ̀(ọ) yẹ̀ ẹ̀ wò; máá dárúkọ̀ rẹ̀ sí ọ̀gá ibi iṣẹ̀ mí; tal'ó tọ̀rọ̀ rẹ̀ l'ọ̀wọ̀ rẹ̀? ní kẹ̀hìn èrò kan'sọ̀ sí mí nínú; ó yẹ̀ k'á pa ọ̀fin imótótó mọ̀; ẹ̀ panumọ̀ ọ̀! mo yára pa á l'ẹ̀nu mọ̀; ó sá pamọ̀ sínú ilé; kábà yí gùn jù, kò bá mí mu rárá; kò sí idán tí ng kò lè pa.*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

POSITION AND DIRECTION

Yoruba has a whole series of pairs of words like *sinú* 'into', *nínú* 'in'; *sóri* 'onto', *lóri* 'on', which are made up of *si* and *ní* combined with names of parts of the body, indications of position and so on. With some of these *si* and *ní* have come to be written as one word, while with others either an inverted comma is used to shew that two words have come together through elision or they may even be written separately in their unelided forms. In such pairs *si* generally corresponds with 'to, towards' while *ní* corresponds with 'in, at'. We have:

<i>inínú</i>	<i>sínú</i>	<i>inú</i>	inside
<i>lóri</i>	<i>sóri</i>	<i>orí</i>	top, head
<i>l'ábẹ̀</i>	<i>s'ábẹ̀</i>	<i>abẹ̀</i>	underneath
<i>l'ára</i>	<i>s'ára</i>	<i>ara</i>	body, main part
<i>lẹ̀hìn</i>	<i>sẹ̀hìn</i>	<i>ẹ̀hìn</i>	back, rear
<i>n'ídí</i>	<i>s'ídí</i>	<i>ìdí</i>	base, bottom
<i>l'ẹ̀nu</i>	<i>s'ẹ̀nu</i>	<i>enu</i>	mouth
<i>l'ọ̀jú</i>	<i>s'ọ̀jú</i>	<i>ojú</i>	eye, face
<i>l'ọ̀wọ̀</i>	<i>s'ọ̀wọ̀</i>	<i>owọ̀</i>	hand
<i>l'ápá</i>	<i>s'ápá</i>	<i>apá</i>	arm, direction
<i>níhìn</i>	<i>síhìn</i>	<i>ihìn</i>	here
<i>níbí</i>	<i>síbí</i>	<i>ibí</i>	here
<i>níbẹ̀</i>	<i>síbẹ̀</i>	<i>ibẹ̀</i>	there
<i>l'ọ̀hùn</i>	<i>s'ọ̀hùn</i>	<i>ohùn</i>	yonder
<i>nílẹ̀</i>	<i>sílẹ̀</i>	<i>ilẹ̀</i>	ground, down
<i>lókè</i>	<i>sókè</i>	<i>okè</i>	mountain, up
<i>lódé</i>	<i>sódé</i>	<i>ode</i>	outside
<i>nílẹ̀</i>	<i>sílẹ̀</i>	<i>ilẹ̀</i>	house, home
<i>l'ọ̀dọ̀</i>	<i>s'ọ̀dọ̀</i>	<i>odọ̀</i>	presence of person

1. We have seen that when a noun beginning with a consonant is put to qualify another noun, this noun has

its final vowel lengthened, e.g. **inú(u) kóbòdù** 'the inside of the cupboard'. Since all the above words contain a noun as their second element, we must remember to add this lengthening in such sentences as **ó wà nínú(u) kóbòdù** 'it is in the cupboard'. For the same reason such a sentence as 'it is inside it' is translated by **ó wà nínú(u) rẹ**, i.e. with the possessive of the pronoun.

2. English 'on' may be translated in two different ways, e.g. **fi sórí(i) tábíli** 'put (it) on the table (i.e. on top of the table)', **fi kọ s'ára ògiri** 'put (it) to hang on the wall (i.e. on the body of the wall)'. Similarly 'from' will have to be translated differently according to circumstances, e.g. **mo gbà iwé mi l'ówó rẹ** 'I got my book from him' (lit. 'at his hand'), **ó k'árùn l'ára iyáwó rẹ** 'he contracted (kó 'gather') an infection from his wife' (lit. 'at the body of'). Yoruba is always much more detailed and specific than English in reference to any sort of space relationship.

3. Yoruba distinguishes between 'to' in talking or sending a message to a person and 'to' in going to a person. In the first case **sí** is followed directly by the noun or pronoun denoting the person concerned, e.g. **sòrò sí mi** 'speak to me', **ó ránṣẹ sí mi** 'he sent a message to me', **ó kọ létà sí mi** 'he wrote a letter to me'. In the second case we must use the noun **òdò** 'presence of a person, place where a person is', e.g. **lọ s'òdò(ọ) Dókítà** 'go to the Doctor'. Similarly, **ó wà l'òdò ọrẹ mi** 'he is with my friend' (i.e. at the place where my friend happens to be at the moment). With **òdò** we may contrast **owó** 'hand', e.g. **ó wà l'ówó iyáwó mi** 'it is in my wife's possession'. **òdò** is used with **ẹbá** 'vicinity', e.g. **ó dúró s'ẹbá ọdò mi** 'he stood near me' (i.e. in the vicinity of where I was); but we say **ó dúró s'ẹgbẹ mi** 'he stood at my side' without **òdò** because **ẹgbẹ** is a part of the body. Another common expression is **omọ ọdò** 'personal servant, one who is always on hand to run messages'.

We may remind ourselves here that the translation of 'with' will vary widely according to the context. For the instrumental sense Yoruba uses the verb **fi** 'put, apply',

e.g. **òbẹ yí ni mo fi gé e** 'it was with this knife I cut it', **kíl'o maa fi owó yí rà?** 'what are you going to buy with this money? In the sense of 'accompanying' the verb **bá** is used, e.g. **tani yió bá nyin lọ?** 'who will go with you?', while if the sense is 'in addition to' the verb **pèlú** is used, e.g. **tani yió lọ pèlú rẹ?** 'who will go with you?' (i.e. in addition to you).

4. Forms with **ní** are regularly used after verbs which denote movement away from a position.

ó kúrò ní Ìbàdàn láná, he left Ibadan yesterday
ẹ kúrò níbẹ! get away from there!
ó díde nílẹ, he got up from the ground
ó jádè nínú ilé, he came out from the house
ó mú u nínú àpótí, he took it out of the box

These forms are also used with the verb **bọ** 'approach', with which **sí** might be expected, e.g. **ó m̀bẹ l'òdò mi** 'he is coming towards me', **máa bọ lókè** 'come up here' (said to someone down below who is waiting to talk to you), and also with **wá** in **wá níbí** 'come here'. In **níbo** 'where?' (**ní ibi wò** 'at what place') the form with **ní** has become generalised in most contexts, though **ibo** survives in some phrases, e.g. **lát'ibo s'ibo?** 'from where to where (are you going)?', **ará ilú ibo ni ẹ?** (**ilú 'bo**) 'person of town of where are you?' = 'what is your home town?'.

In contrast with the preceding paragraph we find that **sí** is used after a number of verbs with which, from the English translation, one would expect **ní**.

ilú òyìnbó l'ó kú sí, he died in England
Abẹ̀òkúta ni mo gbọ̀njú sí, it was at Abẹ̀okuta that I grew up
níbo ni nwọ̀n bí ẹ sí? where were you born?
mo ní ilé miràn sí Ìbàdàn, I have another house at Ibadan
dúró s'ẹgbẹ mi, stand at my side

But it is not unusual to find **dúró** and **jókò** constructed with **ní**.

The word *sibè* (lit. 'to there') has acquired the meaning of 'still, however', so that to translate 'stand over there' one has to say *dúró sibè yèn* 'stand to that place there', while *dúró sibè* has the meaning 'stay where you are, continue standing'. *sibè* is often doubled for emphasis, e.g. *ng kò ní(i) gbà á gbó sibèsibè* 'I still won't believe him'.

5. In English we say 'it is nice here, it is hot in Lagos' and so on, but in Yoruba we have *ibí dára púpò* 'here is very nice', *Ìbàdàn móoru púpò* 'Ibadan is very hot', i.e. Yoruba does not use any word corresponding to the indefinite English 'it'. A good example of this is *ibè wù mí púpò* 'there pleased me very much' for 'I liked it very much there'. Further, where we might say 'the water is not good there' Yoruba says *omi ibè kò dára* 'the water of there is not good'. We cannot say *omi níbè* 'the water at that place'. Nouns denoting position are constructed exactly like other nouns. We say *oko òhún* 'the farm of yonder' or, with more emphasis, *oko(o) t'òhún; t'òhún* (with the thing referred to understood) 'the one yonder'; *àwọn ará ibè* 'the people of there'; *owó owó mí* 'the money of my hand' (i.e. in my possession); *t'owó mí* (thing understood) 'what I have in hand', *filà orí mí* 'the cap of my head' (i.e. on my head), *àwòrán ara ògiri* 'picture of the body of the wall' (i.e. the picture on the wall).

Note that there are two words for 'here'—*ibí*, which pairs with *ibè* 'there', and *ihín*, which pairs with *òhún* 'yonder'. Some Yorubas use one and some the other.

6. We have seen that the verbs *ti* 'come from' and *gbé* 'occupy, live at' are used in a special way as auxiliary verbs in sentences where a word denoting position is in the emphatic position (followed by *ni*) at the head and also in relative clauses, e.g. *níbo l'ẹ gbé n̄s̄is̄é?* 'where are you (at) working?', *níbo l'o ti rà á?* 'where did you (from) buy it?', *ibè ni mo ti rí i* 'it was there I (from) found it', *Ilorin ni mo gbé ñkòs̄é* 'it is at Ilorin that I am an apprentice (am learning-work)'. *níbo l'ó gbé wà?*

'where is it?' (lit. 'where does it occupy exist?').* *gbé* with *wà* and the *n̄-* prefix forms, while *ti* is used of momentary action, but this distinction is not invariably observed; some Yorubas actually use both words together, e.g. *níbo l'o gbé ti rà á?* 'where did you buy it?'. Note that the *n̄-* is added to the main verb, not to *gbé*; this is in contrast with its use as a main verb, not to *níbo l'o n̄gbé?* 'where do you live?'. In examples noted in which a future tense is used, *ti* follows *yió* but usually precedes *maa*, e.g. *níbo l'o ó ti sòkalè?*, *níbo l'o ti maa sòkalè?* 'where will you get off (bus or train)?'.

7. A disconcerting point to note about *sí* is that in certain common expressions many Yorubas in speech elide both its consonant and its vowel, so that nothing is left of the word but its high tone. For example, *sòrò sòkè (sí òkè)* 'speak up' may be heard as *sòrò 'ókè* and *mo ñlò silè* 'I am going home' as *mo ñlòlé*. In the second example the initial vowel of 'ilè has been assimilated to the preceding *o*. This sort of assimilation happens regularly with 'ilè=*silè*, e.g. *ó bọra silè (bọ ara)* 'he undressed himself' is heard as *ó bọraálè*.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

<i>fèrèsé</i> , window	<i>ikorita</i> , road junction
<i>enu ònà</i> , door-way	<i>òtún</i> , right (hand)
<i>sègbé</i> , to perish	<i>tò</i> , to arrange
<i>igbó</i> , forest, 'bush'	<i>àgà</i> , chair
<i>fí . . . ra iná</i> , to put to warm	<i>kó</i> , to hang up
<i>ògòdò</i> , swampy place	<i>ètò</i> , arrangement
<i>bò</i> , to slip from	<i>òkánkán</i> , opposite, exact spot
<i>òsì</i> , left (hand)	

EXERCISE 26

Translate into English: *ó lọ jókò s'ibi fèrèsé; òdò tal'o n̄gbé? òdò ègbón iyá mí ni; ẹ gbé e sòkè n'ibi enu ònà;*

* The use of *gbé* with *wà* is not universal, e.g. *níbo l'ó wà?* often occurs besides *níbo l'ó gbé wà?*

ó dúró s'ènu ọ̀nà, kò fẹ̀ wọ̀lé; nígbàt'ó ẹ̀, a dé ibi ihò kan; má jẹ́kí n ẹ̀gbé sínú igbó yí; mo kojú s'ápá ọ̀dọ̀ rẹ̀; mo bó ẹ̀wù ọ̀rùn mi, mo fi ra iná; ó kojá l'ọ̀dọ̀ mi ó sì lọ sí ibi ọ̀gòdọ̀ kan; kò sí ẹ̀nit'ó lè bó l'ọ̀wọ̀ ikú; ibit'á ti nísòrò yí, a sòrò kàn lyá mi; apá ọ̀sì ọ̀kọ̀ ni k'ò jókò sí; nígbàt'ó bá dé Ikoríta mètá, ọ̀nà apá ọ̀tún ni k'ò gbà; nwón ti tò àga méréin síwájú Oba gaan, nwón kọ ojú wón s'ọ̀dọ̀ rẹ̀; gbágudá l'a máa nje jù l'ápá ọ̀dọ̀ wa níhìn; ó gbé àpò kọ apá (k'ápá); inú obinrin yí kò dùn sí ètò yí; ó gbé àpótí náà s'ábé ibùsùn; apá isálẹ̀ inú kọ̀bòdù ni k'ò fi pamọ̀ sí; mo rántí ọ̀pọ̀lọ̀pọ̀ ohun tí ojú mí'ti rí s'ẹ̀hìn; nígbàt'ó dé ọ̀kánkán ọ̀dọ̀ mi, ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sì(í) kígbé; kó gbogbo nkan wọ̀nyí s'ápá ọ̀hún.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

ADVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS

We saw in a previous chapter that there is really no clear distinction of form between adjectives and nouns, so it will not be surprising to find that Yoruba has no special class of words, like English words ending in '-ly', which we can obviously label 'adverbs'. What we are dealing with in this chapter are words and expressions which can be used to define or qualify verbs or adjectives. Such words and expressions, apart from the special class discussed below in para. 5, follow the verb or adjective except, of course, when they are emphatic, in which case they are placed at the head of the sentence with a following *ni*.

1. Some common words which function as adverbs and also as adjectives and/or nouns are: *dáadáa* 'well', *burúkú* 'nastily', *púpọ̀* 'much', *diẹ* 'a little', *gbogbo* 'altogether', *yí* 'this', *yẹn* 'that' (Yoruba often uses 'this' where English uses 'here, now' and 'that' where English uses 'there, then').

mo mò ọ̀ dáadáa, I know him well

ó wò mí burúkú, he looked at me nastily

ó fẹ̀ràn mí púpọ̀, he likes me a great deal

ó dára diẹ, it is fairly good

kíl'ẹ̀ fẹ̀ gbogbo?, what do you want altogether?

Ìbàdán l'a dé yí o, it is Ibadan we have come to now/
this is I. we have come to

kíl'o wí yẹn? what did you say then/what was that you said?

2. There are a few words in common use which function only as adverbs. These are: *rárá* 'at all', *mọ̀* 'any more, again', *rí* 'previously, formerly', *rí* (at the end of a question) 'I wonder', *ná* 'for the moment, first of all', *şá*

'merely, at any rate', *sé* 'I tell you'. (We exclude from consideration here the words *bí* and *ndan* (dialectal variants) which shew that a sentence is a question.)

kò wù mí rárá, it does not attract me at all
kò fẹ́(ẹ) lẹ mọ, she does not want to go any more
o rí erin l'áàyè rí bí? have you ever seen an elephant alive?

kíl'ó fún u rí? what did he give him, I wonder?
dúró ná, wait a moment
mo ti kà á ná, I have already read it
ng kọ fẹ́(ẹ) rà á sá, I just do not want to buy it
mo rí i sẹ, I did see it, I tell you

3. There is a very large number of phonaesthetic words which are used to emphasise or define more closely the meanings of verbs and adjectives. For example, *ó mọ* 'it is clean', *ó mọ tónítóní* 'it is spotlessly clean'; *ó pupa* 'it is red', *ó pupa fòò* 'it is crimson'; *ó funfun* 'it is white', *o funfun láúláú* 'it is snow-white', *aşo funfun láúláú* 'snow-white clothes'; *ó nrin dúbèdùgbè* 'he is walking heavily', *ó ìdè fùú* 'he rose in a trice'. In the case of *rí* 'look, be in appearance' the verb is in itself incomplete and requires the phonaesthetic word to give it a body, e.g. *ó rí roboto* 'it is round', *ó rí múlómúló* 'it is soft and downy'. Note that the function of the words used with *rí* is exactly the same as that of the words used to qualify the other verbs; from the Yoruba point of view we cannot say that these are 'adjectives' while those are 'adverbs'.

Many of the words which function thus as adverbs also function as adjectives, e.g. *ó han gooro* 'it sounded shrilly', *ohùn gooro* 'shrill/high-pitched voice'; *ó rí wúruwùru* 'it is untidy', *yàrá wúruwùru* 'untidy room'.

4. Many adverbial expressions are formed with the preposition *ní* 'at, on, in' plus a noun; some of the commonest of these have come to be written as one word, e.g. *lóní* 'today' (*ní òní*), *lólá* 'tomorrow' (*ní ọla*), *láná* 'yesterday' (*ní àná*), *nílé* 'at home' (*ní ilé*), *lódé* 'outside' (*ní óde*).

wá(á) kí mi l'ótúnla, come and visit me the day after tomorrow
mo ní k'ó wá(á) pàdè mi l'áago méjì, I told him to come to meet me at 2 o'clock
nwọn san owó nàá fún mi láná, they paid me the money yesterday
mo rí i l'ójúde ọba, I saw him in the chief's courtyard

The use of *ní* in expressions of place and time, like the above, can be readily understood because the English usage is similar, but some other uses touched on in previous pages are not so obvious.

(a) We have seen that *ní* is used with what in English is a second object, e.g. *nwọn fún wa l'ówó* 'they gave us money', *ó kọ mí ní Yorùbá* 'he taught me Yoruba'.

(b) In some cases it has an instrumental sense, e.g. *ó nà mí ní pàşán* 'he beat me with a whip', *mo rà á ní şilè méjì* 'I bought it for 2/0d'.

(c) Often the meaning of the verb is not clear until the extension is added, e.g. *ó rán mi l'etí* 'he reminded me', *ó rán mi n'isẹ* 'he sent me on a message'; *ràn mí l'ówó* 'help me' (in a general sense), *ràn mí l'ẹrù* 'help me with my load'; *ó dá mí* 'he threw me' (in wrestling), *ó dá mí l'ójú* 'it is certain to me'.

(d) It has a meaning something like 'as' in:

mo kí nýn gbogbo l'ókúnrin l'òbinrin l'òmòdè l'ágbà,
 I greet all of you—men, women, children, grown-ups
ó dára l'òbinrin, she was beautiful as a woman = she was a beautiful woman

5. We have seen that a great many ideas which we express by means of adverbs in English are expressed by the use of a second verb in Yoruba, e.g. *kò dára tó* 'it is not good enough', *ó sálọ (sá lẹ)* 'he ran away'. Some of the verbs used in this way may in other contexts occur independently, e.g. *ó tó* 'it is enough', *ó lẹ* 'he went', while others have no independent use, e.g. *a jọ lẹ* 'we together went', *ó kó wọn jọ* 'he gathered them together'. A group of words which occur only in front of the main verb may be regarded as a type of auxiliary verb; a

feature of the use of these is that while they are placed after the future tense particles *yíó/á* they are placed in front of *tí, n-, máa* (though exceptions to this rule occasionally occur).

ṣì, 'still'

ó ṣì wà nìbè, it is still there

mo ṣì ñkà á l'ówò ni, I am still reading it

kókó/kóó, 'first'

èmi ni kí n kókó dán a wò, I should be the first to try it

kókó lọ sí pòsófisi, lèhinnáá . . ., first go to the Post-office, then . . .

tètè, 'early'

kì itètè dé, he does not come early

ó maa ñtètè lọ(ọ) sùn, she goes to bed early

sá, 'at least, at any rate'. This word, like *yíó* and *má*, has basically a tone falling from high to low, so that following high and mid tones have the variant usual after a low tone.

o sá mò pé kò sí owó mò, you know, of course, there is no more money

sá pá á dé, just close it (i.e. don't lock it)

sá maa ñsò, just carry on

ṣèsè, 'just now, just then'

mo ṣèsè dé ni, I have only just arrived

ó ṣèsè ñdide bọ, he is just now beginning to rise in the world

kúkú, 'really, in fact'

kò kúkú ri bẹ̀ gaan, it is not really quite like that

kúkú gbà gbogbo rẹ̀, take all of it, while you are about it

ng ó kúkú fi sílẹ̀, I'll just leave it, and that's all about it

jumọ, 'together'

jék'á jumọ ẹ̀ é pọ̀, let's do it together in a group

a jumọ ñs'ọ̀rẹ̀, we are friends together

fẹ̀rẹ̀, 'almost'

mo fẹ̀rẹ̀ kú, I almost died

a fẹ̀rẹ̀ má lè ri ẹnìkẹ̀ni níbí t'ó gbọ̀ Gẹ̀ẹ̀sì, we can hardly

find anyone here who understands English (= there is hardly anyone etc.)

ó fẹ̀rẹ̀ má tí ilọ̀ tí mo fi wọ̀lé, he had hardly gone when I came in

wulẹ̀, 'for no particular reason'

ó wulẹ̀ nà mí ni, he just beat me for nothing

dédé, 'suddenly, by chance'

ó dédé ṣubú lulẹ̀, he suddenly fell to the ground

túbọ̀, 'further, more'

ọ̀rọ̀ yí túbọ̀ mú mí nínú dún, this speech made me even happier

ìṣẹ̀ yí túbọ̀ ñlẹ̀ sí i, this work is getting harder and harder

tìlẹ̀, 'in fact'

ng kò tìlẹ̀ mò ibit'ó wà rárá, I don't in fact know where he is at all

kàn, 'merely, just'

mo kàn f'ẹ̀nu bà á ní ṣókí, I just mentioned it briefly

ha, 'then' (in questions)

kíl'ó ha fẹ̀? what do you want, then?

kí ha n'iyí? what is this then?

èmi ha ni mo jí i? was it, I, then, stole it?

Note that *ha* may either precede or follow *ni*.

mọ̀mọ̀, 'deliberately'

ó mọ̀mọ̀ ẹ̀ é ni, he did it deliberately

ó mọ̀mọ̀ ñjẹ̀ mí n'iyà ni, he is deliberately making me suffer

It is impossible to give satisfactory short translations of such words as *sá*, *kúkú*, *ṣèsè* and *tìlẹ̀* (which, by the way, may be heard pronounced as *tẹ̀ẹ̀*). The precise nuance given by their use varies a good deal and is often conveyed by intonation in English. They need to be learnt in phrases associated with certain contexts, not as isolated words.

Other verbs are sometimes used in a similar way to these 'auxiliaries', e.g. *rọ̀ra* (*rọ̀ ara*) 'to be gentle' and *yára* (*yá ara*) 'to be quick', as in *rọ̀ra má wà á* 'always

drive it quietly' and *mo yára nlo rà á* 'I am going quickly to buy it'. Examples of their independent use are *rora ò!* 'take it easy!' and *ó yára* 'he is active'.

The words *mà* (used in exclamations) and *sì* 'and' also belong to this class of 'auxiliaries' but for convenience these are dealt with elsewhere, pp. 55 and 203.

6. A common type of adverbial expression is introduced by *bí* 'like, as', e.g. *ó dùn bí oyin* 'it is sweet like honey'. This word behaves as a noun in that its vowel is lengthened on a mid tone if the following word begins with a consonant, e.g. *kò tóbi bí(i) tẹmi* 'it is not big like mine'. A related form *bá-* occurs in *báyì* 'like this', *báun* 'like that' (Northern dialects), *bákánnáá* 'in the same way, alike', *bámíràn* 'in a different way'. Another variant is seen in *bẹẹ* 'so, like that'. These forms function also as adjectives and nouns, e.g. *ilé bí(i) tirẹ* 'a house like yours', *òrọ mi kò jù bẹẹ lọ* 'my words (= what I have to say) is no more than that (so)'.

More will be said about adverbial expressions in Chapter 37, which deals with reduplicated forms.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

<i>dà . . . lé . . . lóri</i> , to pour on	<i>gbà . . . n'ímòrán</i> , to advise
<i>yàà</i> , copiously	<i>nítòótọ</i> (<i>ní t'òótọ</i>), in truth
<i>kọ</i> , to turn, direct	<i>bámúbámú</i> , very much
<i>etí dídí</i> , deaf ear	<i>kínníkínní</i> , carefully
<i>etí mí'dí</i> , I am deaf	<i>sílíkì</i> , silk
<i>nípa</i> , about	<i>pínìn</i> , glossy
<i>gidigidi</i> , very much	<i>kọ mọ̀nà</i> (<i>mà̀nà</i>), to dazzle
<i>jàjà</i> , at last	<i>wọru</i> , in floods
<i>biribiri</i> , very dark	<i>tààrà</i> , straight
<i>fonfon</i> , soundly	<i>níláárí</i> , to have value,
<i>gbẹ̀kẹ̀lé</i> (<i>gbé ẹ̀kẹ̀ lé</i>), to trust	worth

EXERCISE 27

Translate into English: *ó dà omi lé mi l'óri yàà*; *ó kọkọ ñkọ etí dídí sí wọ̀n*; *kò kúkú sọ nkánkan nípa rẹ̀ fún mí*;

mo gbádùn ibẹ gidigidi; *kò tilẹ̀ ràn mí l'ówọ̀ rára*; *ó féré jẹ̀ pé gbogbo wa l'a fẹ̀ lọ wò ó*; *nígbàti mo jájà dé' bẹ̀, nwọ̀n tí tà á*; *ilẹ̀ tí sù biribiri*; *mo té ení*, *mo sùn lọ fonfon*; *má jẹ́kí gbogbo ọ̀rọ̀ tètè máa jádẹ̀ l'enu rẹ̀*; *ohun tí mo kàn fẹ̀ fàyo nínú ọ̀rọ̀ yí ní pé ọ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀ yí kò tó(ó) gbẹ̀kẹ̀lé*; *àwọ̀n ní yíó tètè kọ(ó) yera fún ọ̀*; *mo sẹ̀sẹ̀ rà á tí ilú òyínbó bọ̀ ní*; *taní'ha lẹ̀ gbà wá n'ímòrán?* *mo tí san gbogbo rẹ̀ sẹ̀*; *aşọ bí(i) tirẹ̀ yí ní mo maa wọ̀*; *kò kúkú fẹ̀(ẹ̀) fún wa ní nkánkan*; *ó sá lẹ̀ mú mí dé ọ̀dọ̀ ọ̀gá rẹ̀*; *òtító pátápátá gbáá ní*; *nítòótọ̀, owó sị wá l'ówọ̀ mí dáadáa*; *àpótí náá kún bàmúbámú fún owó*; *mo yẹ̀ mọ̀tò náá wò kínníkínní*; *sílíkì funfun pínìn l'ó fí dá agbáda yí*; *gbogbo rẹ̀ l'ó ñkọ̀ mọ̀nà*; *mo rí i pé ó nsunkún wọru*; *ọkọ̀ iyáwó kò gbọdọ̀ bá iyáwó rẹ̀ lọ sílẹ̀ tààrà báun*; *mo rò pé àwọ̀n ènià míràn'şì túbọ̀ fídé ní*; *a kò sẹ̀sẹ̀ lẹ̀ máa sọ pé irú ènià báyì kò níláárí*; *ẹ̀ jẹ́k'á wá ogbọ̀n tí a ó lò tí èyí kò fí ní(i) rí bẹ̀.*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

VERBS 'TO BE' IN YORUBA

We have seen that with common descriptive words like *kéré* 'is/was small' there is no separate Yoruba word corresponding to the English verb 'to be', but that there is a word *ní* which corresponds to 'it is/was' in certain emphatic situations. There are, in fact, several verbs in Yoruba each of which in its own proper context corresponds to the one English verb 'to be' and it is important that we should be able to sort these out.

1. *jé* and *ṣe*, which are constructed with nouns (including occasionally adjectival forms used as nouns), tend to some extent to overlap; it is, however, possible to make a broad distinction that *jé* is used when we are thinking of natural, in-born, permanent characteristics while *ṣe* is used of what is accidental, acquired or temporary; this meaning of *ṣe* is always clearly present when the *ní*-prefix is used.

òkan'jé òkùnrin, òkan'sì jé obìnrin, one is a boy (male) and one is a girl (female)

òyìnbó l'ó jé, it is a European he is/ he is a *European*
nìgbàtí mo wò ó dáádáa, aya mi l'ó jé, when I looked at her closely (well), she was my *wife*

mo ṣe káfintà rí, I was once a carpenter/I have been a carpenter

akòwé ni mo nṣe nísisiyí, I am now a *clerk*

Àdùkẹ́ l'ó nṣe aya mi nìgbànáá, it was Aduke who was my wife at the time

In the above examples it is not possible to substitute *ṣe* for *jé* or vice versa. We do, however, get such sentences as *òkan'jé akòwé, òkan'sì jé àgbẹ́* 'one was a clerk and one was a farmer' where the occupations, without any time reference, are treated as permanent states. If we

substitute *nṣe* here it will create the impression that these occupations were only temporary and in a sense accidental. Even with time references, be it noted, *jé* is used when we are talking of moral qualities or of status in society, e.g. *ó jé ọmọ rere rí* 'he once was a good boy', *olòyè ni mo jé nìgbànáá* 'I was a title-holder at the time'. In some cases there is a sharp differentiation in meaning according to whether we use *jé* or *ṣe*.

ó jé ènià, he is a human being (i.e. not a ghost, animal etc.)

ó ṣe ènià, he is kind, humane (i.e. he acts as a human being)

ó jé ọkùnrin, he (i.e. a child) is male, boy

ó ṣe ọkùnrin, he is manly, brave (i.e. he acts as a male)

The use of the simple (perfective) form *ṣe* referring to present time is restricted to a few phrases like the above; otherwise *nṣe* is used, but in the examples above its use could alter the meaning—*ó nṣe ọkùnrin* (if not the habitual of the example quoted) could be a slightly derogatory remark made by a woman equivalent to 'he is acting as men always do'.

The meaning of *jé* is such that forms other than the simple stem do not often occur; examples are *máa jé ọmọ rere* 'always be a good child', *ó máa nṣàbà jé ọmọ rere* 'he is usually a good boy' and *yió jé ọmọ rere* 'it will be a good child'—which could be a blessing in connection with a child yet unborn. In the negative *ki iṣe/kò nṣe*, the negative habitual of *ṣe*, corresponds to both *jé* and *nṣe*, while the negative of *ṣe* is naturally *kò ṣe*.

ki iṣe ènià, it is not a human being

kò ṣe ènià, he is not kind

kò nṣe akòwé, he is not a clerk

kò nṣe òyìnbó, he is not a European

kò jé does however occur in certain phrases, e.g. *kò jé bẹẹ́ rárá* lit. 'it is not so at all' but actually meaning 'it is first-rate', and *bí kò bá jé pé* 'if it is not the case that' corresponding to *b'ó bá jé pé* 'if it is the case that' (for *bí . . . bá* 'if' see p. 168).

2. *wà* and *m̀bẹ̀* are basically dialectal variants both meaning 'to exist, be in a situation or state'; *wà* is in more general use in S.Y. but *m̀bẹ̀* is occasionally used for the sake of variety.

Olórún'wà/m̀bẹ̀, God exists, there is a God
owó wà, there is money available
ó wà nínú àpótí, it is in the box
ó wà l'òhùn, she is yonder
nwọ̀n wà ní idúró, they are in a standing position
ó wà, he exists, i.e. is quite well (in reply to an enquiry about a person)
ó tí wà nínú àpótí yí tẹ̀lẹ̀ rí, it has previously been in this box
yíó wà tí tí lálá, it will exist for ever
omí'máa ǹwà níbí nìgbàgbogbo, there is always water here

The only negative form occurring is the negative habitual of *wà*, e.g. in the proverb *àgbà kí iwà l'òjà kí orí ọmọ́ títun 'ó wọ́* 'elders are not found in the market for the head of a new baby to hang sideways', i.e. it is the job of responsible people to draw attention to anything that is wrong. In all other cases a verb *sí* is used; as in the corresponding English, a definite noun precedes the negative while an indefinite noun follows the verb, e.g. *iwé mí (k)ò sí nìbẹ̀* 'my book is not there', *kò sí iwé mí nìbẹ̀* 'there is no book of mine there'.

kò s'ówó tó, there isn't enough money
kò sí, there is none
nwọ̀n (k)ò sí nílẹ̀, they are not at home
kò sí nínú àpótí yí, it is not in this box/there isn't any in this box
kò is'ómi tó, there isn't yet enough water
Ọjó (k)ò ní(i) sí nìbẹ̀, Ojo will not be there

3. *rí* is used with phonaesthetic adjectives* describing the physical characteristics of people or things, also in questions asking for descriptions, e.g. 'what's it like?'

* We saw on p. 122 that *ṣe*, too, is used with some of these adjectives.

and with various words built up from *bí* 'like', i.e. *báyí* 'like this', *bẹ̀ẹ̀* 'like that', *bákannáá* '(like) the same'.

ó rí perẹ̀ṣẹ̀, it is flat
ó rí wúruwúru, it is untidy
ó rí múlòmúló, it is soft and downy
báwo l'ó tí rí? what is it like? (lit. how is it like?)
kíl'ó tí rí? what is it like? (more colloquial)
kò rí bẹ̀ẹ̀, it is not like that
nwọ̀n (k)ò rí bákannáá, they have not the same appearance
nwọ̀n máa ní rí roboto, they are generally round
kiní yíó tí rí lólá? what will it be like tomorrow?

4. *yà* always has a personal subject and is usually followed by a noun denoting a type of person of whom Yoruba society disapproves; it is often written as one word with this following noun.

ó yadi (odi), he is dumb/became dumb
ó yàgàn (àgàn), she is barren
ó ya ọmọ́ búburú, he is/turned out a bad boy
nwọ̀n ya ọlẹ̀, they were lazy

5. *dà* 'where is?' is preceded either by a noun or an *emphatic* pronoun. The word is used when the request is more or less equivalent to a command for the person or thing to be produced, e.g. *iwọ́ dà?* 'where are you?' means 'come here, I want to talk to you'. *òun dà?* 'where is it?' contrasts with *níbo l'ó wà?*, which is merely a request for information about the object's whereabouts.

6. *dí* and *dà* are brought in here though they are often equivalent to English 'to become' rather than to 'to be'. *dí* is the form generally used in normal sentence order, i.e. with a noun (including adjective forms functioning as nouns) following, while *dà* is used when the noun is placed at the front of the sentence for emphasis.

ó d'ọ̀la, till tomorrow, then (lit. it has become tomorrow)
ó dí Sàtidé, till Saturday, then
ijọ́ méló l'ó dà? till how many days, then?

ó di èḗmérín tí mo tí wá, it is now four times that I have come

mo sọ ó di mímò, I caused it to become known

ó ti di mímò fún wa, it has already become known to us

yió di olówó láìpé, he will become a rich man soon

7. *ni* and *kọ* are complementary since *kọ* is the negative of *ni*. This word *ni*, as we have already seen (p. 24), has the general effect of emphasising what precedes it, but there are variations of nuance.

(a) The effect of the word may be to exclude alternative possibilities.

tani'rí i? èmi ni, who found it? it was me

tal'ẹ rí nìbẹ? Táíwò ni, who did you see there? Taiwo

şé lóní l'ẹ dé? lóní ni, was it today you arrived? (yes)

it was today

kọ is used to stress the fact that the alternative possibility is, in fact, correct.

şé iwọ l'ọ fọ? èmi kọ, Táíwò ni, was it you broke it?

it wasn't me, it was Taiwo

işé kékeré kọ, it is no small job

If *kọ* is followed by a verb phrase it must itself be followed by *ni*.

èmi kọ ni mo gbé e lọ, òun ni, it wasn't me who took it away, it was him

lóní kọ ni mo kọkọ rí i, it wasn't today I first saw him

The difference between *kì işe/kò işe* and *kọ*, both of which may be translated by 'it isn't/it wasn't', is made by intonation in English. For example, *ẹjẹ kọ* 'it isn't blood' suggests an alternative *òdà ni* 'it is paint', while *kì işe ẹjẹ* 'it isn't blood' might follow on *ó dàbí ẹjẹ* 'it is like blood' (*dàbí* is formed from *dà* in 6. above and *bí* 'like, as').

(b) *ni* is often used to call attention to a word where there is no suggestion of an alternative possibility, e.g. on hearing a noise in the garden one might call out to enquire what was the matter and be given the answer *ẹjọ*

l'ó şán ọmọdé kán 'a snake (it is) has bitten a child'. Said in this way the sentence really contains two pieces of information 'there's a snake—it has bitten a child'. Contrast with this *ẹjọ şán ọmọdé kán láná* 'a snake bit a child yesterday', where there is no heightening of the effect.

igbà yí ni baba ọrẹ rẹ'kú, now at this time his friend's father died

owó mi ni mo bèrè tí ó fi bẹrẹsì(i) bú mi, (fi p. 174) my money it is I asked for that he thereupon began to abuse me—I just asked for my money and etc.

báyí ni ọba yí şe fú ọ̀lọ̀lọ̀ ọ̀yì mọ́fà, so thus it is this king acted for a whole six months

(c) Where *ni* is used at the end of a verb phrase it calls attention to the verb. In answer to the question *kí'ọ işe* 'what are you doing?' one might get *mo úşşọ ni* 'I am washing (clothes)', in which case the *ni* suggests the continuation 'is what I am doing'. The same sentence (as in English) might also come in response to a suggestion about going out shopping—'I am sorry, I am busy. I am washing', in which case the implied continuation is 'that is the reason I cannot come out now'. These two cases tie up closely with (a) and (b) above; in the first case 'washing' is picked out and all other possible alternatives eliminated while in the second the attention is mainly directed to the fact that one is busy, the actual activity involved being rather incidental.

The difference made by the addition of *ni* is clearly brought out in the following example. If a patient at a dispensary is handed some medicine he may say *şé kí m mu ú?* 'am I to drink it?', to which one might answer *ẹn, mu ú* 'yes, drink it' or *ẹn-ẹn, má imu ú* 'no, don't drink it yet'. If, however, he is doubtful whether it is a medicine or a lotion he may say *şé kí m mu ú ni?* 'am I to drink it?', to which the answer may be *ẹn, mu ú ni* 'yes, drink it' or *ẹn-ẹn, işe ni k'ò fi para* 'no, to do (what you must do) is that you rub your body with it (take rub body)'. In line with this distinction we find *ni* used with alternative

questions, e.g. **kí n sè é ni àbí kí n dín i ni?** 'am I to *stew* it or am I to *fry* it?'

ńṣe ni (or just **ṣe ni**) as used above is one way of adding extra emphasis to a verb. Its translation will vary to some extent according to the time reference of the verb, e.g. **ńṣe l'ó fún mi l'ówó** 'he actually gave me money' (past) but **ńṣe ni k'ò fún u l'ówó** 'what you should do is give him money' (future). An alternative way is to use a re-duplicated form of the verb (see p. 189) with **ni**, e.g. **nínà ni ng ó nà á** 'I will give him a good beating', lit. 'beating it is I will beat him'.

(d) **ni** often occurs at the end of a subordinate clause placed before the main clause.

bí ó ti ńpè orúkọ wọnyí ni ó ńṣe ibèèrè ọ̀pọ̀lọ̀pọ̀ nkán, as he was calling out these names (it is) he was making enquiries about many things

àfi bí a bá ńpurọ̀ ni a ó wípé owó kò ṣe pàtàkì, it is only if we are lying we shall say that money is not important

(e) In certain types of sentence **ni** seems to be no more than a link word.

èmi n'iyí, here I am/this is me

òun n'iyen, there he is/that's him

èyítí mo sọ fún u ni pé . . ., what I said to him was that . . .

ídí rẹ̀ tí mo fi wá ni pé . . ., the reason that I have come is that . . .

(f) **ni** is followed by the object forms of the unemphatic personal pronouns, except that in the third pers. sing. no pronoun is used.

akọ̀wé ni mí I am a *clerk*

akọ̀wé ni ọ̀/ẹ̀ etc.

akọ̀wé ni

akọ̀wé ni wá

akọ̀wé ni nín

akọ̀wé ni wọ̀n

Using the emphatic pronouns the sentences would be **akọ̀wé l'èmi** or **akọ̀wé l'èmi ńṣe/ṣe** 'I am a *clerk*' etc.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

igbádùn, enjoyment
ipónjù, distress
àkàlà, hornbill
àtàtá, genuine, real
àgàn, barren woman
arúgbó, old person

àbùrò, younger 'brother'
aláísí, being deceased
(non-existent)
gorí (gùn orí), to ascend
jibàtájibata, soaking

EXERCISE 28

Translate into English: èyí kò rí bèè mọ̀ nísisiyí; ariwo'pọ̀jù ní ilé wa, kò sí igbàtí àlejò kí idé; nigbàt'ò wá mọ̀ pé àlejò ni mí, àti pàápàá pé àlejò ilé òun ni mo ńṣe, kò fi àṣírí nàà pamọ̀ fún mi mọ̀; ó jẹwọ̀ fún mi pé kí iṣe pé oògùn l'ó mú òun, ṣùgbọ̀n igbádùn'wá fún òun l'ódò wọ̀n ni; ó jé ọ̀ba t'ó ṣ'ènià púpọ̀; eiyé àkàlà'jé eiyé t'ó l'èwu púpọ̀; o kò gbọ̀dọ̀ yà ajá tí kí igbọ̀ fèrè ọ̀dẹ̀; ọ̀gèdẹ̀ kí igbé odò yàgàn (yà àgàn); iyá mí'ti darúgbó (di arúgbó) nísisiyí; e jòwọ̀, e ṣe iyá fún mi; ọ̀jò'pa wá, aṣọ̀ wá'ri jibàtájibata; ọ̀rẹ̀ àtàtá ni ọ̀lọ̀pá ṣe fún gbogbo ará ilú; nígbàt'ò nígbé ilé wa, ó jé enit'ó farabalẹ̀ púpọ̀; ọ̀mọ̀ kékeré l'ó wá nígbàt'ó gorí oyè; ọ̀mọ̀ t'ó ṣe aláísí yí, òun nikan ni iyá iyawó mí'bí l'ọ̀kúnrin; ó nílátí jé pé ara àbùrò rẹ̀ kò dá; nwọ̀n nílátí jé ọ̀mọ̀ ọ̀lọ̀dún mèèdògún, ó kéré tán; ó tí pé tí nwọ̀n tí wá, nwọ̀n ó sí maa wá tífí láíláí ni; kò sí ọ̀kan nínú wọ̀n tí kí iṣe pé orí ilẹ̀ aiyé yí l'a tí bá a; bí aláfiá'ba tí wá, tí owó sí míbẹ̀, ipónjù ènià tí tán n'iyen.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

TIME (CONTINUED)

1. In asking general questions about time, i.e. not clock times, the commonest word in use is, as we have seen, *nígbàwo* 'when?', lit. 'at what time? (*ní igbà wo*)'. Some Yorubas use a form without *ni*, i.e. *igbàwo*. This has come to be written as one word because it corresponds to the single English word 'when?'. Less common expressions, i.e. *l'ákòkò wo* 'at what period?', *n'ijó/l'ójó wò* 'on what day?', *l'òṣù wo* 'in what month?', *l'òdún wò* 'in what year' are usually written as separate words. (In these expressions, too, the *ní* may be omitted.)

- nígbàwo l'o dé?* when did you arrive?
l'ákòkò wo l'ẹ́ nṣiṣẹ́ níbẹ́? at what period were you working there?
n'ijó wò l'o maa dá a padà? on what day will you return it?
l'òṣù wo ni nwón ùbẹ̀rẹ̀ ilé-ìwé? in what month do they begin school?
l'òdún wò l'o fi ilé-ìwé sílẹ́? in what year did you leave school?

To translate 'since when? etc.' we must put *ti* before the verb and we may also substitute *látí* 'from, since' for *ní* 'at, in'; not all Yorubas do this.

- lát'igbàwo l'o ti dé?* since when have you arrived?
 since when have you been here?
nígbàwo l'o ti nṣiṣẹ́ níbí? since when have you been working here?
lát'ijó wò l'o ti rí i? since what day have you seen him?
 what day did you last see him?
lát'òdún wò l'ẹ́ ti ùgbé ibi? since what year have you been living here?

TIME (CONTINUED)

Possible answers to the first set of questions are *l'álẹ́ ànà ni* 'it was yesterday evening' or *mo dé l'álẹ́ ànà* 'I arrived yesterday evening'; *l'ákòkò ọ̀jò ni* 'it was during the rainy period'; *màá dá a padà l'ótúnla* 'I will return it the day after tomorrow'; *l'òṣù kinni ọ̀dún ni* 'it is in the first month of the year'; *l'òdún kẹ̀tá sẹ́hin ni* 'it was two years ago'.

The second set of questions requires *látí* in the answers, e.g. *lát'áárọ̀ ni* 'since morning'; *lát'ijetá ni* 'since two days ago'; *lát'ẹ́sin ni* 'since last year'. Note that a question of the type *lát'ijó wò l'o ti rí i?* can be made more explicit by adding the word *mọ́* 'stop' at the end of it; *lát'ijó wò l'o ti i rí mọ́?* means 'when did you stop seeing him/when did you last see him?'

The verb *mọ́* means more accurately 'to stop at a point/limit' and can be used of both space and time, e.g. *ẹnu báyi ni k'ò ro ó mọ́* 'hoe it as far as this (and no further)', lit. 'limit (ẹnu 'mouth' has also this meaning) like this it is you are to hoe it stop'; *ṣe b'ò ti mọ́* 'know your limitations', lit. 'act as (*bí . . . tí*) you are limited'; *ọ̀jọ́ isinmi ni mo maa ṣiṣẹ́ mọ́* 'I will work up to Sunday', lit. 'Sunday it is I will work stop at'. *Ọ̀jọ́ isinmi ni mo ti rí i mọ́* is translated by 'Sunday was the last day I saw him' or 'I have not seen him since Sunday', which is somewhat more emphatic than *ng kò ití irí i lát'ọ̀jọ́ isinmi* lit. 'I have not yet seen him since Sunday'. 'Last' is more generally to be translated by *kẹ́hin* (*kó ẹ́hin*) 'bring up the rear', e.g. *òun l'ó kẹ́hin dé* 'he was the last to arrive', *nígbàti mo rí i kẹ́hin . . .* 'when I last saw him, on the last occasion I saw him', *ọ̀jọ́ isinmi yẹn ni mo rí i kẹ́hin* 'it was that Sunday I saw him for the last time'. It contrasts with *kókó* 'first', e.g. *òun l'ó kókó dé* 'he was the first to arrive', *kókó lọ sí posófisi, lẹ́hinnaá . . .* 'first go to the post-office, then . . .'

2. We have seen that either *nígbàti* or *igbàti* may stand at the beginning of a clause like 'when I saw him, I ran away' (*ńígbàti mo ri i, mo sálo*—but only *igbàti* can be the object of verbs like *mọ́* 'know', *sọ́* 'say', *bèrè* 'ask',

e.g. *ó bèèrè igbàtí mo maa lo* 'he asked when I intended going'. A further difference between the two situations is that when the main verb is preceded by *ti* we can still use only *igbàtí* etc. as the object of a verb, but in the other situation we may have *lát'igbàtí* etc. instead of (*ń*)*igbàtí*.

lát'igbàt'ó ti lo sí ilú òyìnbó, ng kò ití igbúró rẹ̀ mọ̀, since he has gone to England, I have not had news of him

nígbàt'á ti rí owó náà gbà, ọ̀rọ̀'bùsẹ̀, now that we have received the money, the palaver is over

nwọ̀n fẹ́(ẹ̀) mọ̀ igbàt'ò ti rí i mọ̀, they want to know when you last saw/stopped seeing him

ó bèèrè igbàtí àbúrò mí'ti kúrò ní Ìbàdán, he asked since when my younger 'brother' had left Ibadan

The direct form of the last example would be *lát'igbàwo ni àbúrò rẹ̀'ti kúrò ní Ìbàdán?*

If a *lát'igbàtí . . . ti, nígbàtí . . . ti* clause is followed by *ni*, that has the effect of making it more emphatic; the effect of this is best shewn by translating it 'as soon as', if the situation is in the past.

nígbàtí mo ti kúrò ní London ni mo ti bèrẹ̀sí(i) sàìsàn, as soon as I left London (it is) I began to be unwell

If, however, the situation is in the present, the translation would be 'now that I have left London (it is) I have begun to feel unwell'. But if the clause is 'indefinite', i.e. it contains *bá*, and so refers to the future, the translation 'as soon as' is best even when there is no following *ni*.

nígbàtí mo bá ti rí i, ng ó fún u l'ówó náà, as soon as I see him, I will give him the money

In such clauses *nígbà/igbà* is actually usually omitted, leaving just *tí* (see also p. 168).

t'ó bá ti dé, sọ̀ fún u pé mo fẹ́(ẹ̀) bá a sọ̀rọ̀, as soon as he arrives, tell him I want to talk with him

tí nwọ̀n bá ti san owó rẹ̀ nwọ̀n le gbé e lo, as soon as they have paid the money for it they can take it away

3. All that has been said about *igbàtí* and its variants can be applied to other combinations of time words with *tí*, i.e. such phrases as *ijó/ọ̀jọ̀ tí* 'the day that', *lẹ́hìn tí*, *lẹ́hìn igbàtí* 'after that', *gbàrà tí* 'immediately that', etc.

4. In certain time expressions the verb *fi* is used; its various meanings are made clear in the examples.

(a) *kò pé púpọ̀ tí ilẹ̀'fi sù,* It was not very long before darkness fell (and darkness then fell)

kò pé tí mo dé tí mo fi gorí oye, it was not long after I arrived that I entered on chiefly office

mo fẹ́rẹ̀ má ití isọ̀rọ̀ tán tí nwọ̀n fi jádẹ̀, I had hardly finished speaking when they (then) came out

kò ití ilọ̀ jìnnà t'ó fi rí ọ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀, he had not gone very far when he (then) saw his friend

In all these sentences there is a negative in the opening clause; *mo fẹ́rẹ̀ má ití isọ̀rọ̀ tán* is lit. 'I almost had not yet spoken finish'.

(b) *gbogbo igbàtí a fi wà ní London, kò jẹ́kí isẹ̀ bájẹ̀,* during all the time we were in London he did not let the work spoil

nígbàtí mo fi nǹgbé ilẹ̀ yi l'ó maa nwa kí mi, during the time I was living in this house (it is) he used to come to see me

In these sentences the verb in the *nígbàtí* clause is either in the simple form or continuous (*ń-* prefix) form. Contrast the next examples, where the verb is in the future form.

(c) *nígbàtí Ọ̀jọ̀ fi maa dé, ilẹ̀'ti nǹsú lo,* by the time Ojo arrived, it was already getting dark

nígbàtí a fi maa jádẹ̀ ninú ilẹ̀ náà, ọ̀rẹ̀ mí'ti lo s'ilẹ̀, by the time we came out of that house, my friend had gone home

nígbàtí nwọ̀n yíó fi dájọ̀, nwọ̀n dá a l'ẹ̀bi ikú, when at last they gave a verdict, they condemned him to death

when they came to give a verdict, they condemned him to death

The 'when at last' translation might also be used in the first two examples, but this idea is made more explicit by using the word *jàjà* in front of the verb, e.g. *nígbàtí Ojò jàjà dé . . .* 'when Ojo at long last arrived'; the word has the connotation of struggling with difficulties.

(d) *l'ákòkò tí iwé yí ó bá fi tẹ̀ ọ́ l'ówó, o ó ti kúrò l'Ékò*, by the time this letter reaches you, you will have left Lagos

ìgbàtí oúnjẹ̀ bá fi maa tán, a ó ti délé, by the time the food comes to an end we shall have arrived home

In both (c) and (d) the future form is used in the time clause, but the future meaning in (d) is produced by the addition of *bá*, making the clause 'indefinite'; there is also, of course, a difference of tenses in the main clause. It should be noted that in (c) type clauses the *fi* is sometimes omitted, e.g. *ìgbàt'ó maa tó ọ̀sẹ̀ méjì, ó ti di bí àtíjọ́* 'by the time two weeks had passed, he had become as before'. The use of the future in narratives about the past brings in a certain liveliness, cp. *wiwò t'ó wò iwájú, kí'ó maa rí?* 'when he looked in front, what did he see?'. A simple (perfective) form where a future might be expected has the same effect, e.g. *b'ò bá tún ẹ̀ bẹ̀, o gbé* 'if you do so again, you are done for'. Here the Yoruba and English usages correspond closely.

(e) *mo jókò dè é tí tí ọ́ fi padà dé*, I sat down and waited for him until he came back
jókò dè mí nìbí tí tí mo fi maa padà dé, sit down and wait for me here until I (shall) come back
yio fi silẹ̀ tí tí yio fi jinná, he will leave (it) until it is healed

In these sentences we have after *títí* either the simple form (referring to the past) or the future of that form (referring to the future). If the continuous—*n-* prefix—form is used after *títí* the meaning is rather different, e.g. *ọ̀kúnrin yí kò sọ̀rọ̀ tí tí nwọ̀n fi nse bẹ̀* 'this man did not speak during all the time that they were acting so'. The same use is also found with the verb *wà* 'to be', which has

as part of its meaning the idea of continuation, e.g. *títí nwọ̀n fi wà ninú ipọ̀njú yí, kò fi ọ̀kọ̀ rẹ̀ silẹ̀ rárá* 'all the time they were in this distress she did not leave her husband at all'. An *n-* prefix form used in the main clause of the sentence, however, does not produce this meaning, e.g. *mo maa ndákẹ̀ tí tí yio fi parí ọ̀rọ̀ rẹ̀* 'I always keep silent until he finishes his speech (what he has to say)', *mo nnà á tí tí ọ́ fi maa jẹ̀wọ́* 'I am beating him until he confesses'.

títí used by itself as an adverb means 'on and on', e.g. *ọ́ sọ̀rọ̀ tí tí* 'he kept on talking'. Its meaning can be intensified by repetition, e.g. *ọ́ sọ̀rọ̀ tí tí tí tí* 'he kept on and on talking'. When followed by a noun it may mean either 'during the period of' or 'at the end of a period of', e.g. *o kò ní(i) tọ̀sì tí tí ọ̀jọ́ aiyé rẹ̀* 'you will not be in want during (all) the days of your life', *yio padà tí tí ọ̀sù méfà* 'he will return in six months time'.

5. We have seen (p. 72) that *kí . . . tó* followed by a second verb corresponds to 'before'. This verb will refer to the past, habitual present or the future according to the time in the main clause.

mo maa njeun daadaa kí n tó lo(ọ) sun, I always have a good meal before I go off to bed
yio ti lo s'ilé k'a tó dé'bẹ̀, he will have gone off home before we get there
ọ́ jù ú nù kí n tó lè kà á, he threw it away before I could read it

We must remember, of course, that the first example here could also refer to a past situation, i.e. it might be translated 'I always used to have a good meal etc.' and that the second could occur in reported speech, e.g. 'I thought that he would have gone off etc.'.

6. Clauses introduced by *bí . . . ti* with the emphasising *ni* before the main clause are used when the action of the two clauses is simultaneous.

bí mo ti dé'bẹ̀ ni mo rí i pé ilé mi únóná, as I got there I saw (it) that my house was on fire

b'ò bá ti dé'bẹ l'ò ó rí sọ̀sì l'ápá òtún, as you get there you will see a church on the right
bí mo ti ñpadà ti ibi-iṣẹ́ dé ilé ni mo gbà wáyà kan, as I was returning home from work I got a 'wire'
bí a ti ñrin kiri l'a ñpadé àwọn tí a mò, as we were walking about we were meeting people we knew

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

ṣú , to get dark	iró , sound
egbòogì , medicine	géndé , strong man
opé , thanks	dẹ , to hunt, set trap
tí , to be near	ìgbẹ́ , forest
sọ , to break out; to say	hun , to weave
itòsì , near	agbòṅ , basket
aájò , attention, treatment	kò iná , to build up fire
irin-àjò , journey	hó yèè , to shout loudly
ro , to till	mélòkán , several

EXERCISE 29

Translate into English: ìgbàtí àbúrò mi'fi maa dé, ilẹ̀'ti ñṣú lọ; láti ìgbàwo l'ò ti yé(é) mu egbògi tí Dòkítà ní k'ò maa mu lójoojúmọ? nígbàwo l'ẹ pinnu àti má wá sí ilé-iwé alẹ̀ mò? bí mo ti ñparí ọ̀rọ̀ opé tí mo sọ sí i, gbogbo àwọn ènià'díde dúró; bí ó ti ẹ̀yí ariwo'tún sọ; èmi ni mo maa ñparí ijà láárín wọn ní iròlẹ̀ tí a bá ti inú oko dé; nígbàtí ọ̀kúnrin náà'maa dé itòsì ọ̀dọ̀ mi, ó di ègbòṅ mi; ng ó maa ẹ̀ aájò ẹ̀ tí tí ng ó fi aiyé silẹ̀ ni; kò pé tí a fi dé ilú tí a ñlọ; ó ti lọ sí irin-àjò láti ọ̀jọ̀ mètá sẹ̀hìn, k'ò tó délé tó ọ̀jọ̀ márún sí i; kí ó tó kú, a bèèrè l'ówọ̀ ẹ̀ ohun t'ó dé bá a; nígbàtí ó maa fi tó ọ̀dún kan, ọ̀ba t'ó fẹ̀ràn mi yí kú; ng kò itú iro oko náà tán tí ọ̀jọ̀'fi sù t'ó bèrẹ̀sí rọ; nígbàtí nwọn bá ti gbọ̀ iró ibon, àwọn géndé tí ó ńdẹ̀ ìgbẹ́ á hó yèè; ó tó aago mẹ̀fà kí nwọn tó parí ìgbẹ́ díde náà; bí ó ti jókò tí iná yí tí ó ńkò ó, ó ńhun agbòṅ kan tí ó ti bèrẹ̀ ní ijọ̀ mélòkán sẹ̀hìn.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

It will be convenient to divide conditional sentences into
 1. Real, as in English 'if I see him, I will tell him', and
 2. Unreal, as in 'if I were to do that, I should be very foolish'.

1. Real conditions in Yoruba need to be subdivided into (a) definite, i.e. without **bá** in the 'if' clause, and (b) indefinite, i.e. with **bá** in the 'if' clause.

(a) Definite clauses, which are introduced with the word **bí**, are not nearly as common as indefinite clauses. They occur in two situations—where the two alternatives in a situation are stated and where the conditional situation is like that we get, for example, in geometrical proofs, e.g. 'if AB equals CD, then EF equals GH'.

bí mo fé, bí mo kọ, mo ńlátí lọ, whether I want to or whether I refuse, I must go

bí mo rí i, bí ng kò rí i, kò ẹ̀ nkánkan, whether I saw him or not, it makes no difference

b'ó kú, b'ó yè, kò kàn mí, whether he dies or survives, it does not concern me

b'ómọ̀dé kò kú, agba ni idà (Yoruba proverb), if a child does not die, then he grows up

In the proverb it would create a very unfortunate impression if the conditional clause were made indefinite by the addition of **bá**, i.e. **b'ómọ̀dé kò bá kú** 'if a child does not happen to die', because this obviously suggests that children may be expected to die more often than not. But an indefinite clause will occur in a proverb where it is appropriate, e.g. **bí ikú bá ti ilẹ̀kùn, ebi ni iṣi i** 'if death closes (happens to close) a door, it is hunger which opens it', the point being that hunger will drive people to face anything.

(b) Indefinite clauses may be introduced either by *bí* or, in an 'if and when' sense, by *tí*. This *tí* seems to be a reduction of *nígbàtí*; as we have seen, Yoruba hardly distinguishes between time and condition clauses in an 'indefinite' situation.

bí/tí mo bá rí ẹ lólá, màá fún ẹ l'ówó náà, if I see you tomorrow, I will give you the money

bí/tí nwọn kò bá yára, nwọn kò ní(i) lè rí i k'ó tó(ó) lẹ sí idálẹ, if they do not hurry, they will not be able to see him before he goes out of town

bí/tí ẹ bá ńsìsẹ l'ówó ni, kò ẹ nkánkan, if you are actually working, it does not matter

bí/tí nwọn bá wà nìbẹ, kò burú, if they are there, it is all right

bí mo bá wí bẹẹ, ng kò wí(i) re (wí rere), if I spoke like that, I did not speak well

(ní ighà láílái) bí ọrọ wọn'ba wọ, yió sọ fún àwọn ará ilẹ rẹ, (formerly) if their talk turned out well, he would speak to his family

bí/tí kò bá tí idé, má dūrò dè é mọ, if he has not yet arrived, don't wait for him any more

Very frequently when the condition refers to the present or the past, the conditional clause is extended by the phrase *b'ó/t'ó bá jẹ pé* 'if it be that'. This phrase is, in fact, obligatory in all cases where some word in the clause is emphasised by being brought to the front with *ni*.

b'ó/t'ó bá jẹ pé ẹ ńsìsẹ l'ówó ni, kò ẹ nkánkan, if it be that you are actually working, it does not matter

b'ó/t'ó bá jẹ pé o kò rí i, ng kò ní(i) fún ẹ ní nkánkan, if you did not see him, I will not give you anything

b'ó/t'ó bá jẹ pé irọ l'o pa, màá jẹ ọ níyà, if you have told a lie, I will punish you

b'ó/t'ó bá jẹ pé lóni l'ó tó(ó) dé, kò ní(i) lè wá(á) kí mi lólá, if it is (only) today he managed to arrive, he will not be able to come to see me tomorrow

b'ó/t'ó bá jẹ pé ẹ ran l'o maa rà, ó dáa, if it is meat you are going to buy, very well

The use of this compound clause removes the element

of ambiguity present in such clauses as *bí mo bá wí bẹẹ*, which may be used to refer either to the past or the future according to the tense used in the main clause.

2. Unreal conditions are normally characterised by the use of *bá* in both the 'if' and the main clauses. Besides this, there are generally in the main clause and often in the 'if' clause special low tone forms of the unemphatic pronouns. When these forms are used in the 'if' clause, then *bí* is not used to introduce the clause, and this clause, when it precedes the main clause (as it usually does), is often made emphatic with a final *ni*.

m bá tètè dé ni, m bá bá a nínú ilé, had I come early, I would have found him in the house

ò bá tètè dè ni, ò bá r'àyè bá a sọrọ, had you come early, you would have had a chance to talk with him

ibá tètè dé ni, ibá wá(á) kí mi, had he come early, he would have come to greet me

à bá tètè dé ni, à bá lẹ(ẹ) wòran àwọn oníjọ, had we come early, we would have gone to see the dancers

ẹ bá tètè dé ni, ẹ bá rí nkán rà, had you come early, you would have found something to buy

nwọn ibá tètè dé ni, nwọn ibá r'àyè sinmi, had they come early, they would have had a chance to rest

Note the special form *i-*, written as one word with *bá*, for the 3rd pers. sing. 'he/she/it'. The other pronouns (except *nwọn*), pronounced on a low tone, are substituted for this *i-*, but *nwọn*, on a mid tone, is added to it. It is not unusual to find all the pronouns except *nwọn* written as one word with the *bá*, e.g. *m bá* 'had I', *à bá* 'had we'.

The translations given above may suggest that unreal conditional sentences always refer to the past, but this is not so; in line with all other Yoruba verb forms, which may refer indifferently to either past or present, this form too may refer to the present, e.g. *a sọ yí mà dára ò! m bá l'ówó tó ni, m bá rà á* 'this cloth is very fine! if I had enough money, I would buy it'. Other examples referring to the present are given below.

tí forms of the verb may occur in either clause.

m̀ bá tí rí lẹ̀tá rẹ̀ gbà kí n tó(ó) lọ sódè, m̀ bá dúró dè ẹ̀,
if I had received his letter before I went out, I would
have waited for him

**ò bá farabalẹ̀ gbọ̀ ohun tí Dọ̀kítà'wí ni, ò bá tí sà̀n
nìsisiyí,** if you had quietly listened to what the doctor
said, you would have been well by now

3. Negative clauses in real conditional sentences present no problem because the ordinary forms of the negative particles are used. But in unreal sentences there are complications—in the 'if' clause **ibá** etc. are followed by **má**, while in the main clause the particle **kí** is placed before **ibá**, with noun and pronoun subjects preceding it.

m̀ bá má mò, m̀ bá rà á, if I had not known, I would
have bought it

à bá má rí i, à bá tí lọ sílẹ̀, if we had not seen him, we
would by now have gone home

ibá má sí tí Dọ̀kítà, ng kí ibá tí isàn, if it were not for the
Doctor, I would not yet have got well

nwón ibá má tí ilọ, a kí ibá r'áyè bá nín sọ̀rọ̀, if they
had not yet gone, we would not have had a chance
to talk with you

Note that the written **kí ibá** is often pronounced as **kí bá** and that the negative 'if' clauses are not made emphatic by the addition of **ní**.

A complication in unreal conditional sentences is provided by the fact that some Yorubas use what are at first sight negative forms without a negative meaning, i.e. they use **kí bá** for the more general **ibá** and so on. This usage is rare in written Yoruba but it is not clear how widespread it is in speech.

4. Extended 'if' clauses of the type described in 1. are used also in unreal conditions, especially where action in progress is referred to and in negative clauses. In such clauses the negative is **kò**.

ibájépe/ibásepe o ńsísẹ̀ l'ówọ̀ ni, ng kí ibá dí ọ̀ l'ówọ̀, if it
were that you were actually working, I would not
hinder you

ibájépe o kò wá, m̀ bá gbàgbé rẹ̀, if you had not come,
I would have forgotten it

It is a convention to write **ibájépe/ibásepe** as single words; they contain the verbs **jé** and **se**, which here are synonymous (see p. 152), plus **pe**, which introduces a clause in indirect speech.

5. Very frequently the 'if' clause in unreal conditions has the same form as in real conditions, the hypothetical nature of the situation not becoming apparent until the beginning of the main clause.

**bí kò bá jé pé mo fura ohun t'ó fẹ̀(ẹ̀) se, ibá jí básikùlù mí
gbé,** if it were not that I suspected what he wanted
to do, he would have stolen my bicycle

b'ó bá jé pé mo mò ọ̀ ni, m̀ bá sọ̀ fún ẹ̀, if I knew it, I
would tell you

It may even be that the main clause itself has no obvious sign of 'unreality', e.g. **b'ó bá jé pé mo mò ni, ng kò ní(i) tí ilọ sódè** 'if I had known, I would not (yet) have gone out' (instead of **ng kí ibá tí ilọ sódè**). It is the sequence of tenses here which provides the clue—a 'real' translation 'if it be that I know, I will not (yet) have gone out' is obviously nonsensical.

6. Unreal conditional forms are sometimes used with a sense of politeness or diffidence, cp. English 'what would you like?'

bí ojú kò bá kán ẹ̀ ni, m̀ bá là ọ̀ràn nàá yé ẹ̀, if you are
not in a hurry, I would (like to) explain the matter
to you

bí kò bá ní(i) dí nín l'ówọ̀ ni, nwón ibá simi diẹ̀, if it
will not hinder you, they would (like to) rest a little

They also often occur in relative clauses and in exclamations with a suppressed 'if' clause.

ng kò mò ohun tí m̀ bá se, I did not know what I should
do

ẹ̀nítí ibá ràn mí l'ówọ̀ kò sí nìbí, the person who might
have helped me is not here

kíní ibá tí dùn tó! how nice it would be!

7. There is no fixed position for the 'if' clause, though it probably precedes the main clause more generally than is the case in English. A point to note is that when the 'if' clause follows the main clause it cannot be followed by the emphasising *ni*.

8. Obviously related to *ibá*, there is also a form *ibáá* etc. with the meaning 'even if' in such sentences as *è báá yínbon lù mí, kò lè pa mí l'ára* 'even if you shot a gun at me, it would not hurt me'. When it is repeated it has a rather different meaning, e.g. *ibáá jé òyìnbó, ibáá jé ènià dúdú, ó nílátí wá* 'whether he be an European or an African, he must come'. The use of *ibáá* 'even if' is restricted to hypothetical situations; otherwise, and more generally, *bí* followed by *tilẹ̀* 'in fact' (p. 149) before the main verb corresponds to 'even if, although', e.g. *bí ng kò tilẹ̀ lè rí i, mo mò pé ó wà níbẹ̀* 'even if/although I cannot see it, I know that it is there'. When *tilẹ̀* is used in a compound phrase with *jé* or *şe* 'to be', the whole phrase is usually written as one word, e.g. *bótílẹ̀jẹ̀pé (b'ó tilẹ̀ jẹ̀ pé) kò lè wá lóní, yíó wá lólá* 'although (it is that) he cannot come today, he will come tomorrow'.

9. Combinations of *bí* with *bá ti* are best considered as 'indefinite' variants of *bí . . . tí* clauses (p. 179 f.). They sometimes have a sort of conditional meaning, e.g. *rà á b'ó bá tí dára* 'buy it as long as/provided that it is good', but other translations are sometimes more appropriate, e.g. the meaning may sometimes be the same as that of e.g. *tí . . . bá tí* 'as soon as', as in *pè é wá fún mí b'ó/t'ó bá tí dé* 'call him for me as soon as he arrives'.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

òmòwé, educated person
sà, to apply
táláká, poor person
bó, to escape
dá . . . pé, to call by avoidance name
rojó (rò ejó), to complain

ayò, joy
eni eléni, another person
mọ, to be limited
túláàsì, force
idíkọ, station, bus-stop
aterúderú, ancestral slave
ahun, miser

CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

dínwó (dín owó), to reduce price
afọ́jú, blind person
arọ, deformed person, cripple
òdìndì, complete, whole

igàn, piece (of cloth)
sàn, to get better
dáhùn, to answer
ifòiyà, alarm
olòşà, burglar, bandit
ejọ irò, case pleading

EXERCISE 30

Translate into English: *bí àwọn òmòwé kò bá lè bọ níbẹ̀, agbára kinni àwọn táláká' lè sà? mo wí fún u pé bí işẹ̀ bá wà, k'ó jékí m bá òun şe é l'óko òun; b'ó bá tí rí eni eléni, á dàbí enit'ó gun ori oyè; t'ó bá jẹ̀ pé işẹ̀ yí dùn bẹ̀è ni, nwọn kí ibá maa kó ènià pèlù túláàsì wò ọ; bí kò şe bẹ̀è, m bá ní kí ọrẹ̀ mi wá(á) pàdẹ̀ mí ní idíkọ; bí iyàwó ilẹ̀ kò bá fẹ̀(é) pé àwọn òbí ọkọ rẹ̀ l'órúko, á wá ọnà tí yíó maa fi dà wọn pé; b'á bá míbá a lọ báyi, aterúderú l'a ó maa jẹ̀ títi; bí àisàn nşe ahun, ó maa nrojú, nitoripé kò fẹ̀ nàwó fún dọkítà tí yíó wò ó sà; bí àlejò' wò tí i, ebi ni yíó lè wọn lọ; ọrọ̀ tí m bá sọ kò wá; b'ó bá jẹ̀ pé jiji l'ọ jí owó náà gbé, k'ò wí fún mí; ibáşepé òdìndì igàn l'ọ maa rà, à bá dín'wó rẹ̀ diẹ; ibájẹ̀pé ẹ̀ tètè gbé aláisàn náà lọ s'ódò dọkítà ni, ibá tí sàns nisisiyi; ibá má sí tí àwọn ọlọpá t'ó yára sàré wá, àwọn ọlòşà ibá lù ú pa; bí àkókò óúnjẹ̀' bá tí nító, nwọn ó lù agogo; b'ò ò lọ, yà fún mí; b'ó kú tí kò fi ogún silẹ̀ fún ọ, tani o ó bá rojọ? bí ènià' bá wá nínú ayọ, t'ó bá nraníti pé igbà míràn, igbà ibanujé, míbẹ̀, ayọ̀ rẹ̀ yíó mò n'iwọn; bí omọ aráiyé bá lè fẹ̀ràn ara wọn dé inú, aiyé ibá tí dára tó! bí o bá rí afọ́jú, tàbí arọ, tàbí irú àwọn ènià bẹ̀è, máa şe oore fún wọn bí ipá rẹ̀' bá tí mọ; bí ó bá mò ejọ irò, nwọn lè dá a silẹ̀; bí nwọn bá tí rí mí, nwọn á wò ara wọn l'ọjú; bí ẹ̀ bá tí lè dé' bẹ̀, kò sí ifòiyà mò; bí nwọn bá kí nýin, ẹ̀ kò gbọdò dáhùn.*

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

REASON AND RESULT

1. Clauses expressing consequences are introduced by the connective **tí** with **fi** generally preceding the main verb, e.g. **ó nà mí tóbèṣe tí ara mí'fi sèjè** 'he beat me so much that I bled' or, more literally, 'he beat me so much and my body thereby made blood'. The use of **fi** in these clauses can be related to its instrumental use (p. 82), the situation or event described in the introductory clause, e.g. 'he beat me so much', being taken as the means which produce the situation or event described in the 'result' clause, e.g. 'I bled'. When **fi** is omitted the connection between the two situations or events is not so explicit.

ilẹ́' tí sù tóbèṣe tí ng kò fi lè ríran rárá, it has got so dark that I cannot see at all

kíní nṣe é t'ò fi ñwúkọ́ báyí, what is the matter with you that you are coughing like this?

If any part of the consequence clause is made emphatic with **ni**, the phrase **t'ò fi jé pé** 'and it thereby is that' or, with **fi** omitted, **t'ò jé pé** is used to introduce the clause.

ilú náà'jinnà tóbèṣe t'ò fi jé pé agbára káká ni ng ó fi lè dé'bè lóní, the town is very far, so that it is with difficulty I shall be able to reach there today

mótò mí' bàjé, t'ò fi jé pé eṣe ni mo fi rìn dé'bè, my motor was out of order, so it was on foot that I reached there

inú bí i tóbèṣe t'ò fi jé pé lésèkannàà l'ó lé mí jádè, he was so angry that he dismissed me on the spot

2. 'Why?' is expressed in Yoruba by the phrase **kíl'ó se/kíní se** 'what happened/caused?', for which there is a less common dialectal variant **eése** (written as one word).

A clause following on this phrase is introduced by **tí** in the same way as the 'result' clauses described above, e.g. **kíní se tí kò wá** 'why did he not come?' or, more literally, 'what caused and he did not come?'. If **fi** is added before the verb of the clause it has the effect of making more explicit the questioner's wish for a reasoned answer. A question without **fi** can be, in effect, merely a protest and the speaker will not necessarily wait for an answer.

kíní se t'ò kò dá mí l'òhùn? why didn't you answer me?

kíní se t'ò kò fi dá mí l'òhùn? why precisely didn't you answer me?

The difference in English would, of course, often be brought out merely by intonation.

Other words and expressions which explicitly ask for a reason and are followed by **fi** are **èétírí?**, which is a variant of **kíl'ó tí rí?** 'how is it that?' and **kíní idí rẹ́?** 'what is the (lit. its) reason that?', which also often occurs in the reduced form **idí rẹ́?**, e.g. **idí rẹ́ t'ò kò fi lọ?** 'what was the reason you did not go?'. The expression **nítórí kíní?** 'on account of what?', however, is followed by **se**, not **fi**. The introductory **nítórí kíní?** is sometimes omitted, leaving the bare **se** to carry the meaning, e.g. **o se se é?** 'why did you do it?'. But **se** may also be a reduction of **kíní/báwo ni . . . tí se?**, e.g. **o se mò pé mo tí rà á?** 'how did you know that I had bought it?' (p. 179).

èétírí tí nwón fi ñpariwo? what has happened that they are making a noise?

kíní idí rẹ́ t'ò fi fẹ́(ẹ) kọ ọ sílẹ́? why do you want to divorce him?

idí rẹ́ t'ẹ́ fi kọ t'ẹ́ ẹ san owó náà? what is the reason that you refuse and are not paying the money? (refuse to pay the money)

nítórí kíní nwón se ñjọ nìbẹ yẹn? for what reason are they dancing over there?

o se rà á? why did you buy it?

This use of **se** occurs also in statements with **nítórínáà**

'therefore, for that reason' when that word is emphasised with *ni*, e.g. *nitorináà ni mo se gbé e wá* 'it is for that reason that I have brought it', but not when it is unemphatic, e.g. *nitorináà ng kò rà á* 'therefore I did not buy it'.

Another commonly used question has the form *kíl'ò rí tó?* 'what have you experienced (*rí* 'see') to such a point?' = 'what makes you want to do that?' (which could be expressed more fully by *kíl'ò rí tó t'ò fi fẹ́(ẹ) se bẹẹ?*). Answers to this sort of question are often phrased in the form of *ohun tí mo rí tó tí mo fi fẹ́(ẹ) se bẹẹ ni pé . . .* 'what I have experienced to such a point that I want to act so is that etc.'.

4. Indirect questions either have the direct form preceded by *pé* 'say' or the relative *tí* (with any appropriate changes) instead of the direct question word. In this latter form *fi* or *se* must always be present.

ó bí mí léèrè pé kìní se tí ng kò wá, he asked me saying 'why had I not come?'

ó bí mí léèrè ohun tí ng kò fi wá, he asked me why I had not come (more literally, the thing that I put (as reason) did not come)

nwón fẹ́(ẹ) mò idí rẹ tí Oba kò fi lè rí àwọn, they want to know the reason why the ruler cannot see them

idí rẹ tí mo fi wá n'iyí, this is the reason for my coming/ why I have come

a à mò ohun tí nwón rí tó, we do not know what made them act so

nwón bèèrè pé nitorí kíl'a se kúrò ní Ìbàdàn, they asked saying 'why had we left Ibadan?'

kò fẹ́ sọ itorí ohun tí òun se se bẹẹ, he does not want to give the reason why he acted so

Indirect forms of *nitorí kìní?* questions are not often used.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

şè, to offend
ẹ́fúúfú, strong wind
ya, to flood in

digbò lulẹ, to slump to the ground
dákú, to faint

dàrán (dá ọ̀ràn), to commit an offence
ríràn, to have sight
mú, to be sharp

bẹ, to cut off
sin, to accompany, escort
ìgbèsè, *gbèsè*, debt

EXERCISE 31

Translate into English: ètírí tí nwón fi npariwo bẹẹ? ẹnìkán rí ejò nínú ogbà, nwón fẹ́(ẹ) pa á ni; ọ̀nà wo ni mo gbà fi şè nyín? ohun tí mo t'itorí rẹ wá kò jù bẹẹ lẹ; ẹ́fúúfú yí lágbara tóbẹẹ t'ó fi jẹ pé omi nya sínú ọ̀kọ wa; nwón lù mí tóbẹẹ tí mo fi digbò lulẹ tí mo dákú; a ó wádí ọ̀nà tí a ó maa fi şè gbogbo nkán tí yíó fi dára; kíl'ò rí tó t'ò fi fẹ́(ẹ) fi işẹ́ yí silẹ? ng kò jẹ jẹwọ pé mo dàrán ni mo se kúrò ní ilú mí; owó l'awọn obinrin wọnyí nwò tí nwón fi nńfẹ́ mí; ó bèèrè ibítí mo tí lo àti idí rẹ tí mo fi pé bẹẹ; nwón bèrèsí(í) sálo, tóbẹẹ t'ó fi jẹ pé ní ọ̀wúrọ ọ̀jọ tí mo níwí yí, iyàwó kánşoso l'ó kù s'ọ̀dọ mí; kìní se t'ò ọ şè ohun tí mo ní k'ò şè? lálpẹ́ ilẹ́ ó şù tóbẹẹ tí a kò fi ní(í) lè ríràn rara; èké rẹ̀ pọ̀ tóbẹẹ tí ng kò fi lè gbà á gbọ́ rará; ọ̀bẹ́ yí mú tóbẹẹ t'ó fi lè bẹ ọ̀wọ́ géndé sonù lẹ́kkanşoso; ng kò mò idí rẹ́ tí kò fi sin wá lẹ; ọ̀jà'bàjẹ́ tóbẹẹ tí bàbá mí'bo sínú ìgbèsè.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

MANNER

1. The direct question word for 'how?' in Yoruba is **báwo?** If this is the introduction to a longer sentence, **báwo** is followed by **ni**, with **ti** preceding the main verb, e.g. **báwo ni nwón ti rí?** 'what are they like? (how do they appear?)'. Many Yorubas in this type of question use **kíni** instead of **báwo ni**, e.g. **kíl'ó ti rí?** 'what is it like?'. Note that in this case the presence of **ti** is vitally important for conveying the sense, because without it **kíni** equals 'what?' and the sentence **kíl'ó rí?** can only be translated 'what did he/she see?'. In certain phrases **báwo ni/kíni** are actually omitted, leaving only **ti** to carry the meaning, e.g. **òhún ti rí ó?** 'what is it like there? (how is yonder?)'.

The addition of **tó** 'to reach' or **sí** 'to' is necessary when a question refers to measurements or estimates of quantity or quality.

kíl'ó ti tóbi tó? how big is it? (how is it big reach?)
kíl'ó ti dára sí? how good is it? (how is it good to?)
báwo l'ó ti gbádùn ibè sí? how did you enjoy there?

A broad distinction that can be made between **tó** and **sí** is that **tó** is used when referring to physical features to which some sort of quantitative answer can be given, while **sí** is used when the answer will be in general terms. For example, in answer to 'how big is it?' one might say **ó tóbi tó háyí** 'it is as big as this (it is big like this)' with some illustrative gesture, while **mo gbádùn rẹ púpọ** 'I enjoyed it very much' is the sort of answer expected after 'how did you enjoy there?'. Occasionally, however, **tó** is used where one might have expected **sí**.

When **şe** is added after **ti** some measure of effort is generally implied.

báwo l'ó ti şe ti í? how did you (manage to) shut it?
kíl'ó ti şe rí i rà? how did you manage to get hold of one? (see buy)

Where **şe** is used **ti** tends to be omitted, e.g. **kíl'ó şe rí i rà?** for the example immediately above. On the other hand, **şe** is sometimes added after **ti** rather superfluously.

2. For the indirect 'how' **bí** is substituted for **báwo ni** or **kíni**.

b'ó ti rí n'iyen, that is how it is (how it is is that)
mo fẹ(ẹ) mò b'ó ti rí gaan, I want to know what it is like exactly

bí mo ti şe ti í n'iyen, that is how I managed to shut it
a à mò b'ó ti tóbi tó, we don't know how big it is
a à lè sọ b'á ti gbádùn rẹ tó, we cannot say how much we enjoyed it

Note in the last example the use of **tó** with **gbádùn**, corresponding to 'how much?' in the translation, while in the direct question given earlier **sí** was used, rendered by the vaguer 'how?'.

3. Clauses introduced by **bí ... ti** are actually noun clauses which behave in many ways like a noun qualified by a relative clause. The similarity would be more obvious if, instead of translating the introductory words by 'how/as', we used the rendering 'the way that, the manner that'. We have seen in the examples already given that these clauses can function as either the subject or the object of a verb. An important point to note in this connection is that when such a clause is the object of a low-tone verb, e.g. **mò** 'to know' in the second example in 2. above, the verb is heard on a mid-tone just as when it is followed by an unelided noun object. Other points of similarity are that these clauses can be qualified by **yí** 'this', **yẹn (ùn, ni)** 'that' or **náà** 'referred to', e.g. **bí ẹ ti n'ise é yí kò dára** 'this way that you are doing it is no good', and that two such clauses are linked by the same word **àti** which is used to link nouns, e.g. **b'ó ti tó àti b'ó ti ye** 'as is right and (as is) proper'.

b'ó ti rorò tó náà l'ó bà mí l'èrù, it is the fact mentioned of its being so fierce which frightens me
nwón fi bí nwón ti nṣe é hàn mí, they shewed me how they were doing it (they took the way they were doing it shew me)

bí iṣe èmià bá ti wúlò sí ni òun yíó fi níláári tó, it is according to the usefulness of a person's work that he will be appreciated (as a person's work happens to be useful in degree (sí) it is he will thereby (fi) have worth reach)

b'ó bá ti tóbi sí l'ó fi úníyelóri tó, the bigger it is the more expensive it is (as it happens to be big in degree it is it thereby has value reach)

In the last two examples the **bí . . . ti** clause which is the object of **fi** 'to put, take, use' is put in the emphatic position at the head of the sentence followed by the emphasising **ni**.

4. These clauses are also often used adverbially.

(a) The clause may be put in the usual position for adverbs, i.e. after the main verb of the sentence.

ó nsòrò b'ó ti fẹ, he talks as he likes

nwón ṣe mí l'álẹ̀jò b'ó ti tó àti b'ó ti yẹ, they entertained me as was right and proper

(b) The clause may occur at the beginning of the sentence, in which case its meaning can vary considerably. It may refer to time (p. 165) or condition (p. 172) or, if it ends in **tó** plus the demonstrative **yí** or **yẹn** (**ún, ni**), have a concessive meaning as illustrated here.

bí ẹ̀rọ yí ti kéré tó yí, ó lágbára púpọ, though this machine is so small, it is very powerful

b'ó ti tóbi tó (o)ni, kò lè ṣe nkánkan, though he is so big (as that), he cannot do anything

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

han(an)run, to snore
ekúté, mouse

ológbò, cat
ọṣẹ, soap

iréppò, harmony, friendship

itójú, caring for, looking after

jọ . . . l'ójú, to impress

eré, running

ṣubú, to fall

orogún, co-wife

EXERCISE 32

Translate into English: kíl'ẹ̀ ti gbádùn ilú òylnbó sí? a gbádùn rẹ̀ púpọ̀; báwo ni mo ti ṣe maa sòrò náà fún u? ó ti pé tó t'ò ti dé'bí? ọ̀rọ̀ tí bàbá sọ láná sí mi, báwo l'ó tí rí l'ójú nín? ó wúwo jù b'ó tí rí tẹ̀lẹ̀rì lẹ̀; mo ñgbọ̀ b'ó tí ñhānrun nít'ó sùn sí; bí ekúté kò tí lágbára níwájú ológbò, bẹ̀nna ni ng kò lágbára níwájú nín; bí nwón ti ṣe ètò náà n'lyí; ng kò lè sọ bí inú mí ti dùn tó láti mò nín lóní; ng kò l'èrò míràn l'òkàn jù bí ng ó ti ṣe san oore náà padà fún u; ó ṣe mí bí ọṣẹ̀ tí nṣe ọjú; b'ó tí wà yí ni k'ẹ̀ ṣe gbé e; iréppò wà ní ilú yí jù bí mo ti l'èrò lẹ̀; bí ọ̀kúnrin náà tí ṣe Itójú mí jọ mí l'ójú púpọ̀; gbogbo b'ó tí nṣe yí ni mo ñwò; ng kò tún f'ojú bà á mò dí bí mo tí nsòrò yí; b'ó tí wù kí eré mi pọ̀ tó, ng kò le ṣubú rárá; bí èmi pàápàá tí wà nínú ilé yí, mo mò nkán tí ọjú mí ní l'òwọ̀ àwọn orogún.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

THE FORMATION OF NOUNS (1)

Yoruba forms nouns from verbs in a number of ways. These are:

1. A prefix **a-** is added to many combinations of verb plus object to form nouns denoting persons or things performing the action of the verb, or, where the combinations denote a state, persons who are in that state.

Examples: **akòwé** 'clerk' (**kò** 'write' **iwé** 'paper, book'); **apeja** 'fisherman' (**pa** 'kill' **ẹja** 'fish'); **akékò** 'student' (**kò** 'learn' **ẹkò** 'learning'); **aşégitá** 'firewood seller' (**şé** 'snap off' **igi** 'wood' **tá** 'sell'); **abanilórijé** 'person who gets one into trouble' ('one who spoils—**bà** . . . **jé**—a person—**eni**—in luck—**orí**'); **asonilórúko** 'person who gets one a (bad) name' (**şo** . . . **l'órúko** 'give a name to'); **afójú** 'blind man' (**fó** 'broken' **ojú** 'eye'); **agétí** 'crop-eared man' (**gé** 'cut' **etí** 'ear'). Note that such a word as **agétí** might theoretically be expected to have also the meaning 'person who cuts ears' but such a meaning does not actually exist.

There is a special group of words formed with **a-** which have two parts, the second part being preceded by the negative **má**, e.g. **alápamáşişé** 'person who has arms—**apá**—but does not work', i.e. 'lazybones'; **arajámásánwó** 'person who buys goods—**ojá**—but does not pay'; **atamátásé** 'person who shoots and does not miss'.

Nouns made up of **a-** and a bare verb stem are rare; **asé** 'strainer' (**şé** 'strain') is one example.

2. A small number of nouns have a prefix **ò-/ô-** (varying according to the following vowel) which performs the same function as **a-**; this prefix cannot be used to form new words as **a-** can be used.

Examples: **òjísé** 'messenger' (**jé** 'answer' **isé** 'message');

òşişé 'workman, worker'; **òmùtí** 'drunkard' (**mu** 'drink' **òtí** 'spirits'—for the tones see para. 6. below); **òjeun** 'glutton'.

3. A number of nouns denoting living creatures or things performing the action of the verb are complete reduplications of the verb plus noun object.

Examples: **jagunjagun** 'warrior' (**já** 'fight' **ogun** 'war'); **woléwolé** 'sanitary inspector' (**wò** 'look at' **ilé** 'house'); **yohínyohín** 'dentist' (**yò** 'extract' **ehín** 'teeth'); **jèdijèdì** 'haemorrhoids, piles' (**jè** 'consume' **idì** 'bottom').

In some cases both the form with **a-** and the reduplicated form occur, but with a differentiation in meaning, e.g. **apeja** 'fisherman', **pejapeja** 'a variety of sea-bird which lives on fish'; **akorin** 'chorister', **korinkorin** 'person who is always singing'. The reduplicated form appears to bring up a visual image of constant repetition of the action associated with the person or thing.

4. The prefix **olù-** added to some verbs makes a noun denoting the doer of the action, e.g. **olùkò** 'teacher', **olùgbàlà** 'saviour', **olùtójú** 'one who looks after'. **olùfé**, however, means both 'lover' and 'loved one', while **olùpónjú** means 'person in distress'.

5. There is a compound prefix **oní-** containing the verb **ní** 'have, possess' which can be added to any Yoruba noun to give the meaning 'one who has/possesses the object in question'. The prefix actually takes various forms but it is convenient to refer to it under the form which it has when there is no elision, i.e. before a noun beginning with a consonant, e.g. **onímótò** 'motor-owner'. This form also occurs when the noun begins with the vowel **i**, e.g. **onírun** 'hairy person/thing' (**irun** 'hair'), otherwise the **n** appears as **l** and the **o** is assimilated to the initial vowel of the noun, giving, e.g. **alárùn** 'person with disease', **elépo** 'person/thing which has palm-oil', **ẹlẹran** 'person/thing having meat', **olóko** 'farm-owner', **olónà** 'thing with decoration'. Nouns of this type are used both independently and also as qualifiers of other nouns, e.g. **aşo olónà** 'cloth which has decorations on it'.

òbè ẹ̀lẹ̀ran 'stew with meat in it'. The prefix does not necessarily imply ownership; for example, a girl hawking cloth about is usually acting as an agent but she would be referred to as *aláṣọ*.

A frequent use of nouns of this form is exemplified in such expressions as *ọmọ ọlọmọ* 'another person's child' ('the child of a person who has a child') which occurs in the proverb *ọmọ ọlọmọ kò jọ ọmọ ẹni* 'other people's children are not like one's own children' 'blood is thicker than water'. Other examples are *ilẹ onilé* 'other people's houses' and *ohun olóhun* 'other people's property'.

Occasionally the prefix is added to nouns denoting persons to give a more general meaning than the simple form, e.g. *alákòwé* in *ó ní alákòwé l'òun'maa fé* 'she says she is going to marry a *clerk*' (i.e. not a farmer or factory worker—the reference is more to the proposed husband's status in society than to his actual occupation).

In a certain number of cases this form has an emphatic effect, e.g. *òní olóní* 'this very day' ('today which has today'); also *eléyí*, *oníyẹn*, *eléyí(i)ní*, which are emphatic forms of *eyí* 'this', *iyen* and *eyí(i)ní* 'that'; *onítòhún* 'the other person' (*t'òhún* 'what belongs to yonder').

6. The prefix *i-* added to a simple verb stem or to a compound of verb plus object with or without further extensions forms abstract nouns, e.g. *idúró* 'state of waiting or standing', *ijókò* 'state of sitting', *ináwò* 'expenditure of money', *imọ* 'knowledge', *ifokànbalẹ* 'having one's heart at rest' ('put heart settle down'), *ilọsìwájú* 'progress' ('going forward'). *ifé* 'love, desire'.

The verb-noun formed in this way with *i-* has a reduplicated form with an interposed *kú* which always has a pejorative meaning, e.g. *isókúsọ* 'bad language, foolish talking', *inákúná* 'foolish spending, extravagance', *ilòkúlò* 'foolish use, bad use', *irákúrà* 'foolish buying'. Both these reduplicated forms and also the simple forms are frequently used with the prefix *oní-*, e.g. *onísòwò* 'trader' (*ṣe* 'to do' *òwò* 'trade'), *onídúró* 'one who stands as surety', *onínákúná* 'one who indulges in extravagance, profligate'.

As the examples given suggest, the meaning of these forms is generally active; an exception is provided by *onibàjé* 'spoil' (of a child). The reduplicated form is often used as an adverbial extension, e.g. *ó lò ó ní ilòkúlò* 'he used it in an improper way'.

A certain number of nouns formed from verbs with this prefix do not fit into the general pattern, e.g. *igbalẹ* 'broom' (*gbá* 'to sweep' *ilẹ* 'ground'), *ibòwọ* 'glove' (*bọ* 'to insert' *ọwọ* 'hand'), *iránṣẹ* 'servant, messenger', *ijoyè* 'chief' (but *ijoyè* 'the act of appointing a chief'). Also to be noticed is the fact that verb compounds with mid-high tones change this pattern to low-high when this prefix is added, e.g. *tijú* 'to be ashamed', *itijú* 'shame'; *ronú* 'to take thought', *irónú* 'pensiveness'. The same change also takes place after the low tone *ò-/ò-* prefix described in 2. above, e.g. *mutí* 'to drink spirits', *òmútí* 'drunkard'; *ṣiṣẹ* 'to work', *òṣiṣẹ* 'workman, workmanlike'.

7. There is a prefix *à-* which is to some extent interchangeable with the *i-* just described, but Yoruba has tended to fix a form with *à-* for some verbs or types of context and *i-* for others. For example, one uses *àlọ* 'going' in the farewell prayer *àlọ (ọ)re, àbò (ọ)re ó!* 'a good going and a good returning!', but *ilòkúlò* is said for 'foolish going' and *ilọsìwájú* for 'progress' ('going forward'). In translating into English it is not possible to make any distinction of meaning and it is therefore merely a matter of learning where each form is appropriate.

(a) *à-* is used in wishes and prayers, as in the example already given. Other examples are *àṣẹ ó!* 'may it come to pass', *àḍẹpa ó!* 'may one hunt and kill' (a greeting said to a hunter), *àrọyè ó!* 'may one forge and live' (a greeting said to a blacksmith).

(b) *à-* is generally used where a second verb is added to qualify the first, e.g. *àṣẹjù* 'doing to excess', *àṣẹtán* 'doing to completion', *àṣẹtí* 'attempting to do and failing', *àṣẹghádùn* 'doing with enjoyment'. These forms often occur in adverbial extensions, e.g. *ó ṣe é l'àṣẹjù* 'he did it

with a doing to excess', **ó pa á l'ápátán** 'he killed him with a killing to completion'. They may also occur as the subject or object of a verb, e.g. **àṣejù kò dára** 'excess is not good', **ó pàpòjù (pò apòjù)** 'it is too much', or be used with the **oní-** prefix, e.g. **aláṣejù** 'person who does things to excess'.

(c) Many **à-** forms have a passive meaning, especially when used to qualify another noun, e.g. **itàn àròso** 'fable, fiction' ('story which is imagined and related'), **aṣo àlòkù** 'second-hand clothes' ('clothes used with use remaining'). Other examples are **àmúwá Olórun** 'thing brought on one by God' (**mú . . . wá** 'to bring'); **alábùkún** 'person who is blessed (possessor of thing added in addition)', which we can compare with **ibùkún** 'act of blessing' and **olùbùkún** 'one who gives a blessing'; **aláfèhinti** 'one who has someone on whom he can lean back', i.e. a backer (**fi èhin ti** 'to put back lean').

The translation of many of these forms will vary according to the context, e.g. besides **aṣo àlòkù** we may have **ó lò ó l'álòkù** 'he used it but left it still usable'.

(d) **à-** is used when the first verb is followed by a second verb preceded by a low tone negative element. This is sometimes conventionally written **ì** but is actually pronounced as an extension of the preceding vowel on a low tone, e.g. **áfèìrì** or **áfèèrì** 'something looked for or wanted (**fè**) but which cannot be seen', as in **ó di afèèrì** 'he vanished into thin air'. Such forms can be used to refer to an abstract quality or to a concrete person or thing, e.g. **àwùgbó** 'disobedience' or 'disobedient person—one to whom one speaks (**wí**) but he does not listen (**gbó**)'. In a variant of this form the first verb is repeated after the negative with a qualifying verb added, e.g. **àmòòmòtán** 'thing known but not known completely' or the verb-noun describing this quality.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

mọlémọlé, builder (in mud) **òpùró**, liar
aṣógbó, forest guard **kólékólé**, burglar

osùn, camwood
kádàrà, destiny
áfésónà, betrothed
òṣiṣé, worker
àfojùbà, personal
experience

olórìburúkú, ill-fated
person
irònú, anxious thought
òdàrán, offender
dá . . . l'óró, to treat cruelly
'ni (=èni), person, one

EXERCISE 33

Translate into English: àwọn mọlémọlé kò fẹ kí òjò rọ; aṣógbó ni nwọn nípè àwọn òṣiṣé ijọba t'ó nṣiṣé ninú igbó; ng kò lè gbà á gbọ rará, òpùró ènià ni; a jẹ ṣọra púpọ, nítorípé kólékólé pọ ní ilú yí ò! gbogbo àwọn iyáwó rẹ sá bá èni eléni lọ; nwọn maa nípè oṣo iyáwó ní elésè osùn; irònú kò jẹkí ọkàn mi balé; ng kò fẹ kí olórìburúkú yèn rà nkánkan l'ówó mi; iròhìn kò tó àfojùbà; nígbàt'ó ṣe, a já sí títi ọlódà; aṣo àlòkù l'ó n'wá káakiri; alágbára má mètò (mò èrò), baba ọlẹ; elété kò pa á l'òjú èni; agbójú-lé-ogún fi ara rẹ fún ọṣi ta pa; abínú èni kò lè pa kádàrà dà; aláṣejù kò ní(í) pé tẹ; onígbàgbó l'àwa méjèjì; iyáwó mi àfésónà wá kí mi n'ijètá; adájọ jù ọdàrán nàà s'èwọn ọdún mètá; adáni-l'óró f'agbára kò'ni.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

THE FORMATION OF NOUNS (2)

We go on in this chapter to describe further noun forms derived from verbs.

1. The word **àti** (**lāti**) placed before a verb makes a noun which corresponds to the English infinitive or verb noun, e.g. **àti rí owó ọkọ l'ó sòro** 'to find/finding the money for the boat/conveyance (it is) is difficult'. It is common after nouns and verb combinations composed of verb plus noun, e.g. **àkókò àti lọ** 'time to go', **ọ̀nà àti rí i** 'a way to find it', **ó pinnu (pin ẹnu) àti pa á** 'he decided to kill him', **ó gbìyànjú (gbà iyànjú) àti kọ ọ** 'he made an effort to learn it'. It is also frequently used in adverbial extensions to express purpose, with the preceding **ní** written as one word with **àti**, i.e. **lāti** is written for **l'àti**, e.g. **ó ẹ̀ ẹ̀ lāti dẹ̀rùbà mí** 'he did it to frighten me'. From the adverbial extensions the **lāti** form is tending to spread into the other constructions, so that **àkókò lāti lọ**, **ó pinnu lāti pa á** are also common. As many Yorubas use English a great deal and this form corresponds so closely with the English infinitive it is not surprising to find that it is being used to an increasing degree in other constructions as well, particularly in written Yoruba, e.g. **ó kọ lāti lọ** 'he refused to go' for **ó kọ kò lọ** 'he refused he did not go'; **ó fẹ́(ẹ) lāti rà á** 'he wants to buy it' for **ó fẹ́(ẹ) rà á**; **ó nílāti lọ** 'he has (ní) to go' (the phrase is apparently borrowed from English).

àti appears to contain the prefix **à-** described in Chapter 33 along with an unexplained element **ti**, but its use differs from that of the simple prefix in that it can be followed by **máa**, giving a habitual meaning to the form, e.g. **àti máa ẹ̀rẹ̀ nìgbàgbogbo'sú mí** 'to be playing about all the time is irksome/has become irksome to me'.

The word **àti** (**lāti**) described here must not be confused with another **àti** (**lāti**) 'from' which is formed by adding the prefix **à-** to the verb **ti** 'come from'. This is usually found in adverbial extensions, so that the form **lāti** is commoner than **àti** and is actually (just like the other **lāti**) tending to replace the basic form in other contexts as well, e.g. besides **àti Èkó dé Ìbàdàn jìnnà diẹ** 'from Lagos to (reach) Ibadan is quite far' we have also **lāti Èkó** etc. Perhaps through imitation of English, constructions with **lāti** are tending to replace the simple **ti**, e.g. instead of **mo t'Èkó dé láná** 'I from Lagos arrived yesterday' **mo dé lát'Èkó láná** 'I arrived from Lagos yesterday' is now often heard. (For more about this verb **ti** 'to come from' see p. 142.)

The other word **àti** 'and', used to join nouns and noun clauses (see p. 201), has no complementary **lāti** form.

2. We saw on p. 121 that many adjectives are derived from verbs by prefixing a high-tone syllable which has the vowel **í** and the same consonant as the first syllable of the verb. Words of this type can actually be formed from practically any verb; they function both as adjectives and nouns or sometimes only as nouns.

(a) When followed by the relative word **tí** or the emphasising word **ní** this form is used to emphasise the verb, e.g. **jíjádé t'ó jádé l'ó rí mí** 'the coming out that he came out it is he saw me' = 'as soon as he came out he saw me', **pípa ní nwọ́n pa á** 'killing it is they killed him' = 'they actually killed him'. If a verb is used with both an active and a passive meaning, this form can be used to emphasise it in either sense, e.g. **fífọ́ l'ó fọ́ ọ** 'he broke it' and **fífọ́ l'ó fọ́** 'it is broken'.

(b) If a verb has only active meaning, this form, if used as an adjective, generally has the meaning 'to be . . .', e.g. **mímu** 'to be drunk, drinkable', as in **omi mímu** 'drinking water', and **títà** 'to be sold', as **isù títà** 'yams for sale'. These forms can also function independently as nouns with this meaning, e.g. **aşọ yì pọ́n, ó di fífọ́** 'this cloth is dirty, it needs washing', lit. 'it has become a thing for

washing'. If, however, the verb has both active and passive meaning, this form both as adjective and noun generally reflects the passive meaning, e.g. *àwo fifọ* 'broken dish' and *ó ò fi fifọ* 'it has become a broken thing, it is now broken'.

(c) When a transitive verb is accompanied by its object, this is often placed in front of the verb in this form, e.g. *otí mímu* 'spirit-drinking', *oko ríro* 'farm-tilling'. This is not so, however, with verbs which form a close compound with a noun, e.g. *jàdè (já òdè)* 'to get out'. The difference between close compounds and other combinations of verb plus noun is clearly seen in the emphatic context described in (a) above, where one says, e.g. *jíjàdè tí mo jàdè* but *mímu tí mo mu otí yì*. *jàdè* is thought of as representing one idea and the parts cannot easily be separated and reversed—one says *otí mímu* but not *òdè jíjà*. A point to note is that many verbs which we think of as intransitive in English may be transitive in Yoruba in the sense of being directly followed by an object noun, e.g. we say that a person is 'strong of body', but Yoruba says he is 'strong body'—*ó lera (le ara)*. This can be reversed as *ara líle*, meaning 'a strong body' or 'health'. This example shews that there is sometimes the possibility of translating these forms in two different ways in English. Another example is *ìwé kíkà*, which can be either 'book-reading', i.e. 'reading', or 'book for reading, reader'. Such cases are not, however, numerous and the contexts in which the forms are used shew in what sense they are to be taken, e.g. the two meanings of *omi mímu*—'water for drinking' and 'water-drinking'—are hardly likely to cause confusion.

(d) Forms which are used as adjectives are also used to denote the corresponding abstract nouns, e.g. *gígùn* 'long, length', *didùn* 'sweet, sweetness'. Where the adjective is irregular, however, a *regular* form is used for the abstract noun, e.g. *kékeré* 'small', *kíkéré* 'smallness'; *dáradára* 'good', *dídára* 'goodness'. It is these regular forms which occur in the emphatic sentences described in (a) above, e.g. *kíkéré t'ó kéré ni kò jé kí n rà á* 'it's smallness

it was did not allow me to buy it'. Note, however, that in the case of adjectives which have the same form as the verb, e.g. *dúdú* 'to be black, black', many Yorubas also use the same form for the noun, e.g. *ó ní funfun àti pupa* 'it contains both white and red', *dúdú t'ó dúdú kò wù mí rárá* 'it's blackness does not attract me at all'.

The form is also used for the verb noun of some verbs which have no adjectives connected with them, e.g. *lílọ* 'going', as in *àkókò lílọ mí* 'the time of my departure', and *şíşí* 'state of being open', as in *ó wà ní şíşí* 'it is in an open state'.

3. A reduced form of the prefix described in 2. is probably the origin of the long vowel which crops up in phrases like *ó şòro(ó) şe* 'it is hard to do', *ó dùn(ún) gbọ* 'it is sweet to hear' as compared with the short vowels of *şoro*, *dùn*. Note that the extension has a high tone. We may assume that an earlier form was e.g. *ó şoro şise* and that the initial consonant of *şise* was dropped and the vowel *i* then assimilated to the preceding vowel, retaining of course its high tone. This high tone extension also occurs, as we saw in Chapter 12, in such phrases as *ó fẹ(ẹ) rà á* 'he wants to buy it', *ó bẹrẹsì(ì) jẹ ẹ* 'he began to eat it', *kò ní(ì) lọ* 'he will not go' ('he has not to go'), *kò tó(ó) kà á* 'he is not up to reading it'. In all these cases it is simplest to explain the lengthened vowel as containing what is actually a prefix to the following verb, making a form which corresponds to the English infinitive 'to buy, to eat' etc. Sometimes we get a reversal of order of verb and object, e.g. instead of *ó bẹrẹsì(ì) sọrọ (sọ ọrọ)* 'he began to speak' we may get *ó bẹrẹsì ọrọ(ó) sọ* or the fuller form . . . *ọrọ síşọ* or even . . . *ọrọ ní síşọ*. It is unfortunate that in the ordinary Yoruba spelling there is often no indication of these long vowels, e.g. *ó şoro(ó) şe* may be simply written *ó şoro şe*. Sometimes, however, the extra length is shewn by writing a conventional *í*, e.g. *ó şoro íşe*. In *kò şe şe* 'it cannot be done' (lit. 'it does not do to do') the length is usually shewn as indicated. This use of *şe* is common with and without the negative, e.g. *ó*

še(é) sí 'it can be opened', **kò še(é) f'enu sọ** 'it cannot be described (put mouth say)'. A point to note about its use is that where one might expect it to be followed by the instrumental **fi** (p. 82) this is frequently omitted, e.g. **ọbẹ kò še(é) fári** 'a knife cannot be used to shave the head', where one might have expected **kò še(é) fi fári**.

It is not unusual in written Yoruba to find **láti** used instead of the lengthened vowel, particularly if a qualifying word is added, e.g. **ó sọro púpọ láti še** instead of **ó sọro(ó) še púpọ**.

4. A prefix **àì-** in front of a verb makes a form which we can regard as the negative complement of the **àti** verb noun, since this prefix, too, can be followed by **máa**; it is often written as a separate word. Examples: **àìdára** 'not being good', **àì rí nkán rà** 'failure to find anything to buy', **àìlówótó** 'not having enough money', **àì kà ènià sí rẹ** 'his lack of respect for people', **àìfētísilẹ̀ mi** 'my failure to pay attention'. These forms often occur in adverbial extensions with **ní àì** written **lái** as a separate word corresponding to English 'without', e.g. **ó wọlé láì sanwó** 'he went in without paying', **ó jádẹ̀ láì fún mi l'ési** 'he went out without giving me an answer'. With **pẹ̀** 'to be long, late', however, it is generally written as one word, e.g. **áá wá láìpẹ̀** 'he will come soon', **mo rí i láìpẹ̀ yí** 'I saw him recently'.

Combined with another negative this form is used to express a strong affirmative, **àì-** being fused with the verb **še** 'to do' to form a separate word, e.g. **kò lẹ̀ sàì wá** 'he cannot fail to come', **kò ní(i) sàì padà** 'he will surely return', **másàì (má sàì) maa wá(á) kí mi l'Ékò** 'be sure to keep on coming to greet me at Lagos'. As in the last example, **má** tends to be written as one word with **sàì**; some Yorubas use a longer form **másàlái**, **má sàlái** here. It should be mentioned that **gbọdọ** 'must' is followed by **má**, e.g. **ng kò gbọdọ má lọ** 'I must not fail to go'; compare the use of **má** with **fẹ̀rẹ̀** 'almost' (p. 148). **lẹ̀** 'to be able' can be followed by either **sàì** or **má**, e.g. **ó lẹ̀ sàì rà á**, **ó lẹ̀ má rà á** 'he may fail to buy it'.

Nouns formed with **àì-** are often used with the **oní-** prefix, e.g. **aláìsàn** 'sick person' from **àìsàn** 'not being well', **aláìláánú** 'pitiless person' from **àìláánú** 'not having pity (áánú)', **aláìrìṣṣẹ̀** 'one who cannot find work' (**rì ṣṣẹ̀**).

Other uses of this form are seen in such sentences as **ó lẹ̀ sàì wá lóní k'ó wá lólá** 'he may fail to come today but come tomorrow, perhaps he will not come today but come tomorrow instead' and **ó dé t'aidé l'ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sì(i) bú mi** 'he had hardly arrived when he began to abuse me', **ó wẹ̀ t'àiwẹ̀ ni mo wọlé dé** 'he had hardly finished washing when I came in'. The **t'ài** form here is added as an adverbial qualifier, not as object of the preceding verb; if it were the object the low tone verb **wẹ̀** would be heard on a mid tone (p. 32). The **t'** in such expressions is obscure; it could be taken as an independent use of the possessive **tì** (p. 45). Some Yorubas omit it.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

akólòlò (ké òlòlò) , stammerer	aláìnítijú , shameless person
mì , to swallow	àna , relative-in-law
tú , to undo, reveal	dípò , instead of
àṣírí , secret	fò sànlẹ̀ , to collapse (of a person)
abẹ̀rẹ̀ , needle	gbèrò , to plan
jampata , to worry one's head	dá ọwọ̀ lẹ̀ , to undertake
àtẹ̀lẹ̀wọ̀ , palm of hand	

EXERCISE 34

Translate into English: **ó wá ọ̀nà àti lọ(ọ) pàdẹ̀ ọ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀;** **obinrin kò še(é) f'inú hàn;** **ó še(é) fi bọ̀'pò (bọ̀ àpò);** **kíkéré tí abẹ̀rẹ̀ kéré, kí ṣṣẹ̀ mími adẹ̀;** **rírò ni t'ènià, ṣṣẹ̀ ni t'Ọ̀lórùn;** **pípẹ̀ ni yíó pẹ̀, akólòlò yíó pẹ̀ bàbá;** **sísá l'ó ñmú ènià sá fún oore ṣṣẹ̀;** **ọ̀jú tí mí láti tú àṣírí yí fún u;** **kò lẹ̀ sàì yà nyín l'ẹ̀nu láti rí mí báyí;** **àti jókò di Ọ̀ngbòn;** **àti dide di iyọnu;** **kíní ọ̀jú rẹ̀ sàì rí tán l'órú ọ̀jó náà? kò**

jampata àti fẹ̀ iyàwó mǐràn mọ́; àtéléwọ́ kò ẹ̀(é) fi rù iná; ó nàwó gidigidi lóri nkán jìjẹ àti nkán mímu; ó pinnu àti farapamọ́ wò nkán tí yíó ẹ̀lẹ̀; ó lẹ̀ ẹ̀sàì fún wa l'óúnjẹ k'ó fún wa l'ówó dipò rẹ̀; iṣẹ̀ tí a nígbèrò àti dá ọwọ́ lẹ̀ yí wúlò lópòlópò; áígbé'lẹ̀ jù bẹ̀ẹ̀ lọ kò jẹ́k'ó tètè l'óbinrin; aláínítijú ní ígbà ilẹ̀ àna rẹ̀ kú sí; awọ́ yí ẹ̀(é) ẹ̀ bātà (= . . . ẹ̀(é) fi ẹ̀ bātà); ẹ̀wà sísẹ̀ ní mo fẹ̀ràn jù; kò mọ́ ọ̀bẹ̀(é) sẹ̀, kò mọ́ iyán(án) gún; ó jádẹ̀ t'ài jádẹ̀ l'ó fò sánlẹ̀ kú.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

MORE ABOUT YI, YEN, AWỌN, KAN, NAA AND PRONOUNS

In this chapter we bring together and give more details about various commonly occurring words.

1. We have seen (p. 41) that in Yoruba we can make a distinction between a number of persons or things thought of collectively, e.g. **mo fẹ̀ àwọ** 'I washed the dishes', or as a group of individuals, e.g. **mo rí àwọn ijòyè** 'I saw the chiefs'. This distinction may be made also when we add 'these' or 'those', e.g. **fẹ̀ àwọ yí** 'wash this dish', **fẹ̀ àwọ wọnyí** 'wash these dishes'; **ijòyè yí fẹ̀ bá nyín sọrọ** 'this chief wants to talk with you', **àwọn ijòyè yí fẹ̀ bá nyín sọrọ** 'these chiefs etc.'. In written Yoruba also, possibly through the influence of English, we often have **àwọn . . . wọnyí** instead of **àwọn . . . yí**, which seems to be out of line with the general Yoruba tendency to be economical with indications of plurality. It should be noted, however, that the plural form is obligatory if the noun is followed by a qualifying clause of any length, e.g. **àwọn t'ó fẹ̀(é) bá wa sọrọ wọnyí** 'these people who want to talk with us'. The corresponding forms for 'those' are **wọnyen** and **àwọn . . . yèn/wọnyen**.

The independent plural form of these words are **iwọnyí/àwọnyí**, **iwọnyen/àwọnyen** in the more collective sense (**i-** and **à-** being dialectal variants) and **àwọn wọnyí**, **àwọn wọnyen** in the more individual sense. The difference between **kín' iwọnyí** and **kíl' àwọn wọnyí** 'what are these?' is best brought out by differences of intonation in English; the second alternative answers to an increase of stress on 'these'.

2. The plural indicator **àwọn** may be put in front of **tani** 'who?', e.g. 'who did you see there?' may be

translated *tal'o rí nìbè?* or *àwọn tal'o rí nìbè?* according to the questioner's knowledge of the circumstances. But if plurality is shewn in what follows this does not happen, e.g. 'who are those people?' is *tàl'awọn wọnyẹn?* Notice the difference between this expression and *àwọn tan'iyẹn?* 'who is that?', which might be said if one heard a noise outside the room indicating the arrival of more than one person. If one thought that only a single person had arrived one would, of course, say *tan'iyẹn?*

When *àwọn* is placed in front of a proper name it denotes the group to which the person concerned is thought of, in that particular context, as belonging, e.g. *àwọn Táiwò* may on one occasion denote Taiwo's family and on another occasion a school class or any other group with which he may happen to be associated. It is not in any way equivalent to the English family plural, e.g. 'the Smiths'.

3. When *kán* occurs after *àwọn* or numerals it has the meaning 'a set/group of', e.g. *ní ìgbà kán àwọn omọ méfà kán wá* 'once upon a time there were three sons', i.e. a particular set of three sons on whom our attention is to be fixed. *àwọn kán* means 'a certain group of people', e.g. *tàn'iwọnyí? àwọn kán tí nwọ́n* (or *t'ó*) *ńwá iṣẹ̀ ní* 'who are these people? some people who are looking for work'. Contrast with this *àwọn t'ó ńwá iṣẹ̀ ní* 'the people who are looking for work'. The singular of *àwọn kán* is *ẹnìkán* (always written as one word). Compare with this *nkán* (or *nńkan*) 'something, a thing', derived from *ohun kán*. The *kán* is doubled in *ẹnìkankan* 'anybody', *nkankan* 'anything', as in *ng ò rí ẹnìkankan nìbè* 'I did not see anybody there', *ng ò rà nkankan* 'I did not buy anything'.

Note that in the above usage *kán* precedes a relative clause. It will follow such a clause only if this is short and, in fact, equivalent to an adjective (which is true also of other numerals). Contrast *mo rí ilé t'ó kéré kán* 'I saw a small house' with *mo rí ilé kán t'ó kéré púpọ̀* 'I saw a house which was very small'; *t'ó kéré* in the first sentence

is equivalent to *kékeré. yí, yẹn* and *náà*, on the other hand, normally follow a relative clause, e.g. *obinrin t'á ńsọ̀rọ̀ rẹ̀ yí* 'this woman that we are talking about', *èyít'ó sanra yẹn* 'that fat one', *owó tí nwọ́n fún mí náà* 'the money in question which they gave me'. When these words precede the relative clause, they are followed by a slight pause just as in the corresponding English sentence; the relative word *tí*, too, requires some supporting words. For example, 'my friend (mentioned), who had already arrived' is rendered by *ọ̀rẹ̀ mí náà, t'ó jẹ̀ pé ó tí tètè dé* 'my friend, which it is that he had arrived early' or *ọ̀rẹ̀ mí náà, ẹnít'ó tí tètè dé* 'my friend, the person who had arrived early' (the second rendering being rather bookish). Similarly, for 'this bag of mine, which was very heavy' one says *àpò mí yí, t'ó jẹ̀ pé ó wúwo púpọ̀* or (bookish) *àpò mí yí, èyít'ó wúwo púpọ̀*.

4. Besides its common meaning of 'the . . . mentioned, hinted at, inferred', *náà* not infrequently means 'too' or, in negative sentences, 'either', e.g. *èmi náà fẹ̀ lẹ̀* 'I too want to go', *Táiwò náà kò lè kà á* 'Taiwo could not read it, either'. It is also occasionally used adverbially at the end of short phrases with a meaning something like 'as has already been stated or implied', e.g. *ó dára náà* 'it's all right even so' (in spite of various circumstances which might have caused me to alter my mind), *ó lẹ̀ náà ní sùgbọ́n . . .* 'he did indeed go, but . . .'. For this adverbial use of *náà*, compare the similar use of *yí* and *yẹn* mentioned on p. 145.

náà can be used with *yí* and *yẹn*, which it always follows, e.g. *aṣọ̀ tí mo rà láná yí náà* 'this (before mentioned) cloth which I bought yesterday', *ọ̀rọ̀ t'á sọ̀ fún nyín yẹn náà* 'that matter which we mentioned to you'.

In some cases *náà* is written as one word with the preceding element. These are: *nítorináà* 'for that reason, therefore', *ọ̀kannáà* (*ikannáà*) 'the same thing' (*ọ̀kan* 'one'), *kánnáà* 'the same' (dependent form), *bákánnáà* 'in the same way, alike' (compare *báyí* 'in this way'), *bẹ̀nńáà* 'so, as you say'.

5. The forms *eléyí* and, less frequently, *oniyèn* containing the *oní-* prefix described on p. 183 are used for emphasis, e.g. *eléyí ni mo fẹ́* 'it is this one I want' is more emphatic than *èyí ni mo fẹ́*. They are sometimes used with nouns, e.g. *ìgbà eléyí* 'this occasion' as compared with *ìgbà yí*. If *eléyí* is used to refer to a person it usually has a contemptuous meaning, e.g. *kíní eléyí lè ẹ̀?* 'what can this person do?'. Another way of making *èyí* emphatic is to add *yí*, e.g. *èyí yí ni mo fẹ́* 'it is this very one I want'.

6. In translating 'that' we have to take account of dialectal variants. Besides *iyen*, *yèn* there occur also *èyūn* (*èyūn* from *èyí un*), *ùn*, e.g. *àpótí ùn* 'that box', *èyūn kò kàn mí* 'that does not affect/concern me'. *ùn* is seen in *báun* 'like that', parallel with *báyí* 'like this', for *bẹ̀ẹ̀ yèn*. Another variant is *nì* (dependent form), which requires the lengthening on a mid tone—not always written—of the preceding vowel, e.g. *filà(a) nì* 'that cap', *owó(o) nì* 'that money', *omọ(o) nì* 'that child'. The independent form is *èyíni*, e.g. *èyíni kò tó* 'that is not enough'. Plural forms *àwònnun*, *wònnun* and *àwòn(òn)nì*, *wòn(òn)nì* also occur.

7. Common uses of the emphatic pronouns which should be noted are:

(a) We have seen that *àwòn* 'they' can precede *tani* 'who?'; so too, in fact, can the other emphatic pronouns, e.g. *ẹ̀nyin tal'ẹ̀ fẹ́(ẹ́) bá mi sọ̀rọ̀?* 'who are you people that want to talk with me?', *òun tal'ó wí bẹ̀ẹ̀?* 'who is he that says so?'. *ẹ̀nyin tani?* by itself is a more emphatic variant for *tani nýin?* and so also with the other pronouns.

(b) The plural emphatic pronouns are often used with numerals, including the question word *méló?* 'how many?', e.g. *ẹ̀nyin méló ní?* 'how many are you?', *àwa méfà ní* 'we are six, there are six of us'. *àwa mètá ní bàbá wa bí* 'there were three of us children of our father'. Both singular and plural pronouns can be used with *nikan* 'only', and also the emphasized form *nikanşoşo* 'alone', e.g. *èmi nikanşoşo* 'I alone', *àwa nikanşoşo* 'we alone'.

(c) Emphasis, sometimes indicating contempt, is conveyed by the addition of *yí* or *wònyí*, e.g. *èmi yí l'ò rúbú báyí?* 'is it actually me you are abusing like this?', *kil'ẹ̀nyin wònyí lè ẹ̀?* 'what can people like you do?'. Contempt is often indicated by adding a noun (or adjective functioning as a noun) qualified by *yí*, e.g. *iwọ́ kìní yí* 'a thing like you', *iwọ́ omọ́dé yí* 'a child like you', *iwọ́ lásánlásán yí* 'a good-for-nothing like you'. *iwọ́ omọ́dé yí* is not necessarily contemptuous as it can also be used in calling out to a child whose name one does not know. Remember that the use of the 2nd. pers. sing. is familiar and, if used out of place, downright rude. The pronoun cannot be used by itself in calling out to a person in Yoruba; where in English one might call out 'Hi, you!' one would in Yoruba say *iwọ́ Lágbájá ò!* 'you, So-and-so'.

8. In abusive expressions in English we use 'you' in addressing a person and 'the' in referring to him, but Yoruba uses the *possessive* pronouns, e.g. *kil'alákorí rẹ́ fẹ́* 'what does the scamp want?'. Note also the difference in construction between *kil'òkú ìgbẹ́ rẹ́ fẹ́* and its English equivalent 'what do you want, you good-for-nothing?'.
 8. In abusive expressions in English we use 'you' in addressing a person and 'the' in referring to him, but Yoruba uses the *possessive* pronouns, e.g. *kil'alákorí rẹ́ fẹ́* 'what does the scamp want?'. Note also the difference in construction between *kil'òkú ìgbẹ́ rẹ́ fẹ́* and its English equivalent 'what do you want, you good-for-nothing?'.

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

<i>àwùjọ</i> , assembly, meeting	<i>wàyi</i> , as things are
<i>Èlédá</i> , Creator	<i>òmùgò</i> , fool
<i>òlájú</i> , civilised person	<i>ribiribi</i> , important,
<i>èyà</i> , people, tribe	substantial
<i>oríṣi</i> , sort, variety	<i>t'orẹ́ (ta orẹ́)</i> , make a gift
<i>pésẹ́ (pé ẹ̀sẹ́)</i> , to be fully present	

EXERCISE 35

Translate into English: *ó kí wa, àwa náà'sì kí i; ilé tí bàbá rẹ́'kó s'ẹ̀hìn ilú náà ní nwọn lọ; àwòn tani mo rí tí nwọn dúró pọ̀ yèn? àwòn kán tí nwọn n'wá iṣẹ́ ní; láipẹ́ yí mo wà ní àwùjọ àwòn òlájú ènià kan; Èlédá wa*

l'ò fi ifé nkán wònyí sí wa l'ókàn; gbogbo oríṣi óúnjé méréèrin yí l'ó yé k'ó maa pèsè nínú óúnjé wa; mo rò pé ènyin náà'ti rí i wáyí pé àwa t'á jé oníṣèègùn kò rí bákannáà; àwa yí, babaláwo t'ó ti inú babaláwo wá ni àwa; olóriburúkú nýin ñlọ pàdè iyáwó tuntun, iyáwó tuntun'ti lọ ó; oba ilú tí nwón dé eti rẹ yẹn'lọ s'óko oḍe; àwọn t'ẹ rí wón(ọ)nì, ọmọ mi ni gbogbo wón; eléyí gbìn èso ibi, ó ká ibi; tal'ènyin wònyí? ọmọ ọgá ilé-ìwé ni wá; Olórún kánnáà t'ó dá àwọn èyà ènià tí a dárúko wònyí l'ó dá àwa náà; àt'oun àt'awón mewa iyókú tí a kò mò, gbogbo wón l'ó sá lọ pátápátá; kí'òmùgò rẹ'maa ẹ ni bí? àwọn olówó ríbiríbi t'á wí yí lè fi ẹgbèrún pónùn t'ọrẹ láí kà á sí nkánkan.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

CONNECTIVES

1. The word **àti** is used to connect nouns, emphatic pronouns or noun clauses. A repetition of **àti**, making a phrase which is often emphatic, gives the meaning 'both ... and'.

èmi àti Kẹhíndé lọ(ọ) kí i, I and Kẹhinde went to greet him

àti èmi àti Kẹhíndé l'a jọ lọ(ọ) kí i, both I and Kẹhinde together (it is) went to greet him

nwón ẹ wá l'álẹjò b'ó ti tọ àti b'ó ti yẹ, they entertained us as is right and (as is) proper

nwón fẹ mọ b'ó ti ga àti b'ó ti gùn tó, they want to know how tall and how long it is

Note that in Yoruba 'I' is placed first, e.g. **èmi àt'ìwọ** 'I and you', **èmi àt'Ọjọ** 'I and Ojo'. Notice also that in the last example above **tó** occurs at the end of the second clause only; if we added it at the end of the first clause as well, the effect would be very much like that of 'they want to know how tall it is and how long it is', where each clause is given in its isolated form.

Where a sequence of nouns occurs, Yoruba is like English in normally using **àti** only before the final noun, e.g. **mo rà epo, ẹran, ata àti àlùbòsá** 'I bought palm-oil, meat, pepper and onions'. This is possibly a case of imitation of English usage. Another case of this seems to be the use of **àtipé** as a general connective between sentences, corresponding to 'and furthermore ...', though **àti pé** is quite natural when connecting two clauses of reported speech, e.g. **ó wípé òun kò lè wá àti pé òun fẹ(ẹ) bá mi sọrọ** 'he said that he could not come and that he wanted to talk with me'.

2. A special usage is found with the singular pronouns

in which no connective is used, as in the phrase *èmi ire* 'I and you' (*ire* being a Southern Yoruba variant of *iwo*), and *Táiwò òun Ójó wá kí mi* 'Taiwo and Ojo came to greet me', in which the pronoun *òun* is substituted for the preceding noun with the second noun following immediately. A literal translation would be 'Taiwo he Ojo'.

3. A doubled *ti* (probably connected with *àti*) occurs in two forms:

(a) with a repetition of the same noun, e.g. *tagbára-tagbára* 'violently, forcibly', *tibínútibínú* 'angrily', *tòmò-tòmò* 'children and all'. As the translations suggest, these forms are generally, but not invariably, used adverbially.

ó wò mí tàánútàánú, she looked at me with pity

ó pa wòn run tòmòtòmò, he destroyed them children and all

ó jẹ ẹ tewétewé, he ate it leaves and all

(b) with two nouns of related meaning, e.g. *tẹgbòntà-búrò* 'both elder and younger brother', *tọkọtaya* 'husband and wife', *tòsántòru* 'night and day', *tajáṣeran* '(dog and animal) any Tom, Dick or Harry'. These forms may be used as subject, object or adverbial extension.

tẹgbòntàbúrò l'ó dé, both elder and younger brother came
nwọn jẹ tọkọtaya, they are husband and wife
a ṣiṣẹ tòsántòru, we worked night and day

4. *tí* is used to connect subordinate clauses which are not noun clauses, including clauses following upon the emphasising word *ni*. Often the second clause contains also the connective *si*, for which see below.

èmi ni mo rí i tí mo sì pa á, it was I who saw it and (also) killed it

epo ni mo nra tí mo tún nta, it is palm-oil that I buy and in turn sell

bí mo bá rí i tí mo sì r'àyè bá a sọrò, if I see him and have a chance to talk with him

bí nwọn ti dé'bẹ tí nwọn sì wòye pé . . ., as they arrived there and realised that . . .

agbàdò tútù t'ó ti sè t'ó sì gbóná yaya, fresh corn which she had cooked and which was piping hot

Note that where the first clause is indefinite, i.e. contains *bá*, this is not normally repeated in the following clause, the 'indefiniteness' of the situation having now been established.

Where the first clause is introduced with *kí* any following clause in the same sequence will be introduced with a repetition of this word.

jéki n lo kí n padà, let me go and come back

ó yẹ k'á dúpẹ l'ówọ àwọn t'ó jéki nkán rọrùn kí ó sì dára báyi, we ought to give thanks to those who have caused things to be easy and good like this

5. *si* is an auxiliary verb used to connect sentences and clauses which are not noun clauses. It has the meaning of 'moreover, also' rather than merely 'and'; in fact, in many cases where 'and' would be used in the translation no connective is used in Yoruba. This auxiliary follows *bá* but precedes *ti*, *ṣe*, *fi*; it follows the future particles *yíó/á* and frequently takes the habitual prefix *í-*, while it precedes the other tense signs.

Some examples of its use are to be found in the preceding section; further examples are added here.

kò dúdú púpọ, kò sì pupa púpọ, she was not very dark and she was not very light

ó mú mi l'ára dá, èmi kí yíó sì gbàgbé, he caused me to get better, and I shall not forget

ó dà lé mi l'óri ó sì bà agbádá ọgá mi jẹ báṣabáṣa, it spilled over me and also spoilt my master's gown all over

bí aṣọ' bá sì ti bèrèsí(í) ́sá, yíó pa á ti, and when a gown began to lose colour, he would put it aside

nígbàtí mo sì rí i pé gbogbo wọn lo síwájú, mo bá eṣẹ mi sọrò, and when I saw that they had all gone ahead, I took to my heels

kí isì iṣe bèẹ mó, and he does not act so any more
nígbàtí mo bá sì nkà á . . ., and whenever I read it . . .

6. *àbí, tàbí* 'or' are to some extent interchangeable, but *tàbí* occurs more generally between nouns and pronouns while *àbí* often joins clauses. *àbí (tàbí)* is also used, as we have seen, to introduce a question in situations where English, too, uses 'or'.

lọ(ọ) bá mi rà ògèdè tàbí ọpẹ-òyínbó wá kíákíá, go and quickly buy for me bananas or pine-apples (come)
kí n sè é ni àbí kí n dín i ni? am I to stew it or fry it?
àb'ò ò fẹ(ẹ) lọ mọ? or don't you want to go any more?

A reduplicated form *tàbitàbí* is used as a noun in the phrase *tàbitàbí kò sí* 'there is no perhaps, i.e. doubt'.

7. *nítòrí* is used as a connective either by itself or in the longer forms *nítòrípé, nítòríítí* with the meaning 'because'. We have already mentioned *nítòríináá* 'therefore, because of that'. *nítòrí (itorí)* is also used with nouns and pronouns in adverbial phrases, e.g. *nítòrí ọran yí ni mo ẹ lọ silé* 'it was because of this matter that I went home', *ọran tí mo t'itorí rẹ lọ s'Ékò n'iyen* 'that is the matter about which I went to Lagos'. The *t'itorí* of the last example is really a doubled form, because *itorí* itself is a verb noun formed from *tí* 'to come from' and *orí* 'head, reason'. The example might be simplified as *ọran tí mo t'orí rẹ* etc., and with the *ń-* prefix we could have *ọran tí mo ńt'orí rẹ* etc. 'the matter about which I am going'. Note that *nítòrí (itorí)* is followed by *ẹ* when in the emphatic position but otherwise is constructed with *tí*.

8. *şughón* 'but' presents no difficulties as it is used exactly like its English counterpart; some Yorubas use instead the Hausa loan-word *àmọ*. The phrase-word *bẹẹni* 'so it is' occurs in situations where 'but' might be followed by some qualifying phrase in English. e.g. *ó nşe aşojú oníşòwò, bẹẹni kò mọwé* 'he is a trader's representative but (surprisingly enough) he is illiterate'. The word needs care in translating because it is sometimes equivalent to no more than 'and furthermore', e.g. *aiyé kò íti íşá, bẹẹni kò íti íti* 'the (glamour of the) world

has not yet faded and furthermore it has not yet gone stale (nor has it gone stale)'.
 9. We saw on p. 172 that a repetition of *ibáá* without a connective is equivalent to 'whether ... or ...'. Yoruba is actually rather fond of using balanced phrases without a connective in this way, e.g. *bí mo fẹ, bí mo kọ, dandan ni kí n lọ* 'whether I want to or whether I refuse, it is incumbent on me to go'. This same idea can also be expressed by what are at first sight two independent sentences, each ending with the exclamatory *ó*, e.g. *mo fẹ ó, mo kọ ó, dandan ni kí n lọ*. In this case some Yorubas might add *yálá ... tàbí ...* 'whether ... or ...', e.g. *yálá mo fẹ ó, tàbí mo kọ ó*, but these additions are possible instances of the influence of English. Other examples of lack of connectives are *mo rí méjì méta nínú won* 'I saw two or three of them', *nwon kí í mészán mészá* 'they sang his praises nineteen to the dozen' (lit. 'nine ten'), *ó ńlọ sókè sódò* 'he is going up and down'. Compare also compound nouns such as *arajámásánwó* 'one who buys goods (*ọjà*) but does not pay' (see p. 182).

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

<i>ojú ńkán mi</i> , I am in a hurry	<i>olóyè</i> , intelligent person
<i>repẹte</i> , extensively	<i>sibésibé</i> , nevertheless
<i>kí</i> , to push, ram	<i>ọşó</i> , adornment
<i>tọ</i> , to follow (road)	<i>lọra</i> , to be slow
<i>dánşíkí</i> , short gown	<i>fẹ i (fẹ ẹsi)</i> , to reply
<i>pon</i> , to draw water	<i>ọni</i> , crocodile
	<i>oniyebiye</i> , valuable

EXERCISE 36

Translate into English: a là á yé e pé a kò ní(i) lè dúró, *nítòrípé ojú ńkán wa, şughón sibésibé ó ẹ wá l'álẹjò repẹte; mo rántí Adùkẹ, omí'si bọ l'ójú mi; bí a tí dé tészán, tí a gbà iwé tán ni okọ'yo; darúko méjì nínú won k'ò sí sọ ilú tí nwon wà; ó gbé e mi t'eegun-t'eegun; t'omódé-t'agbà l'ó fẹran rẹ; ọba'ni òun'fi tayọtayọ fi omọ*

naà fún mi; ó pé tí mo ti rí i mọ, n kò sì mọ pé ó ti di olópá; kò pé púpọ tí ilẹ̀'fi sù; ó wí fún mi kí m maa lo s'ilé, sùgbón n kò lọ; báyi ni mo se tí mo jádè láárin ilú tí mo kí orí bọ inú igbó; èrò okàn mi' ti padà nítorí gbogbo òrọ̀ t'ó so wọn(ọn)ni, kò fi wọn purọ̀ mọ̀ mi rárá; kí n jù ú nù ni àbí kí n fi pamọ̀ ni? mo maa níwọ̀ agbádá tàbí dàńsíki; àwọn baba àti iyá nyín ti tò ọ̀nà tí ẹ̀ nítọ̀ yí rí; iyán gígùn ni ó, ata lílọ̀ ni ó, omi pípọ̀n ni ó, ọmọ̀ yí nikan l'ó nṣe gbogbo rẹ; inákúná kò dára, bẹ̀ẹ̀ si ni ahun síse kò dára rárá; òrọ̀ l'ó nṣéki a mọ̀ ènià ni olóyè tàbí òmùgò; nígbatí ó fọ̀ èso yi, owó, aṣo, ilẹ̀kè àti ohun ọ̀ṣọ̀ oníyebiye yọ̀ sí i; àti èmi àti iyawó, kò sí èyíkéyi nínú wa t'ó jẹ̀ sọ̀rọ̀; mo bí i léèrè pé àbí mo tó(ó) se ẹ̀ ni; àti eja àti ọ̀nì, ẹran jíjẹ̀ l'awọn méjèjì.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

REPETITION AND REDUPLICATION

We have already had several examples of the uses of repetition and reduplication; it will be convenient at this point to bring them together and explain some of them in more detail.

1. Repetition is often used to intensify the meaning of words, e.g. **mo jẹ jẹ jẹ** 'I ate and ate and ate'. Note that, in contrast with the English translation, there are no connecting words. Another example of this sort is **mo se ẹ se ẹ se ẹ mo se ẹ ti** 'I tried and tried to do it but failed (ti)'. With nouns, adjectives and adverbs a single repetition is normal, **púpọ̀púpọ̀** 'very much', **diẹ̀diẹ̀** 'very little', **wéréwéré**, **kiakia** 'very quickly'. In the case of some phonaesthetic words only the doubled forms are in general use, e.g. **gidágidá** 'tightly' (with **di** 'to tie'), **tónítóní** 'spotlessly' (with **mọ̀** 'to be clean').

With some words a change of tone occurs, e.g. **ńlá** 'big', **ńláńlá** 'very big'; **lásán** 'useless', **lásánlásán** 'quite useless'. A regular change is that of a low-tone phonaesthetic word to mid-tone on repetition, e.g. **ara rẹ̀'rí** **minijọ-minijọ** 'its body is smooth', **orí rẹ̀'rí** **finkàn-finkan** 'his head is huge'.

2. We have seen (p. 110) that repetition is used with numerals to give a distributive or plural sense, e.g. **nwón tó ní mètá mètá** 'they were lined up in threes', **fún wọn ní méjì méjì** 'give them two each'. It is also used so with some adjectives and nouns, e.g. **fèrèsé ńlá** 'a big window', **fèrèsé ńláńlá** 'big windows' (note the difference here between repetition on the same tone and repetition on a different tone); **gígùn gígùn ni mo fé** 'it is long ones I want'; **fún mi ní s'ilè s'ilè** 'give me shillings'; **gbogbo awọn sàràkí sàràkí ni nwón lọ(ọ)** kí i 'all the various officials

went to greet him'. *kékeré* has a plural form *kékèkè*, e.g. *àwọn omọ kékèkè kò sí nibẹ̀* 'the young/small children are not there'. This pattern is found also in some other words which have no corresponding singular form, e.g. *pópòpó* 'in small pieces' as in *ó gé e pópòpó* 'he cut it up small', and *pépépé* 'trivial' as in *isẹ̀ pépépé* 'trivial tasks'.

Another repetitive form with a similar distributive meaning has its two parts fused together, e.g. *oḍoḍún* 'each/every year' from *oḍún*; *oṣòòsù* 'each/every month' from *oṣù*; *irúurú* 'various sorts' from *irú*, occurring in *onírúurú* 'of various sorts'. Compare with these *òkòòkan* 'each, one by one' from *òkan*.

3. In some words where there is repetition of syllables, with or without a change of tone, the simple form seems to be meaningless, e.g. *kòlòkòlò* 'fox (fennec)', *kànnà-kanna* 'pied crow', *gèdègèdè* 'lees, sediment'. We must mention here, too, a large number of phonaesthetic words with the tone pattern high-mid-low-mid, e.g. *wúruwúru* 'untidy', *fálafála* 'abundantly'. Many of the words with this pattern have a disparaging meaning, cp. *wúruwúru* above. When these forms are repeated a further variation of tone pattern is heard, e.g. *ó úrin hẹ̀hẹ̀hẹ̀* 'he is waddling along'.

4. We saw (p. 183) that doubled forms of verb plus object are often used for people or things performing the action, e.g. *fágifági* 'carpenter' (*fá* 'to shave, make smooth'). Some doubled forms of this type, however, serve to intensify the meaning of the simple form in an adverbial use, e.g. *mo mò dájú* or *mo mò dájúdájú* 'I know for certain', cp. *ó dá mi l'ójú* 'I am certain'. Another commonly occurring example is *karakára* 'enthusiastically, keenly', cp. *ó ká mi l'ára* 'I am keen about'. Adverbial use is also, as we have seen (p. 202), normal for nouns doubled with a repeated *tí*, e.g. *tókántòkàn* 'heartily' (*òkàn* 'heart'), *tayótayò* 'joyfully' (*ayò* 'joy').

4. We have seen that nouns may be reduplicated with a *k* followed by a high tone between the two sections.

These forms may have two rather different meanings, as exemplified in the examples:

oúnjékóúnjẹ l'ò ñjẹ yí o, this is poor sort of food you are eating

oúnjékóúnjẹ t'ò bá jẹ nílátí gbóná, any food that you eat must be hot

The meaning to be understood in any particular case will depend on the form of the sentence used, e.g. *má jẹ oúnjékóúnjẹ* means 'don't eat any old sort of food' rather than 'don't eat any food at all', because the latter meaning is more likely to be expressed as *o kò gbòḍò jẹun rara* 'you must not eat at all'. Apart from this, there are certain limitations on the use of these forms. *enikéni*, from *eni* 'person' (in a very general sense), has only the meaning 'anybody at all', e.g. *enikéni t'ó bá dé, sọ fún u pé mo mbò* 'anybody who arrives, tell him I am coming', but *èniàkènià*, from *ènià* 'person, human being', has only the meaning 'a poor sort of person', e.g. *èniàkènià ni* 'he is a poor type'. Reduplications of verb nouns in *i*- have only the derogatory meaning, e.g. *isòkúsò* 'foolish talk, bad language', *inàkúnà* 'foolish spending, extravagance'. Note that in these verb forms *u* replaces *i* after the *k*; this is also a free variation in *igbákígba*, *igbákúgbà* 'any occasion at all', formed from *igbà*, which also happens to have an initial *i*-.

5. Where other consonants, also followed by high tones, are interposed, the doubled forms have some intensification of the meaning, e.g. *ilẹ̀yilẹ̀* 'the very ground', *iyebiye* 'great value', *aiyebáiyé* 'ages ago', *òpòlòpò* 'great quantity', *àgbàlágba* 'elder'.

6. Repetition is used with verbs for two different purposes.

(a) The reduplicated verb noun, followed either by a relative clause or by *ni*, has the effect of intensifying the meaning of the verb.

rírí tí mo rí i, mo pa kuuru mó o, the seeing that I saw him (as soon as I saw him) I rushed at him

dídú d'ó d'ú d'ú l'ó wù mí, it is its blackness which attracts me

pípa ni nwón pa á, they actually killed him

títa l'ó nta mí nígbàgbogbo, it always stings me

(b) the verb noun in **à-**, with a second qualifying verb added, is placed after the verb, either directly as its object or as an adverbial extension. This has the effect of calling increased attention to the qualification.

nwón je àjẹti, they ate but could not eat all
ó pò àpọjù/pápọjù, it is altogether too much
nwón pa á l'ápákú, they killed it stone dead
ó ẹ̀ ẹ̀ é l'áşẹti, he failed to do it

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY

wọra (wọ ara) , deeply (enter body)	gbà fún , to be indulgent to
dùndú , fried yam	pérepèrẹ , in shreds
kó ẹgbẹ , to keep company	fà . . . ya , to tear up
mọ̀námọ̀nà , lightning	rọ , to urge
jágbajágbà , untidy	léalélera , repeatedly
tímùtímù , pillow, cushion	túlétúlé , breaker-up of household
àwọ , colour	ògbólógbò , dyed-in-the-wool
alákọrí , good-for-nothing	gbá . . . l'ẹti , to box the ears of
d'ẹhin (dà) , to act in absence	fi ẹşẹ kọ , to stumble
halẹ , to threaten, bluster	
aiyeráiyé , everlasting	

EXERCISE 37

Translate into English: ikú ọ̀rẹ̀ mí yí dùn mí ní àdùnwọ̀ra; mo rà dùndú tọ̀rọ̀ tọ̀rọ̀ fún gbogbo àwọn ọ̀şìşẹ̀ pátápátá; máşẹ̀ jẹkí ọ̀mọ̀ rẹ̀ kó ẹgbẹ̀kẹgbẹ̀; nwón ndán bí mọ̀námọ̀nà ojú ọ̀run; ohun gbogbo rí jágbajágbà réderéde; mo rà tímùtímù aláwọ̀ méfà l'ọ̀wọ̀ rẹ̀; nwón maa npe é ní 'olóríburúku', 'alákọrí' àti bẹ̀ẹ̀ bẹ̀ẹ̀ lọ; aşọ̀ yí wù mí(i) rà púpọ̀púpọ̀; àwọn àgbààgbà ilú wá kí mí;

ó ní bí òun kò bá sí n'ílẹ̀, nwón kò gbọ̀dọ̀ d'ẹhin òun ẹ̀ ohunkóhun; híhalẹ̀ t'a níhalẹ̀ mọ̀ ọ̀, a kán fi ndérubá á ní ọ̀; ó bọ̀ sí gbèsè aiyeráiyé; máşẹ̀ gbà igbákúgbà fún ọ̀mọ̀ rẹ̀; ekùn'fà ọ̀kùnrin yi ya pérepèrẹ̀; ó yẹ̀ k'ò tẹ̀lẹ̀ e n'íbi kibi t'ó bá lọ; mo rọ̀ ọ̀ títí, síbẹ̀síbẹ̀ kò gbà; nwón gbà a l'ẹti léalélera; ọ̀dọ̀dún ni mo maa ngbà ọ̀lídé lọ sí ilú mí; ikọ̀kúkọ̀ gbàá ni nwón nko; ọ̀rẹ̀ tímùtímù ni wón; kí orí nyín gbà nyín l'ọ̀wọ̀ túlétúlé ọ̀mọ̀; ọ̀gbólógbò olẹ̀ l'ọ̀kùnrin yẹn; dídide tí mo dide, ẹşẹ̀ ọ̀sì ni mo fi kọ̀.

Now turn to the key at the back and retranslate the sentences into Yoruba.

SOME SPECIAL WORDS

A feature of the vocabulary of Yoruba is the great variety of meanings given to words which are basically names for parts of the body. These are so diverse that they are difficult to classify; some of the more common expressions are given here.

ojú 'face, eye'

This is used in many expressions to mean the actual place where things happen, the main or essential part of a thing, the effective part of a weapon or tool and so on, e.g. ojú ònà 'road-way', ojú ojà 'market-place', ojú isẹ́ 'main work', ojú owó 'money spent in buying a thing as distinct from profit gained by selling it', ojú ijó 'place where people are dancing', ojú ijá 'place where there is fighting', ojú ádá 'sharp edge of matchet', ojú ibon 'muzzle of gun', ojú alẹ́ 'late evening', ojú esẹ́ eranko 'foot-print of animal', ojú omọ 'real child, child who behaves as a child really should'. Sometimes it is used where in English we merely use a preposition, e.g. oorun òkùn mí 'I am feeling sleepy' but mo jì l'ójú oorun 'I woke from sleep', and mo lálá (lá alá) 'I dreamed' but mo rí i l'ójú alá 'I saw it in a dream'.

In some expressions it is used by itself with the meaning of 'place', e.g. aiyé kò dúró l'ójú kán 'the world does not stop in one place' (it keeps on changing), l'ójúkánáá 'on the spot, immediately', ng kò mò ojú tí mo fi bú s'érín 'I did not when (lit. where) I burst out laughing, I just had to burst out laughing'.

In many other expressions the word is used in a metaphorical sense, as in English 'his face fell' and so on. Examples of these are: ó fi gún mí l'ójú 'he pierced me in the eye with it', which is more or less equivalent to 'he cast it in my teeth'; ojú mí wálẹ́ 'my eye came to the

ground', said after achieving something which one has been very eager to obtain, or on coming to after a drinking bout; ojú mí mó 'my eye cleared', said on realising too late that things have gone wrong; ojú kún mí 'eye filled me' = 'I became weary, bored'; ó fà ojú mí mọ́ra 'he drew my eye to himself' = 'he set himself to make a good impression on me'; ó ñsẹ ojú aiyé ní 'he is acting in order to impress people' (his real feelings are very different); o ó rí pupa ojú mí 'you will see the redness of my eye' = 'I shall be extremely angry with you'; ojú mí dí ọwọ́ rẹ́ 'my eye is in your hand' = 'you must act for me in my absence'.

enu 'mouth'

This word, too, is used in certain phrases for the edge of a tool, e.g. ọbẹ́ yì kú l'enu 'this knife is blunt'. Used with ònà 'way' it means 'door-way'. A less obvious meaning is 'limit of time or place', e.g. l'enu isẹ́jú méwá yì 'within these ten minutes', enu bá yí ní k'ò gé e mọ́ 'as far as this you are to cut it stop' = 'cut it as far as this but no further'.

Examples of its metaphorical use are: enu rẹ́ tó ilẹ́ 'his mouth reaches the ground', meaning that he is an important person whose every word carries great weight; enu rẹ́ dùn 'his mouth is sweet', i.e. he has a very persuasive tongue; nkán ẹ́ enu(u) re (enu rere) fún u 'things have made a good mouth for him', i.e. things have turned out well for him; nwọ́n gbà sí i l'enu 'they accepted to him in the mouth', i.e. they agreed with his proposal, accepted his explanation; mo wò ó l'enu 'I looked at him in the mouth', i.e. I was careful to listen to what he said before answering, for fear of saying the wrong thing; nwọ́n tí enu bọ́ ọrọ́ 'they pushed their mouth into words', i.e. they started discussing; ó yọ mí l'enu 'it made my mouth come out', i.e. it annoyed me.

ara 'body' and inú 'inside, belly'

It will be convenient to take these two words together as they are both used in certain expressions relating to parts of a whole. mo jẹ́ diẹ́ l'ára rẹ́ and mo jẹ́ diẹ́ n'inú rẹ́

both mean 'I ate some of it', but with some difference of meaning. 'I ate some from the body of it' is used of eating a part of a larger whole, e.g. part of a piece of meat; 'I ate some from inside it', on the other hand, is used of eating part of something which can be regarded as made up of several parts, such as a cooked food. *nínú* is necessarily used of liquids and plural objects, but sometimes either word may be used though with a slightly different connotation, e.g. if one used *l'ára rẹ* in talking of something like pounded yam (*iyán*) one would be thinking of it as made up into a single large lump. A similar distinction occurs in talking of money, e.g. *mo mú diẹ l'ára owó tí mo tí kó jọ* 'I took some out of the total of the money which I had collected', and is seen also in *ara àwọn t'ó pa á ni wón* 'they are some of (the larger number of) those who killed him' as compared with *nínú(inú) àwọn t'ó pa á sálọ* 'some of those who killed him ran away'.

In some other expressions it is possible to contrast *ara* 'body' with *inú* 'mind', e.g. *ó dùn mó mi nínú* 'it is pleasant to me (mentally)', *ó dùn mó mi l'ára* 'it is pleasant to me (physically)', cp. also *ó dùn mó mi l'ẹnu* 'it is pleasant to me in taste'. But in describing sensations Yoruba often uses *ara* where in English one would think rather of a mental state, e.g. *ara'fu mí* 'I felt suspicious', *ara'ta mí* 'I was on tenterhooks'.

Some other common expressions containing these two words are:

(a) *ara ikú nýá a* 'he seems anxious to get killed', cp. *yára (yá ara)* 'to be quick, in a hurry'; *ara rẹ'gbóná* 'his body got hot' = 'he got hot under the collar, he was eager to intervene'; *nwón faramó (fi ara mó) ipinnu yí* 'they agreed (put body to) with this decision'; *ó kú s'ára bí ịṣu* 'he died to his body like a yam' = 'he shewed great signs of alarm, his knees trembled with fear'; *mo farabalẹ (fi ara ba ilẹ)* 'I put body settle on ground' = 'I acted in a relaxed, reasonable manner'; *ara rọ ó* 'body is soft for him' = 'he has no difficulties' or 'he became deflated'.

(b) *inú rẹ'dí* 'his inside is blocked up' = 'he bears grudges'; *inú rẹ'só* 'he is churlish'; *bá inú sọ má bá ènià sọ* 'tell the mind, don't tell people' = 'keep your own counsel'.

idí 'base, bottom'

This is often used in the sense of a place connected with various activities, e.g. *idí mótò* 'bus-stop, bus-park', *idí-ọkọ*, *idíkọ* 'station', *idí odò* 'watering place at a river', *idí aró* 'place where dyeing is done', *idí ibon* 'the front line' (used metaphorically in the sense of the most important position).

We may connect with its use in the sense of 'cause, reason' such phrases as *mo nàwó púpọ n'idí ọràn yí* 'I spent a lot of money in connection with this affair' and *a rí wáhálà púpọ n'idí a nṣòwò nìbẹ* 'we had a lot of trouble in connection with the fact that we were trading there'.

ẹhin 'back'

This sometimes has the meaning 'outside', e.g. *àwòrán ẹhin iwé* 'picture on the cover of book'. It is also often used in the sense of 'absence', e.g. *nwón ẹẹ é lẹhin mi* 'they did it in my absence' (often, but not necessarily, like English 'behind my back') or 'the time after a person's death', e.g. *ẹhin rẹ ó dára*, which is a prayer after the death of an elderly person.

ọwọ 'hand' and *ẹsẹ* 'foot'

These are used together in certain expressions, e.g. *nwón gbà á t'owót'ẹsẹ* 'they received him cordially', *nìgbàti ọwọ wọ ọwọ, ẹsẹ wọ ẹsẹ* 'when hand entered hand, foot entered foot' = 'when they became close partners', *ó rọwọrọsẹ ẹẹ é (rọ)* 'he did it without difficulty'.

Some uses of *ọwọ* which are not immediately clear are seen in *ọwọ irọlẹ* 'towards evening', *ọwọ odó* 'the sound of a mortar being pounded' (*odó* 'mortar'), *ó nàwọ óúnjẹ* 'he stretched out the hand of food, he offered food', *mo tí mò ọwọ rẹ nisisiyí* 'I have now got to know his way of acting'.

PERSONAL NAMES AND TITLES

The Yoruba are now gradually giving up their old indigenous system of personal names and are adopting a West European system with surnames and a limited number of forenames occurring in a fixed order. This is so because of the increasing necessity in modern conditions of having people's names registered for all sorts of purposes—the registration of births, marriages and deaths; voting lists; school lists and so on. To understand the present situation it will be best to describe first of all the indigenous system and then explain how it is being modified.

(a) Each large family group has an *orilẹ* name, representing what was originally the totem of that group. Such names are *Erin* 'Elephant' and *Ọkín* 'Egret'. Children normally take the *orilẹ* of their father; married women retain the *orilẹ* of their own family. Each family group has, besides its *orilẹ* name, a long *oriki* 'praise name' recounting the exploits of the family. This is recited or drummed after the *orilẹ* name on certain special occasions.

(b) Any individual born in certain special circumstances will have an *àmútòrunwá* name, i.e. a name 'brought from the other world' (*mú . . . wá* 'bring' *ti* 'from' *òrun* 'other world'). The commonest of these names are probably the names given to twins—*Táiwò* 'Test the world' (*tó . . . wò* 'test' *aiyé* 'world') given to the elder and *Kẹhíndé* 'Bring up the rear' (*kó* 'gather' *ẹhìn* 'rear, behind' *dé* 'arrive'). According to Yoruba ideas *Kẹhíndé* is the senior because in a procession the most important person is always at the rear. Other names of this type are *Dàda*, given to a child born with a lot of hair on its head; *Igè*, given to a child born feet first; *Ọjó*, given to a boy born

with the umbilical cord twisted round its neck, and *Idòwú*, given to a child born after twins.

(c) All individuals will have one or more *àbísọ* names, i.e. names 'given at birth' (*bí* 'bear' *sọ* 'pronounce'). These names are given by senior members of the parents' families when the child is first 'brought out' (*kó . . . jádè*). This ceremony, which is called *ikómojádè*, takes place about a week after the birth of the child. There is a proverb which says *ilé l'a ńwò k'á tó sọ ọmọ l'órúkọ* 'we look at the household before we give a child a name' and, in fact, the *àbísọ* names reflect the circumstances or feelings of the family or they may contain a reference to the particular cult which is practised in the family. These names, which generally have the form of short sentences, are almost infinite in their variety. A few examples are given here.

Bẹbátúndé 'Father has returned' is the name given to a boy whose grandfather died not long before he was born. The Yoruba have an indigenous belief in reincarnation and think that grandparents are reborn in their grandchildren. The corresponding girl's name is *Yétúndé* or *Iyábọ* 'Mother has arrived'.

The word *adé* 'crown' often occurs in boy's names in families which have the right to nominate (in their proper turn) the person to be appointed head chief in their town, e.g. *Adétòkunbọ* 'Crown has returned from overseas' (*ti* 'from' *òkun* 'sea'). Such a name is given when the boy's father has recently returned from a stay abroad, e.g. a period of study in Europe.

Examples of names referring to cults are *Fáşínà* 'The god Ifa has opened a way' (*şí ọnà*), *Ọzúnkẹyẹ* 'The god Ogun has gathered honour' (*kó ẹyẹ*), *Sówándé* (*oşó wá mi dé*) 'the magician sought me out'.

A whole group of names is connected with the belief that when children keep on dying in their infancy there is a particular sort of mischievous spirit called *àbíkú* 'born to die' which keeps on being reincarnated in these children and then hastens back to rejoin its companions in the other world. The names given are designed to

dissuade the spirit from acting in this way. Examples of such names are: *Málómó* 'Don't go any more', *Kòsókó* (*kò sí ọkọ*) 'there is no hoe (to dig a grave)', *Dúrójaiyé* (*je aiyé*) 'Stop enjoy the world', *Bánjókó* 'Sit with me'.

Abiṣo names in common use tend to get abbreviated, e.g. *Adétòkunbò* may be reduced either to *Adé* or *Tòkunbò*. There seems to be no fixed rule as to which part of the full name is used; the main consideration is to avoid confusion by having too many people using the same name.

(d) Among certain sections of the Yoruba, besides the long *òríki* which belong to the family as a whole, children are given short personal *òríki* or 'pet' names. There are certain restrictions on the use of these names, e.g. an individual must not address anyone senior to himself by his *òríki*. Examples of these 'pet' names are the girl's names *Adùkẹ* 'She whom one competes (*dù*) to cherish (*kẹ*)', *Aṣàbí* 'She who is chosen to be born', and the boys' names *Àkàndé* 'He whose turn it is to come', *Àjàní* 'He whom one fights to have'.

Modifications

(a) With the spread of Christianity and Islam various specifically Christian and Muslim names may be given in place of the older *abiṣo* names, which at one stage were almost regarded by converts as relics of heathenism though they have recently begun to come back into favour. Examples of Christian names are *Samuel*, *Comfort*, and of Muslim names *Aminù*, *Latifátù*.

(b) The surnames which many Yoruba now use are in most cases one of the names of their fathers or grandfathers. These names are now handed down just as they are in Western Europe. They may be in origin either an *àmútòrunwá* name, e.g. *Táiwò*; an *abiṣo* name, e.g. *Akínyélé* 'Hero befits the house'; an *òríki*, e.g. *Àkàndé* or sometimes a title, e.g. *Balógun* 'War-captain'. Yorubas whose forbears returned as freed slaves from Sierra Leone may have English names while some families which returned from Brazil have Portuguese names.

As in most languages, there are certain rules about the

use of names, cp. the situation in English, where Mr. Smith will refer to his wife by her Christian name in one set of circumstances, but will refer to her as 'my wife' in another set and as 'Mrs. Smith' in a third set. Apart from the restriction on the use of 'pet' names mentioned above, the most obvious point (in the indigenous system, at any rate) is that in calling out to an older person a term of relationship is used, e.g. *bàbá Lágbájá* 'father of So-and-so' for a man, *iyá Lágbájá* 'mother of So-and-so' for a woman. Note that *Lágbájá*, *Tẹmẹdù*, *Làkásẹ̀gbè* are used in Yoruba in the sort of circumstances where in English we use 'So-and-so' or 'Smith, Brown and Robinson'.

TITLES

The titles of leading chiefs (*oba*) may be either special names, e.g. the *Ọ̀pini* of Ifẹ and the *Awùjalẹ* of Ijebu Ode, or be made up with the *oní-* prefix ('owner of') and the name of a place, e.g. the *Aláké* of Abeokuta—Ake being a part of that town—and the *Aláàfin* 'Owner of the palace' of Oyo. Under the principal chiefs there are often many grades of lesser chiefs. The titles of these again may be either special names or be derived from their former functions, e.g. *Balógun* 'war-chief'. The *Balógun* himself may have subordinates, the most senior of whom will be called *Ọ̀tún Balógun* 'the Balogun's right' and the next senior *Ọ̀sì Balógun* 'the Balogun's left'.

Though the social pattern is now rapidly changing, the Yoruba still lay great store by these traditional ranks and titles.

POSTSCRIPT BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. DICTIONARY

The best available is *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*, by R. C. Abraham, published by the University of London Press Ltd. This is fully tone-marked and gives many examples to illustrate the meanings of words, but learners may find it difficult to use at first because it sometimes deviates from the normal orthography.

2. READERS

There are two series of Readers published for use by Yoruba children which may be found useful. These are the *Taiwo ati Kehinde* series, published by the Oxford University Press (Nigeria) and the *Alawiye* series published by Longmans of Nigeria. At a somewhat more advanced level there are the *Ojulowo Yoruba* series by E. L. Laşebikan (O.U.P.) and *Iwe ede Yoruba* by A. Babalola (Longmans).

3. NOVELS AND STORIES

Very popular among the Yoruba are the books written by D. O. Fagunwa and published by Thomas Nelson and Sons. These mostly relate the strange adventures of hunters in their wanderings in the forest and are full of insights into the Yoruba view of life. Another book from the same publishers which is well worth reading is *Aiye d'aiye oyinko* by I. O. Delano, which is a novel about changes in Yoruba society during the period of British rule and their impact on individuals.

Two interesting books published by Longmans are

Olowolaiyemo by F. Jęboda, which gives a vivid picture of life in Lagos and Ibadan, and *Itan Adegbesan* by J. A. Qmoyajowo, which is the first attempt at a modern adventure story in the language.

J. F. Qdunjo, the author of the *Alawiye* Readers, has written various other books which are worth reading. We may mention particularly *Kuye*, the story of a deaf and dumb boy who eventually regains these faculties.

CONNECTED PASSAGES FOR TRANSLATION

These passages are given more or less as they would appear in an ordinary Yoruba book or newspaper. A few tone marks have been added to help the learner on his way. Unfamiliar words can be looked up in the Vocabulary at the end.

1. A FALSE FRIEND

Ọkunrin kan wà ni ilu wa ti oruko rẹ̀ njẹ̀ Adéyemí. O jẹ́ enit'ò ni owo ati gbajumọ̀ ni ilu wa ati agbegbe rẹ̀. Ọkunrin yi wá ni oṣẹ́ kan ti kò fi tinutinu fẹ́ran rẹ̀. Oruko oṣẹ́ rẹ̀ yi njẹ̀ Sùlẹ̀. Ojọ̀ ti pé pupọ̀ ti nwọ̀n ti jọ̀ nba oṣẹ́ wọ̀n bọ̀. Adeyemi ti fi gbogbo ọ̀kàn rẹ̀ tán Sule, t'ò fi jẹ́ pé aburo oṣẹ́ rẹ̀, eyit'ò njẹ̀ Mako, ni Adeyemi fi ẹ́ akọ́wẹ́ si ile itaja rẹ̀ t'ò wà ni ilu wa. Nigbat'ò ya, Adeyemi pinnu ati fẹ́ ọ̀mọ̀binrin kan ni iyawo, ẹ́gbẹ̀n ọ̀rọ̀ yi kò dùn mọ̀ Sule rara o si nwá gbogbo ọ̀na lati fi bà Adeyemi jẹ́ l'ọ̀dọ̀ ọ̀mọ̀binrin yi. 'Abani jẹ́ mbà ara rẹ̀ jẹ́'—kàkà ki ọ̀mọ̀binrin naa gbọ̀ ọ̀rọ̀ ibajẹ́ wọ̀nyi, nşẹ́ ni ifẹ́ rẹ̀ tun npeleke si i. Nwọ̀n nba ọ̀rọ̀ yi bọ̀ titi oṣẹ́ igbeyawo Adeyemi fi kù oṣẹ́ marun. Nigbati Sule ri eyi, o bẹ́rẹ́ ronun ọ̀na ti o fi le pa oṣẹ́ rẹ̀. O wá wá s'ọ̀dọ̀ Adeyemi pé oun ti ba a ẹ́ ọ̀na òwò kan, nitorinaa ki o wa tikalara rẹ̀ si ọ̀na oko oun, eyit'ò to bi iwọ̀n meṣi meṣin si ile. O sọ fun u pé k'ò maşẹ́ rán ẹ̀nikẹ̀ni, oun gaan náà ni k'ò wá ni deedeede agogo meje aabọ́ alẹ́. Adeyemi si gbà bẹ́. Şugbọ̀n nigbati o de ile, inu bẹ́rẹ́si run u t'ò fi jẹ́ pé kò ni lẹ́ lọ̀ s'oko Sule mo. Ni o ba rán akọ́wẹ́ rẹ̀, ti işẹ́ aburo Sule. Ọ̀mọ̀kunrin yi gba ọ̀na oko ẹ̀gbẹ̀n rẹ̀ lai mọ̀ pé ẹ̀gbẹ̀n oun yi ti yan ọ̀kunrin onibọ̀n kan si ọ̀na lati pa Adeyemi. Aburo Sule naa wọ́ aşọ́ oga rẹ̀, o dé fila rẹ̀, o si tun wọ́ bata rẹ̀ pélu. Ẹ̀nikẹ̀ni t'ò ba ri i, Adeyemi ni

yio pé e. Bi o ti de ọ̀kankan ọ̀dọ̀ ọ̀kunrin onibọ̀n naa ni eleyi ba yinbọ̀n si i, leşẹ́kannaa ni o si ti ku. Nigbati okiki kàn, gbogbo enia ni o sare wá si ibẹ́, ni nwọ̀n ba ri i pé aburo Sule ni. Ẹ̀rù Ọ̀lorun ba Sule ti oun tikalara rẹ̀ si jẹ́wọ̀ ni oju gbogbo awọ̀n enia pé oun ni oun fi ọ̀wọ́ ara oun ẹ́ ara oun. 'Ẹ̀ni d'ẹ̀rù l'ẹ̀rù ítò'.

2. A JEALOUS CO-WIFE

Iyawo ati iyale kan jọ̀ ngbe pọ̀ pélu ọ̀kọ̀ wọ̀n ni ilu kan ti a npe ni Ọ̀janla. Nwọ̀n jọ̀ bi ọ̀mọ̀kunrin kọ̀ọ̀kan fun baale wọ̀n, nwọ̀n kò si bi ju ọ̀kọ̀ọ̀kan naa lọ̀. Ọ̀kọ̀, iyale ati iyawo jọ̀ ngbe pọ̀ ni irepọ̀. Ko si ija bẹ́ni ko si si ariwo. Ọ̀kọ̀ fẹ́ran iyale ati iyawo rẹ̀ bakannaa, kò si si ẹ̀nit'ò njowu ọ̀mọ̀ si ekeji rẹ̀ nitoripe ọ̀mọ̀kunrin kọ̀ọ̀kan ni Ọ̀lorun fun wọ̀n. Bayi ni nwọ̀n ẹ́ nba igbesi aipe wọ̀n lọ̀ ti gbogbo nkan si wá ni dọgbadọgbá fun wọ̀n. Laipe awọ̀n ọ̀mọ̀kunrin mejeeji dagba, a si fi wọ̀n si ile-ẹ̀kọ̀. Nwọ̀n a maa jẹ́un pọ̀, nwọ̀n nwoşọ́ kannaa, nwọ̀n nsun ni ibusun kannaa; l'ọ̀rọ̀ kan, nwọ̀n dabi Taiwo ati Kehinde.

Bi nwọ̀n ti nşẹ́ yi gbadun mọ̀ gbogbo enia ninu. Şugbọ̀n laipe, eyi ọ̀mọ̀ iyale bẹ́rẹ́si huwa ipata. Nitori idi eyi ko fi oju si ẹ̀kọ̀ rẹ̀ mọ̀. Bi o ba di ipari ọ̀dun ti nwọ̀n ba ẹ́ idanwo, eyi ọ̀mọ̀ iyawo, ti o njẹ́ Olu, a gba ipo kini, bẹ́ni Wọ́la ọ̀mọ̀ iyale a gbofo (gba ofo). Ko tilẹ́ mura mọ̀ rara, a si maa rin rederede kaakiri igboro. Bayi ni nwọ̀n ẹ́ titi nwọ̀n fi de iwe mefa. Nigbati nwọ̀n si ẹ́ idanwo Ijọ́ba, Olu yege daadaa şugbọ̀n Wọ́la gbofo. Inu wá bi baba wọ̀n, o si paşẹ́ ki ọ̀mọ̀ iyale lọ̀ kọ́ işẹ́ dẹ́rẹ́ba, bẹ́ni Olu lọ̀ si ile-ẹ̀kọ̀ giga. Lati igba naa ni ifẹ́ ti tan l'ọ̀kan iyale si iyawo ati ọ̀mọ̀ rẹ̀, ti ọ̀ran wọ̀n si ti ndi 'gbọ̀nmi si i, omi ò t'ò'.

Ki a ma ba ọ̀pó lọ̀ si ile olooro, Olu jade iwe mefa, awọ̀n Ijọ́ba si fun u l'aye lati lọ̀ kọ́ işẹ́ dọkita ni ilu oyinbo, nitoripe ori rẹ̀ pé. Inu iya rẹ̀ si ndun lati igbati o ti gbọ́ eyi, şugbọ̀n inu iyale kò dùn rara. Nigbati o ku ọ́la ti Olu yio lọ̀ si ilu oyinbo ni iyale se irẹ́si t'ò dun, o fi oògùn buruku si i, o si pinnu lati gbe e fun Olu jẹ́ ki o baa lẹ́ ku.

B'o ti se e tan ni o toju rẹ si ile de Olu ti o lo sode. Şugbọn bi ọmọ oun paapaa ti de lati ibi iṣe l'o ri iṣesi naa ti o si je e. Were l'o ku. Igbe nla ta, nigbati aṣiri si tu, a ri i pe ounje ti iyale fe fun ọmọ iyawo je ni ọmọ oun paapaa ti je ti o si ku. Beṣeni ibanuje di ti iyale yi titi oju aiye rẹ.

3. A FAMILY MIX-UP

Egbọn mi kan je oniṣowo ti o nta iwe ni ilu Ibadan. Şe Ọyọ l'a bi mi si ni temi, ati igba ti nwon si ti bi mi ng kò lo si ilu wa ni Ijebu ju igbà meji lo. Eyi ko fun mi ni amfaani ati mo ọpoloṣo ninu awon ebi wa. Nwon ko tile soro egbon mi oniṣowo yi loju mi ri. Ebi wa timotimo ni o si je, şugbọn ng ko mo o.

Mo ni amfaani ati lo si ile-ekọ giga kan ni Ibadan ni bi odun marun şehin. Odọ egbon mi yi ni awon ti nwon je aṣaju ninu wa ti maa nra iwe won, awa ti a je alejo naa si nba a ra iwe. Nigbati a ti ra gbogbo iwe wa tan, mo se akiyesi pe mo si iwe kan ra. Were mo sare gba ile itawe lo, mo si be egbon mi yi lati gba iwe rẹ pada ki o fun mi ni owo mi. Şugbọn o kò jale. Mo be e titi, o taku, o ni oun ki igba iwe pada l'owọ enikeni lehin oṣe kan ti onitohun ba ti mu iwe kuro ninu ile itawe oun. Mo se alaye fun u pe iwe naa kò wulo fun mi, mo tile tun be e ki o je ki n fi mu iwe miran. Ohun ti o so gbehin ni pe, 'Alaye kò ká ejo'. Inu bi mi, mo si pinnu lati gbesan lonakona.

Nigbati mo pada de ile-ekọ, mo ro ejo rẹ fun ọpoloṣo ninu awon eṣegbe mi, a si pinnu pe a ko ni ra iwe l'owọ rẹ mo, a ko si ba a ra ohunkohun mo. A si si ile itawe ti o dojuko tirẹ lati maa ra awon iwe wa. Mo tile gbe oran naa le'ju ti o fi je pe o mo pe emi ni mo se atako oun.

Lehin odun meji ti mo de ile-ekọ, iya baba wa ku, a si ni lati lo se ijade oku iya wa ni ilu wa ni Ijebu. Nibiti baba wa ti nse inawo fun awon alejo rẹ, iyalenu l'o je fun mi lati ri oga tawetawe yi ti o nba baba wa mú igbá ti o si nba a mú áwo. Nse ni nwon jo nwolewode. Were mo pe baba wa si yára lati beere eniti alejo yi iṣe. O ya mi l'enu pupo nigbati mo gbọ pe egbon mi l'o je. Were mo se

alaye bi a se jo ni edeaiyede ni Ibadan. Kia, baba wa pe e, o beere l'owọ rẹ, o ni, 'Nje o mo Fakoya ọmọ Lagbája?' O fi ika s'enu. o ni, 'Paga, Olurun gba mi!' O daro titi, emi naa si bebe wipe ki o l'aju fo aṣise mi da. Nigbati a jo de Ibadan, a se atunse nkan ti o ti sele, mo si ba a wá ọpoloṣo onibara.

4. THE CUSTOM OF CUTTING FACE-MARKS

Aṣa ila kiko je nkan ti awon Yoruba maa nse pupopupo ni aiye atijo şugbọn ti ko wopo mo ni aiye ode oni. Idi rẹ ti awon Yoruba fi maa nkola l'aiye atijo ni pe ogun wa n'ibikibi. Awon Fúlani maa nba Yoruba ja ogun, awon ilu Yoruba si maa nba ara won jagun. Idile kan ti ko ba mo ara won daadaa le pa ara won si oju ogun. Şugbọn ti nwon ba kola ti nwon si ri ila l'aju ati enu enia, nwon ko ni pa enia naa nitoripe ilu kannaa ni nwon ti wa. Ibadan le ba Ijẹṣà jagun. Ti gbogbo awon t'o njagun kò ba kola, Ibadan yio pa Ibadan nigbati ko ni mo pe Ibadan ni; Ijẹṣa naa yio pa Ijẹṣa nitoripe ko ni mo pe Ijẹṣa ni. Nitorinaa ni oriṣiriṣi ilu kọkan se maa nkọ ila tirẹ.

Awon Ọyọ maa nkọ gombọ si oju ati si ori won, awon Ijẹṣa maa nbu ila meta meta si oju otun ati si oju osi. Ila tiwon maa ngun. Awon Ondó maa nbu ila gboro kọkan si oju otun ati si oju osi. Awon Ijẹbú maa nbu meta kekeke si oju. Bayi ni awon Yoruba se le da ara won mo l'aju ogun. Nitorinaa, nwon ki imu enit'o ba bu ila iru tiwon l'erú nitoripe nwon mo pe ibi kannaa ni nwon ti wa. Şugbọn eniti ila tirẹ ba yatọ, tabi ti ko bula, nwon yio mu l'erú tabi ki nwon pa a s'aju ogun.

Idile kọkan ni ile Yoruba tun maa nni ila tiwon. Nigbati nwon ba pade lehin odi, nwon yio mo ara ile won yatọ si awon miran. Idi eyi l'o fa ki awon Yoruba maa kola lati igba lailai titi di akoko yi. Şugbọn l'asiko yi ila ti npare ni ọpoloṣo awon ilu ile Yoruba nitoripe ko si ogun mo, ilaju si ti de si gbogbo ilu. Awon Ijebu ati Ijẹṣa ko kọ ọmọ won n'ila mo. Şugbọn awon Ọyọ l'o poju ninu awon t'o nkola titi di oni. Idi t'o fa eyi ni pe

opolopo won kò ití imowe daadaa. Gbogbo awon t'o mowe ko ko omọ won n'ila mọ. Ninu awon ilu miran ti nwon tun nkọla ni Ondo. Şugbon akobi won ni nwon nkọ n'ila, awon omọ kekere t'o kù—nwon ko ni ko won n'ila. Aşa ila kikọ ti nparẹ diẹdiẹ laarin awon Yoruba bayi.

Ila kikọ ba oju opolopo enia je. Ila miran maa ndi egbo, omiran maa nso. Eyi je ki oju awon t'o dara tele buru si i. Opolopo obinrin ti ko kola ni ki ife fe okunrin t'o kola. Iru eyi maa nba okunrin miran ninu je. Laişe aniani, asa yi ko ni pe parẹ ni ile Yoruba.

5. COMMUNAL WORK

Opolopo ise l'o wa ti enikan ko le da se a fi bi o ba ri oluranlowo. Ni igba lailai ni ile Yoruba awon baba nla wa da asa aaró ati owe sile lati maa fi ran ara won lowo ninu orisirisi ise won. Eyi je oranyan ni akoko igba(a) ni nitoripe nse ni nwon ngbe ninu abule kekeke ti enia inu re ko po ju bi igba lo t'o si jinnà si ara won.

Bi a ti nran ara eni lowo yi pin si ona meji. Awon agbalagba ati awon odomokunrin a maa ko ara jo lati ran ara won lowo ninu ise agbe t'o je ise ti gbogbo ara abule maa nse. Awon ewe ode oni si maa nse aaro ni abuleko gbogbo, bi o tile se pe awon borokinni agbe ngba onise lati ilu okeere lati ba won sise ninu oko won. Ni igba atijo o je isoro pupo fun enikeni lati ri onise bi iru eyi gba. Nitorinaa awon agbe a maa so owọ po fun aaro sise. Bi agbe mefa ba se adehun lati ba ara won sise, nwon yio bere lati odo enikan. Ti nwon ba se ti enikan loni, yio kan elomiran lola titi yio fi kari gbogbo awon mefeefa. Eyi mu ki agbe kan le se ise pupo ninu oko re ni ojo kan ju eyiti iba se ni ose kan lo.

L'ona keji ewe, awon baba nla wa maa nse owe. Iyatọ wa ninu owe sise ati aaro gbigba. Awon alaaro a maa ba ara won sise ki ise won baa le tete joju, nwon ko si mbọ ara won. Şugbon enit'o ba pe owe nilati wa ounje ti awon ti yio ba sise yio je. Opolopo l'o maa nfi owe da ana. Bi enikan ba fe obinrin lowo enikeji, o le fi owe

ba a se ise re; awon obi omọ si maa nfe ki awon ana won wa ba won fi owe ko ile. Awon ore ati ojulumo si maa nbe ara won lowe lati mo ile, lati pa igi ti a fi nkole ati lati se awon irufe ise t'o jemọ eyiti enikan ko le da se. Inawo pupo ni enit'o pe owe nse nitoripe o nilati se ounje pupo ki o si pon oti ati emu fun awon t'o wa ba a sise.

KEY TO EXERCISES

CHAPTER 1 (p. 12)

He has some money; she is very short; it is too full; it is very dear; it is too hard; it is useful; it is clean enough; it is too bitter; he is very strong; it is fairly tall; it is too thick; it is very tough; it is too sour; it is too expensive; it is level enough; it is fairly white; it is certain; it is too red; he is very hairy; it is dark enough; she is very fat; it is too heavy; it is rather sour.

CHAPTER 2 (p. 16)

You are very fat, he is very fat; we can read, we cannot read; I hear (understand), I do not hear; they can run, they cannot run; she can sing, she cannot sing; he is too small, you are too small; you can iron clothes, you cannot iron clothes; you can ask riddles, you cannot ask riddles; I can tell stories, I cannot tell stories; they worked a lot, they did not work a lot; you can write a little, she can write a little; I know, I do not know; I cannot play any more, they cannot play any more.

CHAPTER 3 (p. 23)

She attracts me very much; he taught you Yoruba; they gave us a lot of money; it does not please us at all; they killed him; she divorced him; they took it away; I found them at home; we saw you at the market; they are at home; he found us at the farm; he is in the house; I pronounced it for them; he has not washed it enough; he said it attracted them to some extent; I did not strike you at all; she lent me a spoon; he bought it for me; she did not sell

KEY TO EXERCISES

it to them; they bought it from us; I found it in the box; they say it is enough; he says it is not big enough; they did not lend us any money at all; I brought it for her; it made them feel upset; they stole my key.

CHAPTER 4 (p. 28)

What do they want? What did he give you? who did they find at the farm? who bought it on your behalf? who gave you money? what did they find in the box? it is not water, it is palm-wine; it is not fish I want, it is meat; it was not pepper we bought, it was ocro; it was not palm-wine I poured away, it was water; it was not Aduke who brought it, it was Bisi; it is not a sheep he wants, it is a goat; he says it is not gold, he says it is silver; he says it is not paint, he says it is blood; it was he threw it away; it was not you I called, it was Aina; it was not a goat they sold him, it was a sheep; it was not a metal box I bought, it was a wooden box.

CHAPTER 5 (p. 33)

What do you see (can you see) in this picture? I see a child; I see a palm-tree; I see a man and two women; I see three sheep and four goats; which (one) did they give you? which box did they bring? I found one to buy (managed to buy one) in the market yesterday; I managed to buy a lot of palm-wine for them; that cloth is not thick enough; that picture does not attract me at all; he wore only a single piece of clothing; that does not suit me; who can help us? this work is very hard; what work did you do yesterday? this money is not correct; this child cannot do it; who gave you this money? which song did they sing? we wrote two letters; is it a monkey I see on that tree or a bird? is this silver or gold? who spilled this water?

CHAPTER 6 (p. 38)

Does this business surprise you? this box is not too heavy, I hope? can you come today? it is really strong, I hope?

can you lend me 6d? Ibadan station is very big; Ibadan is quite far from Oshogbo; Oshogbo is not as big as Ibadan; once upon a time there was a certain king, he had three children; three bottles of liquor are too much; bananas are very dear in England; I am going to buy (intending to buy) maize and bananas; this dog is not fierce, is it? is this water hot enough? or is this money not enough? they can read it well, I think? you are going to help me, I hope? fresh maize is very tasty; is it bananas you intend to buy in the market or oranges? did they give (it) to you or not? he says he is going to buy cassava; we (at any rate) can sing it.

CHAPTER 7 (p. 43)

A tree fell and blocked the road to the farm yesterday; we could not climb over it to pass; this is the hunter who killed a leopard yesterday; I saw a fine cloth in the market; the masqueraders wore clothes of many colours; what are these women going to buy? they are going to buy pepper and yam-flour; what sort of animal is this? it is an antelope; Aduke's husband bought a hoe from Ojo; where (which) is the way to Ibadan? this is it; the embroidery on this cloth is very fine; these farm-huts (i.e. their roofs) are constructed of grass; I have managed to buy a flute in a shop today; the flute is long, it has four holes; what else can you see in this picture? I see a big ox and two small sheep; the rulers held an important meeting at Ibadan; can I buy a knife here? how many portions of porridge (pap) did the school-children eat? how many hoes is this woman's husband intending to buy? I see three men in front of the house; what are the men (in question) going to do?

CHAPTER 8 (p. 48)

Where is your testimonial? here it is; that is Tunde's house on the other side of the street; the inside of this clothes-box is very dirty; when will you buy the ticket(s)?

Aduke's clothes are not as nice as mine; I like Bisi's very much; my father's is nice and big; do you like bean-cake made from 'ere' beans? some of the passengers got off at Ondo; we can read the story of his life in this newspaper; I do not like the pictures on this wall at all; are you going to live in the bottom part of the house? my gown (coat) is in the top part of the cupboard; that house on the other side of the street is very lofty; I am going to live in the middle part of the town now; a woman's loom is different from a man's; our father's farm is very far from yours; it was my mother who bought these clothes for me; the second part of this story is very interesting.

CHAPTER 10 (p. 59)

Why, you *have* spent a lot of money (= you are altogether too generous); I am so glad to see you! how terribly dear bananas are in this town! why, it isn't heavy at all! gently put it down here; don't drag it! there are breakable things inside it; always wash it well; wait a moment, don't go yet! always help your parents; don't cry any more; gather it all together by the fire; don't light up yet! don't call him yet! I am *very* surprised about this business! this news made me very happy indeed! it was Taiwo who took it away! don't eat it! it's poison! don't be sitting lazily like this all the time! all of you pay attention properly; you must not light fires here! take her quickly to the hospital; don't put out the light yet in the other room.

CHAPTER 11 (p. 65)

It's a bribe the chief of police wants; I stood at a distance watching my master; he sat down waiting for his friend; it is I who gets food for them; what work are you doing here? what time do you go home? what food do you eat at mid-day? (the light of) this lamp is going out; my expenditure is going up every day; it is indigo-plant they use to make dye; she sells small articles; the children are running about in the road-way; the water on the fire is

getting nice and hot; she does not give them beans in the morning; they sleep on the bare ground at the farm; are you writing or reading? a certain Egba woman sells it; it is fisherman's work I am doing now; I am reading this letter at the moment; they always wear white clothes.

CHAPTER 12 (p. 70)

He says he wants to be going; they say they want to come and pay their respects (greet) us tomorrow; I came to realise that he was a thief; he said he would not think of acting so at all; the children did not stop crying all that day; I did not realise that they were referring to me; I know quite well that they *stole* the money; we cannot know for certain that it will not rain tomorrow; they said they came upon him on the road to the farm; they will not be long in getting to Ilorin; this lorry will not take all of us; I am surprised that there is no piped water in your town; they wrote a letter to him to say they wanted to see him; who are they talking with over there? this girl is old enough to get married; I remember that it was my mother who gave it to me; I cannot remember her name; I am sorry I have no time to stop and watch the dancers; he reminded me that there was not enough money; I told them off severely that they were not working well.

CHAPTER 13 (p. 75)

He says you are to give him money; they say you must not go yet; we want you to help us a little before you go off home; we should at all times shew respect to our parents; he told the women to go on ahead; before I could catch him he had run clean away; you must always put this key in the same place, so that I may always know where it is; you should always cook meat for me in the evening; it is he you should always follow; am I to throw it away or am I to put it by? are we to wait for him or return to our place of work? my advice is that you pay the money immediately; he gave orders that they

should not allow the disease to spread; they acted so in order that the disease should not trouble the people of their household; he sent a wire to say that they should send £2 quickly; they want me to shew it all to them; shall we pour it away?

CHAPTER 14 (p. 81)

We have done all the work that you told us to do; I have found the person I was looking for; she had previously been in the habit of wearing a head-tie; I have not seen him since Saturday; we have not seen him since about two weeks; I did not tell him that I had already previously had a licence; I have examined it all thoroughly; it was the trade of cocoa-buying that the husband had been following formerly; bad behaviour has settled on this child like a garment; we have learnt it all well by heart; I had bought thick clothing because it was the cold season; I have made arrangements about money beforehand for my wife; we had not walked very far before he met a girl-friend of his; somebody told me the name of the street there the other day but I have forgotten the name; all the passengers have got off; they have not yet begun to harvest their cocoa; what I had been thinking about previously turned out to be a complete mistake.

CHAPTER 15 (p. 86)

It is with bean-cake that I eat it; what will they give me? it was in England that I learnt the work; it is with one's own hands that one puts right one's own affairs; I saw it with my own eyes; it was here that I picked it up; fortunately (God did it for me) no-one saw me; we found him busy at his work; he told me that he was not a hooligan of that sort; I went with my master to Ogbomoso; I gave him £5 for my mother; it was for four shillings that they sold it to me; all of us know him to be a good man; they served out some palm-wine to him; call out to Ojo for me to tell him to come quickly; it was only the day before yesterday that I managed to see him; where did you buy

this wrist-watch? this box is full of filth; it was on a cart that I carried wood about; he gave all these things en bloc to his friend; every one came away from this meeting in tears; I ought to mention it to you; we set out for Ijebu; one ought always to avoid excess; I was abroad for six years; I advised him not to go.

CHAPTER 16 (p. 91)

I understand everything that you have said; this is the box that I found in their house; that is the meat I have cooked for the evening meal; they carried off a load of cloth worth £200; he is not (does not amount to) a person who can lord it over me (put on airs at me); I was looking at all who were passing; they are talking into something which they call a microphone; I went to find my friends who were at school together with me; a person who is not yet dead, we do not know the disease that will kill him; I do not like that friend of yours with the hard eyes; on the next day after we arrived at Ibadan, we found a lorry that could take us to Ilorin for nothing; this woman that we have mentioned had borne three children to her husband; the two among them that were boys were quite grown up; what is bad and dangerous about this business is that we do not know what caused it; there is in the market a stall belonging to an elder sister of mine where we can buy tinned fish; this is the stone with which he struck and killed the child; you who have plenty of money can buy it; we could not find the remaining food which we had tied up in my wife's bundle; the person on whose behalf one dies does not look on one favourably; this world we are in is very difficult.

CHAPTER 17 (p. 96)

Who will pay the money for the train/boat (the fare)? it is at 4.30 p.m. they will have the burial; we shall not find anything of importance to buy today; what will they eat this morning? it will be quite clear to you before you finish reading the book; what day will you return the axe? how

much will they be giving you a month? what they will be saying is that this matter does not concern them; it will be quite dark before we reach home; this is the yam with which I shall make pounded yam; I will tell my father to buy one like it for me; they must find a way by which they can eat; the chiefs will be in front and the others will follow them; you will not have a chance to speak with him today any more, it is too late; they will not yet have stopped work at their office/factory; I shall take this gown to the washerman and tell him to wash it well for me; he will dry it well before he irons it; I will wait for another lorry; he will spend up to two weeks there; I think you will enjoy there very much; who will sit in front? he will know we have not forgotten, at least; they will not keep on singing like that all the time; may the cap stay long on the head and the shoes on the feet! (greeting to a chief); may you not meet with disaster! may you not meet with illness or misfortune! both of those who were going to be husband and wife were people I knew well; it may be that what you will see will be strange in your eyes; I am sure I shall be able to explain it to you; I have heard that there will be a grand wedding in our quarter; he said he would quickly arrange entertainment for visitors beforehand.

CHAPTER 18 (p. 100)

When money comes to an end, that means trouble has arrived; anyone who thinks he is completely wise does not want to accept advice; you can give me any amount that pleases you; anybody at all who enters this room, you are to drive him out at once; I always send to my wife any amount that I make; everything that is not quite clear to you, you should ask me its meaning; when it happens that an elderly person suffers the loss of one of his juniors in this way, we greet him saying, 'Greetings for a death out of turn'; whenever you are ill, you should quickly send to call the doctor; presently, they will hold the funeral of their father; any child at all who makes a

noise, I will punish him well; I will do whatever I can; when they have completed the enquiry, they will return to the police-station; anyone who is going to enter must first call out 'Permission, householder'; anyone that has gone bad among them, throw it away; when the king gets up from his throne, you too should get up as well; anyone who does not confess will get into trouble (his eye will see something); he recites a charm in the ear of anyone who challenges him.

CHAPTER 19 (p. 104)

We do not usually wear European clothes; we do not use it these days (world of now); I do not let any suffering befall this dog at all; the noise they make does not let a person study at all; it is pepper stew we usually eat then; they are not in the habit of eating rice in the morning; at what time do you break off work at your office (place of work)? a farmer does not fail to provide food for those he asks for communal help; what do you do in the evenings? we beat drums, we tell stories and we dance; what do you plant in this farm-plot? I plant maize and beans; the heart does not deceive me; if anyone passes, he will not come out to him; if anyone starts a quarrel/fight, they will go and report the person to the police; hunger does enter one's belly for anything else to enter; it; travelling is not so sweet that the man with a home does not return home; we do not put on fine white clothes to go and sit in the oil-seller's stall; the dream which a dog dreams stays inside the dog; a town is never so small as not to have a rubbish-heap; anger brings out arrows from the quiver, a kind voice brings out cola-nuts from the pocket.

CHAPTER 20 (p. 112)

Add 9 to 4, it makes how much? it makes 13; take 7 away from 12, there remains how much? there remains 5; I have £120 in the bank, I take £75, how much remains? there remains £45; how many yards make a mile? 1760

yards; how many yards are there in this piece of cloth? I divided 15/- equally among three children, how much did each child get? if I buy 12 chickens for £7-1-0, how much is each chicken? 11/9d; how much change will I get from a £5 note if I buy (chicken's) eggs for 18/-? you will get £4-2-0; we all three went to meet her at Lagos; both of them are well educated; how many were you who set up this thrift club? there were ten of us; how many miles is it from Lagos to Ibadan? it is a little over 100 miles; I have only been there twice; give her two more; I emphasise it once again that you must not go; a quarter of the population of this town perished in this war; 5 times 12 is 60; I gave these twelve children 2/6d each; I spent only a shilling; she has only one child; I bought 2/- worth of sugar and 3/- worth of biscuits; which turning (in order) to the right should I take? cut down every third tree; I alone am occupying this room.

CHAPTER 21 (p. 116)

It is at 5.30 that we stop work at our office; at what time should I come to wake you tomorrow? it will be three days from today before I can return the axe; a farmer does not have time to sit idly at home during the rainy season; I think we shall have a holiday (start our holidays) two days before the Greater Bairam festival; five days before I was due to go to England my father died; I want each window to be four foot high and two foot broad; how many minutes is it now to 3 o'clock? when I saw him four days ago he was not well at all; the Muslims go to pray at the mosques on Fridays; they brought out the child on Thursday, the 26th of last month; I think the rains will begin the month after next; how many cwt. of cocoa did they buy from you last year? he had finished all his work before 5 o'clock; how many days past Christmas is it today? it will be up to four days before he returns.

CHAPTER 22 (p. 120)

I asked him (if) perhaps he could take me round the

town; he further asked if this mother had any other children (alive) in the world; he could not remember where he had put the beads for safe-keeping; I do not know what I shall give them to eat; he asked me if the food he had served was enough or not; I asked the price (for) which he would sell one of them to me; they related to each other what they had experienced in the past; have you decided what time you will go? who knows how many years he will live on earth? he was thinking about what had befallen him; do you know what time they break off work at this office? he asked me what sort of good turn he could do for me; he does not know which one he ought to choose; I do not know if they are going to work or going home; he cannot remember with whom his 'younger brother' is living; you ought to take notice of what sort of clothes they are wearing; he came across his book at the spot where they had thrown it.

CHAPTER 23 (p. 126)

Pork and fresh fish were his commonest articles of food; they paid me a great sum of money; I sold all my loads for a small sum; there are four things which everyone looks for in the world—long life, money, children and fame; he gives me tasty food to eat; all of us Yoruba people (Yoruba sons) know that death is preferable to disgrace; I opened the door, I saw an important visitor who had come to me; the price of this lorry should not be more than £200; after many days I hit on a plan; I am looking for cloth which is a bit darker than this; the Yoruba have (take) various ways of greeting each other; the African among them was wearing native clothes; thin skin covers the inside (and) does not let us see the mind (belly) of the secret enemy; we took a winding road to get out of the town; the big one attracts me most; when I knocked at the door, a beautiful woman came out to me from inside the room; dark ones attract him, and so do fair ones.

CHAPTER 24 (p. 131)

There is nothing you can do to satisfy him; when I saw the elephant in the distance, I felt very afraid; I am surprised that those who are in positions of honour can take money from those who are not as rich as themselves; I am not afraid of the police at all; I am ashamed of you; he said it made him laugh when he heard of this matter; we must not cause sorrow to our parents; a person who is hungry cannot calmly accept advice; a gentleman should not break down in that way; these words of his made me very angry; patience is the master behaviour, anger does not achieve anything; I am going off to bed, because I have been feeling sleepy for some time; a person who has common sense will not be afraid of any evil spirit; I am not ashamed of (doing) any work at all; there was no one who was not glad when we heard you had arrived home safe and sound; good health is the medicine for wealth; the joke I cracked made my friend laugh; don't be afraid of anything they may do; there is medicine for head-ache in my bag; it was a great sorrow to him when his mother died; I hate cruel behaviour; I do not know what is the matter with me.

CHAPTER 25 (p. 138)

It is a mad person who is beaten by the rain in the middle of a town; these words of his precluded any reply; I am surprised that you missed the meal-time like this; the tar with which they are spraying (painting) the road splashed onto me; deceitful behaviour has become a garment on his back (neck); they could not solve the riddle which I posed; they said I had come to tell lies to deceive the police; let us add all the money we have made today to what we made yesterday; the proverb they quoted against me caused me to be very angry; he owns a lorry on his own account; is it that big house that you are occupying all by yourself? don't leave me to do it alone! he had torn up the letter and thrown it away before I had a chance to read it; after I had finished eating, I again

began looking about for work; I re-painted my lorry; he pulled £3 out of his pocket; he shewed me where I had gone astray; when I was returning from Lagos the day before yesterday, I turned aside to greet my 'elder brother'; the good turn you have done me, I cannot ever forget it; I think I can hire/rent it for £4 a week; I went along with them to examine it; I will mention you to the manager where I work; who asked for her (in marriage) from you? eventually an idea flashed into my mind; we should observe the rules of cleanliness; keep quiet! I quickly shut him up; he ran to hide in the house; this dress is too long, it does not suit me at all; there is no magic trick which I cannot perform.

CHAPTER 26 (p. 143)

He went to sit by the window; with whom are you living? with my mother's 'elder brother'; lift it up at the door-way; he stood at the door, he did not want to enter; presently, we came to where there was a hole; do not let me perish in this forest; I faced towards him; I took off the coat that was on my back (neck) and dried it at the fire; he passed by me and went to where there was a pool; there is no one who can escape from death; when (where) we were talking in this way, we talked about my mother; you should sit on the left side of the conveyance; when you come to a fork in the road, take the road to the right; they had arranged four chairs right in front of the king; they put them to face him; it is cassava we eat mostly in these parts of ours here; he had a bag hanging from his shoulder; this woman was not pleased with this arrangement; he put the box under the bed; put it away in the bottom part of the cupboard; I remembered many things which I had experienced in the past; when he came to where I was, he began to cry out; collect all these things (and put them) over there.

CHAPTER 27 (p. 150)

He poured water over me in a flood; at first he turned a deaf ear to them; he did not in fact tell me anything about it; I enjoyed (being) there very much; indeed he did not help me at all; it is almost all of us who want to go to look at it; when at last I arrived there, they had already sold it; it is already pitch dark; I laid out a mat (and) I went off soundly to sleep; don't let every matter for discussion come straight (quickly) out of your mouth; what I just want to draw out from this discussion is that this friend of yours is not to be trusted; it is they who will be the first to avoid you; I have just come back with it from England (where I bought it); who then can advise us? I have paid it all, I tell you; it is clothes like these of yours that I am going to wear; he just does not want to give me anything; he may at any rate take me to his master; it is the absolute truth; in actual fact, there was still plenty of money in my possession; the box was chock-full of money; I examined the lorry carefully; he had this 'agbada' gown made of glossy white silk; all of it was dazzling; I saw that she was in a flood of tears; the bridegroom must not go straight home with his bride like that; I think some other people are still arriving; we just need not go on to say that people like that are worthless; let us find a plan which we shall use so that this will not turn out to be so.

CHAPTER 28 (p. 159)

This is not so now any more; there is a great deal of noise in our house, there is no time that visitors do not come; when he came to realise that I was a visitor, and particularly that I was a visitor in his house, he did not conceal the secret from me any more; she confessed to me that it wasn't that she had been affected by juju medicine, but that she found enjoyment in their company (there was enjoyment for her . . .); he was a very humane king; the hornbill is a very dangerous bird; you must not become a dog who does not hear the hunter's whistle; the banana

does not live by the river (and) turn out barren; my mother is now old; please be a mother to me; we were beaten by the rain (and) our clothes were soaking; the police are good friends to all the people of the town; when he lived in our house, he was a very steady person; he was (in the state of being) a small child when he ascended the throne; this child who died, he was the only male child my wife's mother had; it must be that your 'younger brother' is not well; they have to be fifteen years old at least; they have been in existence for a long time and they will continue to be in existence for ever; there is not one of them that we did not find already upon earth (that it is not the case that it was upon earth . . .); if there is health, and also money, that a person's distress has come to an end.

CHAPTER 29 (p. 166)

By the time my 'younger brother' arrived, it was already getting dark; since when have you stopped drinking the medicine which the doctor said you were to drink every day? when did you decide not to come to evening school any more? as I was finishing off the words of thanks which I addressed to him, all the people stood up; as he did this, a hubbub again broke out; it is I who puts an end to quarrels among them in the evening as soon as we get back from the farm; when the man came near me, he turned out to be my 'elder brother'; I will continue to look after you until I leave this world; it was not long before we arrived at the town where we were going; he had gone on a journey two days before (and) it would be up to five days more before he would get back home; before he died, we enquired of him what had happened to him; by the time a year had passed, this king who was fond of me was dead; I had not yet finished hoeing the farm when rain-clouds gathered and rain began to fall; as soon as they hear the sound of the guns, the grown-up youths who are surrounding the 'bush' will raise a shout; it was 6 o'clock before they finished this sweep of the

'bush'; as he sat by this fire and was drawing it together, he was weaving a basket which he had begun some days before.

CHAPTER 30 (p. 173)

If educated people cannot escape in this situation, what power can the poor apply? I said to him that if there was work, he should let me do it for him on his farm; as soon as she saw anyone else, she would be like someone who had attained a chief's office; if this work was so pleasant, they would not be collecting people by force to undertake it; otherwise (if it were not so) I would tell my friend to come to meet me at the bus-stop; if the bride in the house does not want to call her husband's parents by their (proper) name, she will look for a way by which she can use an avoidance-name for them; if we go on with it like this, we shall be ancestral slaves for ever; if illness affects a miser, he will put up with it, because he does not want to spend money on a doctor who would cure him; if guests put up at his house, hunger will drive them away; words which I might say did not come (to me); if it is the case that you *stole* the money, you should tell me; if you were going to buy a whole piece (of cloth), we would reduce its price a little; if you had taken the sick man to the doctor in good time, he would be well by now; had it not been for the policemen who quickly ran up, the burglars would have beaten him up and killed him; as the time for a meal approaches, they ring a bell; if you are not going, make way for me; if he dies and does not leave you an inheritance, with whom will you lodge a complaint? if a person is in (a state of) happiness, if he remembers that there is another time, a time of sorrow, his happiness will be in moderation; if the people (children) of the world could love each other sincerely, how fine the world would be; if you see a blind man, or a cripple, or that sort of person, always do good turns to them according to the limitations of your power; if he knows how to argue a case, they may release him; as soon as they see me, they will eye each other; as long as you can get there,

there is nothing more to fear; if they greet you, you must not answer.

YORUBA

CHAPTER 31 (p. 177)

Why are they making a noise like that? someone has seen a snake in the garden (and) they are trying (want) to kill it; in what way have I offended you? the reason for my coming is no more than that; this wind was so strong that water was coming into our boat; they hit me so much that I collapsed on the ground and fainted; we will enquire about a way to do everything so that it will be alright; what makes you want to give up this work? I could not bring myself to confess that I had committed a crime was why I left my town; it was money that these women had in mind that they married me; he asked me where I had been and why I had been so long; they began to run away, so much so that on the morning of the day I am talking about only one wife remained with me; why didn't you do what I told you to do? it will soon be so dark that we shall not be able to see at all; he is such a liar that I cannot believe him at all; this knife is so sharp that it can cut off a strong man's hand at one go; I do not know why he did not escort us on our way; the market was so depressed (spoiled) that my father landed in debt.

CHAPTER 32 (p. 181)

How did you enjoy England? we enjoyed it very much; how shall I speak about this matter to him? how long have you been here? what father said to me yesterday, what is your opinion of it (how is it in your eyes)? it is heavier than it was before; I could hear how he was snoring where he had fallen asleep; as a mouse has no power before a cat, so I have no power before you; this is how they made the arrangement; I cannot express how pleased I am to get to know you today; I had no other thought in my mind than how I should pay the good turn back to him; he treated me as soap treats the eye; you are to lift it as it is now; there is harmony in this town to a

greater degree than I thought; the way the man looked after me impressed me very much; I was observing how he was acting in every way; I have not set eyes on him again up to the moment I am speaking now; however fast I run, I can never fall down; in this position that I am in this house, I know what I experience at the hands of my co-wives.

CHAPTER 33 (p. 187)

The builders do not want it to rain; they call the government workers who work in the forests 'forest guards'; I cannot believe him at all, he is an habitual liar; we had better be careful, because there are a lot of burglars in this town! all of his wives ran off with other people; they call the bridegroom 'the one with camwood feet' (coloured with camwood); anxious thought did not allow my heart to be at rest; I do not want that unlucky person to buy anything from me (he may infect me with his bad luck!); the relating of news does not equal seeing with the eyes; presently, we came out onto a tarred road; he goes about looking for second-hand clothes; the strong man without reflection (is) the chief of lazy men; the man with a plot does not hatch it in one's presence; he who relies on an inheritance hands himself over to destitution to strike down; he who is jealous of one cannot change fate; he who goes to extremes is not long in getting disgraced; both of us are Christians; my fiancée came to visit me the day before yesterday; the magistrate (judge) sent the offender to jail for three years; he who uses us cruelly teaches us by force.

CHAPTER 34 (p. 193)

He looked for a way to go and meet his friend; a woman cannot be shewn one's innermost thoughts; it can be put in the pocket; a needle may be small (but) it is not to be swallowed by a chicken; thinking belongs to human beings, acting to God; it may be a long time (but) the stammerer will say 'Father'; it causes people to shun

doing good turns; I was ashamed to reveal this secret to him; it cannot fail to surprise you to see me like this; to sit down became a trouble, to get up became a worry; what did his eyes not witness altogether during the course of that night? he did not worry any more about marrying another wife; the palm of the hand cannot be used to carry fire; he spent a lot of money on things to eat and drink; he decided to conceal himself and watch what would happen; he may not give us food but give us money instead of it; this work that we are planning to take up is very useful; not living at home to any great extent did not allow him to marry early; it is a man without shame who goes to the house of his in-laws to die; this leather can be used for making shoes; I like boiled beans best; she does not know how to cook stew nor how to pound yam; he had hardly gone out when he collapsed and died.

CHAPTER 35 (p. 199)

He greeted us and we greeted him; it was that house which his father had built outside the town that they went to; who are those I see standing in a group there? some people who are looking for work; recently I was in a meeting of certain enlightened people; it was our Creator who put the love of these things in our hearts; all these four sorts of food should be present in our diet; I think that you too have realised now that we who are doctors are not all the same; as for us, we are diviners descended from diviners; you unlucky fools, you are going to meet your new bride, but your new bride has gone! the king of that town near which they had arrived had gone hunting; those that you see, they are all my children; this person planted an evil fruit and he reaped evil; who are you here? we are the children of the headmaster; the same God who created these tribes of men that we have mentioned created us too; both he and the other ten who we did not know, they all ran off and escaped; what are you going to do here, you stupid fool? these

important rich people that we have mentioned can make a present of £1,000 without reckoning it to be anything at all.

CHAPTER 36 (p. 205)

We explained to him that we would not be able to stop because we were in a hurry, yet nevertheless he shewed us hospitality on a big scale; I remembered Aduke, and tears (water) burst from my eyes; as we got to the station and completed getting our tickets the train appeared; mention two of them and the town where they are; he swallowed it bones and all; both young and old love her; the king said that he gave me the girl with great joy; it was some time since I had seen him and I did not know that he had become a policeman; it was not long before darkness fell; he told me to go home, but I did not go; it was in this way (it was thus I acted) that I came to leave the town and headed for the forest; my opinion had changed because all those words which he spoke—he did not say anything false about me in (with) them at all; am I to throw it away or am I to put it by? I wear an 'agbada' or 'danşiki' gown; your fathers and mothers have already followed this path which you are following; whether it was yam pounding, or pepper grinding, or water carrying, this child alone used to do all of it; extravagance is not good, but being miserly, too, is not good at all; it is words which allow us to recognise a person as wise or foolish; when she broke this fruit, money, clothes, beads and costly ornaments appeared to her; both I and my wife, neither of us cared to say anything (there was not either among us cared . . .); I was very slow in answering (before I answered), because words are very hard to say; I asked him if I was important enough to offend him; both fish and crocodile, they are both edible flesh.

CHAPTER 37 (p. 210)

The death of this friend of mine pained me deeply; I bought 3d each worth of fried yam for all the workmen;

don't let your child get into bad company; they shine like the lightning in the sky; everything was topsy-turvy in confusion; I bought six leather cushions from him; they call him 'unlucky fellow', 'good-for-nothing' and so on; I very much want to buy this cloth; the elders of the town came to greet me; he said if he was not at home, they must not in his absence do anything; the threats that they were making against him, we were just frightening him with them; he landed himself in perpetual debt; don't allow your child complete licence; the leopard tore this man to shreds; you should follow him wherever he goes; I tried and tried to persuade him, but nevertheless he did not agree; they boxed his ears repeatedly; every year I take a holiday and go to my own town; they are singing a very poor song; they are close friends; may your luck protect you from a child who breaks up the household; that man is a dyed-in-the-wool thief; when I got up, I stumbled with my left foot.

CONNECTED PASSAGES FOR TRANSLATION

1. A FALSE FRIEND

There was a man in our town whose name was Adeyemi (crown befits me). He was a person who had money and reputation in our town and its environs. Now this man had a friend who did not from the bottom of his heart like him. The name of this friend was Sule. It was a long time that they had been carrying on their friendship together. Adeyemi had put all his trust in Sule, so that it was his friend's 'younger brother', whose name was Mako, that Adeyemi appointed clerk in his shop in our town. Presently, Adeyemi decided to marry a certain girl, but this business did not please Sule at all and he was looking for every opportunity to blacken Adeyemi's character in the eyes of this girl. 'The man who tries to ruin other people's characters ruins his own'—instead of this girl listening to these words of detraction, in actual fact her love continued to increase. They were going on with the matter until four days remained to Adeyemi's wedding. When Sule saw this, he began to consider in what way he could kill his friend. So he came to Adeyemi saying that he had on his behalf made an opening (road) for trade, so he should come in person to the road to his farm, which was about four miles from home. He told him not to send anyone, he himself was to come at exactly half past seven in the evening, and Adeyemi agreed to this. But when he got home, his stomach began to pain him, so he would not be able to go to Sule's farm after all. So he thereupon sent his clerk, who was Sule's 'younger brother'. This young man set off on the way to his 'elder brother's' farm without knowing that this elder brother of his had stationed a man with a gun on the way to kill

Adeyemi. Sule's younger brother was wearing his master's clothes, had on his cap, and was wearing his shoes as well. Anyone who saw him would call him Adeyemi. As he came up to the place where the gunman was, the latter shot at him, and he died on the spot. When the news got around, everyone ran there, and they then found it was Sule's younger brother. The fear of God fell upon Sule and he himself confessed in the presence of all the people that it was he with his own hand who had done ill to himself. 'He who pours out ashes, ashes come back on him'.

2. A JEALOUS CO-WIFE

A certain junior and senior wife were living together with their husband in a town which we call Ojanla (Big Market). They each bore a single boy to their husband, and they did not have any more children than this one each. Husband, senior wife and junior wife lived together in harmony. There was no quarreling and also there were no altercations. The husband loved his senior and his junior wife alike, and there was no one who was envious about children towards her partner, because God had given them one boy each. So thus they went on with their lives and everything was in equal shares for them. Soon the two boys grew up and they were put to school. They ate together, they wore the same (sort of) clothes, they slept in the same bed; in short, they were like Taiwo and Kehinde (the names given to twins).

This behaviour of theirs gave pleasure to the hearts of all. But soon, the senior wife's child began to behave like a rascal. Because of this he did not pay attention to his studies any more. When it reached the end of the year and they took an examination, the junior wife's son, who was named Olu, would take the first place, while Wola, the senior wife's child, would get nought. In fact he gave up making any effort, and he used to wander aimlessly about the town. They went on in this way until they reached Standard (Book) VI. When they took the Government examination, Olu passed well but Wola got nought.

Their father now became angry and he ordered that the senior wife's son should go and learn to be a driver, while Olu went to the High School. From that time love towards her junior wife and her son came to an end in the senior wife's heart, and anything involving them became more and more a case of 'scoop out some more water, the water is not enough' (a proverbial phrase used in referring to situations of strife).

To avoid going with a post to a house which is already standing (not to prolong the story), Olu left at Standard X and the Government gave him the opportunity to go to England to learn to be a doctor, because he had brains (his head was all there). His mother was more and more pleased from the moment she heard this, but the senior wife was not pleased at all. When it was the following day that Olu would be going to England, the senior wife cooked some tasty rice, added some evil medicine to it, and decided to give it to Olu to eat so that he might die. When she had finished cooking it, she put it by in the house ready for Olu, who had gone out. But when her own son returned from work he saw the rice and ate it. He very soon died. A great cry went up, and when the secret was revealed we saw that the very food which the senior wife wanted to give the junior wife's son to eat her own son had eaten and then died. So sorrow became the portion of this senior wife for all the days of her life.

3. A FAMILY MIX-UP

An 'elder brother' of mine was a trader who sold books in the town of Ibadan. Of course, as far as I was concerned I was born at Oyo and from the time I was born I had not gone to our home town in Ijebu more than twice. This had not given me the opportunity to get to know many of our family. They had not in fact ever talked in my presence about this elder brother who was a trader. He was a close relative of ours, but I did not know him.

I had the good luck to go to a High School at Ibadan about five years ago. It was from this elder brother of

mine that those who were our seniors used to buy their books, and we who were new boys (strangers) were buying books from him (too). When we had finished buying all our books, I noticed that I had bought a book by mistake. I quickly made my way to the bookshop and I begged this elder brother of mine to take his book back and give me my money. But he refused point blank. I kept on imploring him but he refused: he said he never took a book back from anybody after a week had passed since the person took the book away from his shop. I explained to him that the book was useless to me, in fact I again begged him to let me take another book for it. What he finally said was, 'Explanation does not meet the case'. I got angry and I determined to be revenged somehow or other.

When I returned to school, I complained about him to many of my companions, and we decided that we would not buy books from him any more, and we did not buy anything from him any more. We moved over to the bookshop which faced his to buy our books. I in fact made the business quite obvious, so that he knew it was I who was his opponent.

Two years after I came to this school, our father's mother died, and we had to go to hold the 'bringing out' ceremony in connection with our (grand)mother's funeral in our home town in Ijebu. When (where) my father was giving entertainment to his guests, it was a surprise to me to see this bookseller gentleman helping my father to bring out calabashes and bring out dishes (helping in service). In fact they were going in and out together. I hurriedly called my father into a room to ask who this guest was. I was very surprised when I heard that he was my elder brother. I hurriedly explained how we had had a quarrel together at Ibadan. At once my father called him and asked him, saying, 'Don't you know So-and-so son of So-and-so?' He put his finger to his mouth, saying, 'Good heavens, God save me!' He repeatedly expressed his regret, and I too implored him to overlook my mistake. When we arrived together at Ibadan, we put right what had happened, and I found many customers for him.

4. THE CUSTOM OF CUTTING FACE-MARKS

The custom of cutting face-marks was something which the Yoruba practised to a high degree in olden days but which is no longer common at the present day. The reason why the Yoruba used to cut face-marks in olden days was that there was war everywhere. The Fulani used to wage war with the Yoruba and the Yoruba towns waged war with each other. A family group which did not know each other well could kill each other in battle. But if they had face-marks, and they saw the marks on people's faces and mouths, they would not kill them, because they came from the same town. The Ibadan might be at war with the Ijeṣa. If all those who were fighting had no face-marks, an Ibadan might kill an Ibadan when he did not know that he was an Ibadan. An Ijeṣa too might kill an Ijeṣa because he would not know that he was an Ijeṣa. It was for this reason that the various towns each used to cut their own (various) face-marks.

The Oyo used to cut 'gombò' marks on their faces and heads, while the Ijeṣa put three lines on the right and left of the face. Their lines were long. The Ondo used to mark a single broad line on the right and left of the face. The Ijebu put three small lines on the face. In this way the Yoruba could recognise each other apart in battle. So they used not to capture as a slave anyone who had the same sort of mark as theirs, because they knew that they came from the same place. But a person whose marks were different or who had no marks they would capture as a slave or kill in battle.

Each family group in Yoruba country also used to have its own mark. When they met away from home (outside the town-wall), they would know members of their family apart from others. This is the reason which brings it about that the Yoruba cut face-marks from olden times right up to the present day. But in these days face-marks have begun to disappear in many towns in Yoruba land because there is no longer war, and enlightenment has come to every town. The Ijebu and the Ijeṣa do not cut

marks on their children any longer. But the Oyo predominate among those who cut marks up to the present day. The reason for this is that many of them are not yet well educated. All those who are educated no longer cut marks on their children. Among the other towns which still cut marks is Ondo. But it is their first-born that they mark, the young remaining children—they will not mark them. So the custom of cutting face-marks is gradually dying out among the Yoruba.

Face-marks spoil the faces of many people. Some marks turn into sores, others protrude. This causes the faces of people who were previously good-looking to become ugly. Many women who have no marks do not want to marry a man who has marks. This sort of thing causes some men distress of mind. Without any doubt, this custom will not be long before it disappears from Yoruba country.

5. COMMUNAL WORK

There is a great deal of work which a person cannot do by himself, but only if he finds helpers. Long ago in Yoruba country our forefathers founded the customs of 'aaro' and 'oṣe' in order to help each other in their various work. This was absolutely necessary in those days, because in fact they lived in small villages whose inhabitants did not exceed two hundred and which were far from each other.

The way that people helped each other is divided into two. The adults and the youths used to collect themselves together to help each other in farm work, which was the work that all the people in the village did. The young men of the present day still do 'aaro' in the farm-villages everywhere, though the substantial farmers hire workers from distant towns to work for them on their farms. Long ago it was very difficult for anyone to find workers of this sort to hire. So the farmers used to join hands to do 'aaro'. If six farmers made an agreement to work with each other, they would start with one (of their number). If they did one man's work today, it would be the turn of another

tomorrow until it went round all six of them. This brought about that a farmer could do a great deal of work on his farm in one day, more than he could do in a week.

In the second place also, our fathers practised 'oṣe'. There is a difference between doing 'oṣe' and holding 'aaro'. Partners in 'aaro' work with each other so that their work may quickly be substantial, and they do not feed each other. But a person who summons an 'oṣe' must get ready food which those who are going to work will eat. A great many people use 'oṣe' to fulfil marriage obligations. If a person gets a wife in marriage from another, he may by means of an 'oṣe' do his work for him. The parents of the girl like their in-laws to come and roof a house for them with an 'oṣe'. Friends and acquaintances ask each other for 'oṣe' help in order to build a house, to cut wood that is used for roofing and to do the sort of jobs which are in the category of what a single person cannot do by himself. He who summons an 'oṣe' lays out a lot of money, because he has to cook plenty of food and supply spirits and palm-wine for those who come to work for him.

VOCABULARY

This word-list is designed to help the learner deal with the Exercises; it does not contain all the words occurring in the Lessons. For pronouns and numerals reference should be made to the appropriate chapters. Remember that nouns formed from verbs by the addition of the prefixes **a-**, **à-**, **i-**, if not given separately, can be easily deduced from the corresponding verbs, e.g. **ìgbádùn** 'enjoyment' from **gbádùn** 'to enjoy'. The same applies to words formed by adding the **oní-** prefix (**alá-**, **elé-** etc.) to nouns, e.g. **aláşọ** 'person with cloth' from **aşọ** 'cloth'.

- abà**, farm hut
abanijé, detractor
àbáṣe, co-operation
abẹ, small knife, razor
abẹ, underneath part
abéré, needle
àbètélẹ, bribe, bribery
àbí, or
àbò, return, arrival
ààbò, half
abúlẹ, village
abúlẹko, farm village
àbúrò, younger relative,
 younger 'brother'
àdéchùn, agreement
adiẹ, fowl
àdirò (ààrò), hearth
àdúgbò, district, quarter
afará, afá, bridge
ààfin, palace
àfẹfẹrì, thing which vanishes
àfẹsónà, betrothed
àfojúbà, personal
 experience
afójú, blind person
àga, chair
àgàn, barren woman
àgò, permission to enter
agogo, aago, clock, watch,
 bell
agolo, small tin
àgùtàn, sheep
agbádá, large gown
àgbàdo, maize
àgbàkò, disaster
àgbà, adult, senior
àgbàlágbà, elder
agbàra, force, power
àgbègbè, surrounding
 district
àgbẹ, farmer
àgbòn, basket
àgbòn, coconut
àgbòn, wasp, hornet
àgbònrín, antelope
ahun, miser
àisàn, illness
aiyé, world
aiyéráiyé, everlasting
ajá, dog
àjà, ceiling, vault
ààjà, whirlwind
àjẹjì, àjòjì, strange, foreign
àjò, journey
àájò, attention, care,
 treatment
àkàlà, hornbill
àkàrà, bean-cake
àáké, axe
àkiyèsí, notice
àkókò, time, season
akólòlò, stammerer
àkóbí, first-born
akòwé, clerk
àlà, white cloth
àlà, dream
ààlà, boundary
àláfiá, well-being
alágbáfò, washerman
aláinítijú, shameless person
aláísí, being deceased,
 non-existent
alákòrí, good-for-nothing
aláràbarà, many-coloured
alárinrin, fine, resplendent
aláàrù, porter
àlàyé, explanation

àlejò, stranger, guest, new boy
 alé, evening
 àlòkù, second-hand
 àmfààni, opportunity, advantage
 àmòòmòtán, imperfectly known
 ànà, yesterday
 àna, relative-in-law
 dá àna, to perform traditional marriage customs
 àniàni, doubt
 apá, arm; direction, side
 àpára, joke
 apeja, fisherman
 àpò, bag, pocket; £100
 apó, quiver
 àpótí, box
 ara, body; self
 ará, member of a community
 àràbà, silk cotton tree
 àrán, velvet
 ààré, tiredness, illness
 àárin, middle, centre
 ariwo, noise
 àáró, mutual aid on farm
 ààrò, àdìrò, hearth
 arọ, cripple
 àárọ, morning
 arúgbó, old person
 àrùn, disease
 àsán, afternoon (in greetings)
 àsikò, time, period
 àṣà, custom

YORUBA
 aṣaájú, predecessor, leader, senior
 àṣejù, excess
 aṣeni, secret enemy
 àṣehinde, expecting return of elder who has died
 àṣírí, secret
 àṣiṣe, mistake
 aṣiwèrè, madman
 aṣọ, cloth, clothes
 aṣógbó, forest guard
 ata, pepper
 àtakò, opposition
 àtátà, real, genuine
 àtèhinkú, untimely death
 àtèlẹwọ, palm of hand
 àterúdérú, ancestral slave
 àti, and; to (with verb)
 àtijọ, former, some time ago
 àtitàn, ààtàn, refuse heap
 àtúnṣe, repair, amends
 àtùpà, lamp, lantern
 àwa, we, us (emphatic)
 àwùgbó, not heeding advice
 àwo, dish
 àwòrán, picture
 àwọ, colour
 awọ, skin, leather
 àwọn, they, them (emphatic)
 àwùjọ, assembly, meeting
 àyè, place, opportunity, chance
 ààyè, life, alive
 ayọ, joy
 bà, to alight on
 èrù' bà mí, I felt afraid
 fi etí bà, to drop a hint to

bà, fi ojú bà, to witness, see
 bá, to meet, accompany, hit upon; for, with
 bà . . . jé, to spoil
 bá . . . mu, to suit, agree with
 bà . . . nínú jé, to make sad
 bá . . . wí, to rebuke; to refer to
 bàbá, father
 baba, father (in general sense), senior, master
 bàjé, to become spoilt
 inú mi' bàjé, I felt upset
 bàmúbámú, chock full
 báníkí, bank (for money)
 banújé, to become sad
 básíkùlù, bicycle
 bàtà, shoe, boot
 báyi, like this
 bèèrè, to ask about or for
 bè, to beg, ask, implore
 bè . . . l'ówè, to ask for communal help
 bè, to cut off
 bèè, so, like that
 bèbè (bè èbè), to implore
 bèèkọ, it is not so
 bèèni, it is so; even so, yet
 bèrèsi(i), to begin
 bèrù, to fear
 bi, bi . . . léèrè, to ask
 bí, asks doubtful question (at end of sentence)
 bí (inú bí mí), I became angry
 bí, like, as
 bí . . . ti, as, how
 bí, bí . . . bá, if
 bínú, to be angry
 biribiri, very dark
 bò, to cover
 bojújé (bà), to scowl
 bọ, to approach, return, arrive
 bọ, to enter narrow opening
 bọ, to slip out, escape; to come, go (rather quickly)
 —, to feed
 bọ sí, to turn out to be
 bọ sí i, to be successful, effective
 bọròkinni, gentleman
 bọyá, bọyá, perhaps
 bù, to take from larger quantity; to cut
 bù olá, bọlá, to pay honour
 bù ọwọ, bọwọ, to pay respect
 búburú, bad, nasty, wicked
 burú, to be bad, nasty, wicked
 burúkú, bad, nasty, wicked
 dà, where is?
 dà, to pour
 dà . . . lé . . . l'óri, to pour on top of
 dà . . . nù, to pour away
 dà . . . kọ, to direct towards
 dà . . . pè, to call by an avoidance name
 dá, to cause (ch. 24)
 dá, to do alone
 dá . . . dá, to leave to do alone
 dá (ara mí' dá), I am well

dá èésú, to contribute to a thrift club
dá . . . l'ójú, to be certain to one
dá . . . l'óró, to treat cruelly
dá owó lé, to undertake
dá . . . padà, to return a thing
dá . . . silẹ, to cause, found, set up
dàgbà (dì àgbà), to grow up
dáhùn (dá ohùn), to answer
dájú, to be certain; to be brazen-faced
dákú, to faint
dámòràn (imòràn), to advise
dáná (iná), to make a fire; to cook a lot of food
dáná (àna), to perform marriage duties to in-laws
danindanin, important; tightly
dàńsíkí, type of short gown
dànù, to be spilt
dára, dáa, to be good, nice to look at
dáradára, dáadáa, well, fine, all right
dàrà (òrà), to commit an offence
dàró (arò), to express sympathy
dẹ, to await
dẹ, to arrive, happen
—, to cover, put lid on
d'èbí pa (dá), to starve to death

déédéé, exactly
délé (ilé), to arrive home
dẹ, to hunt, trap, set (trap)
d'ẹhin (dà), to act in one's absence
dẹrùbà (dá), to terrify, intimidate
dì, to tie
dì/dà, to become
dí, to block up
dide, to get up
dídùn, tasty, pleasant
diẹ, some, a little
dígí, glass, mirror
digbò lulẹ, to slump to the ground
dínwó (owó), to reduce price of
dípò (dí ipò), to replace
d'ojú ijà kọ (dà), to challenge, shew fight to
dójútì (dá), to put to shame
dógba, to be equal
dókítà, doctor
dòtí, to be dirty
dùbùlẹ, to lie down
dúdú, to be black, dark; black, dark
dùn, to be tasty, pleasant
inú mi dùn, I am pleased
dùn, to pain
dùn . . . nínú, to make one sorry
dùndú, fried yam
dúpẹ (dá opẹ), to give thanks
dúró, to stand, wait, stop
dúró tì, to stand by someone

ebi, hunger
ebi npa mí, I am hungry
èdè, language
èdèàiyédè, misunderstanding, quarrel
egungun, eegun, bone
egúngún, eégún, masquerader
egbò, sore
egbòogi, medicine
ejò, snake
èké, deceit, deceitful person
èkúté, mouse
elété, plotter
eléyi, this one
eéló, how much? for how much?
èlùbó, yam flour
èmi, I, me (emphatic)
ènià, person, people
èèrà, ant
eré, running; play
èéí, dirt
erin, elephant
èrò, thought, consideration
èrò, people, passengers
eéru, ashes
èsi, reply
èsúsú, èésú, thrift club
èsín, last year
ète, plan, plot
etí, ear
etí mí' di, I am deaf
etí dídí, deaf ear, deafness
ètò, arrangement
ewé, leaf
èwo, which one?
ewu, danger
ewuré, goat

èyi, this
èbá, vicinity
èbi, fault, guilt
èbí, family, relative
èfó, green vegetables
èfóri, headache
èfúfú, strong wind
ègbé, side
egbé, society, age group
ègbón, elder relative
èhin, back (see ch. 38)
èhin odi, out of town, abroad
eiye, bird
eja, fish
èjẹ, blood
ejó, court case, fault
èèkan, once, recently
èkọ, pap, gruel
èkọ, education
èkùn, leopard
èkún, weeping
elédá, creator
elédé, pig
èlẹgẹ, fragile, delicate
èlòmíràn, another person
èmi, life, spirit
èmu, palm-wine
èn, expression of assent
èn-èn, expression of dissent
èni, person
èní, mat
ènikan, somebody
ènikèni, anybody
ènití, the person who
ènu, mouth (see ch. 38)
ènu ònà, doorway
ènyin, you (pl. emphatic)
èran, animal; meat

- eranko, wild animal
 èrì, testimony
 èrìn, laughter
 èrìn pa mí, I had to laugh
 èrò, machine, device
 èrù, load
 èrù, fear
 erú, slave
 esè, foot, leg
 èsin, humiliation
 ewà, beauty
 èwà, beans
 èwè, also
 èwu, coat, gown
 èyà, tribe, people
 èyin, egg
- fà, to pull, draw
 fà . . . l'etí, to give a hint to
 fà . . . l'ówò, to hold by the hand
 fà . . . yò, to draw out
 fà . . . yà, to tear up
- fàdákà, silver
 fajúro, to pull a long face
 farabalè, to be calm
 farapamó, to conceal oneself
 fáàrì, display, airs
 fèrè, flute, whistle
 fèrèsé, window
 fèsi (fò èsi), to answer
 fè, to be broad
 fè, to want, love, woo, marry
 fèràn, to like, love
 fi, to put, use, apply; with (see ch. 15)
- fi . . . ra iná, to put to warm
 fi . . . sùn, to accuse, report
 filà, cap
 fò, to jump, fly
 fò . . . dá, to pass over, ignore
 fò şánlè, to collapse (of a person)
 fò, to wash (things)
 fò, to break, smash
 fójú, to be blind
 fonfon, soundly
 fun, to give, transfer to; to, for (see ch. 15)
 funfun, to be white; white
 fúyè, to be easy, light of weight, better (of health)
 fu (ara 'fu mí), I felt suspicious
 fura, to suspect
- ga, to be lofty, high
 gaan, exactly, actually, really
 gèlè, head-tie
 géndé, strong man
 geletè, at ease
 gidigidi, extremely
 gorì (gùn orì), to ascend
 gòòlù, gold
 gò, to be stupid
 gòhoyi, much (of money)
 gòmbò, a style of face mark
 gùn, to be long, tall (of people)
 —, to climb, mount, ride
 gún, to pound, stab, pierce

- gbà, to take, get, accept; to rescue
 gbà fún, to agree with, be indulgent to
 gbà . . . gbò, to believe
 gbà . . . n'imòràn, to advise
 gbà . . . l'etí, to box the ears of
 gbádùn, to enjoy; to be pleasant; to get well
 gbágudá, cassava
 gbàgbé, to forget
 gbàgbó, to have faith
 gbájúmò, reputation, person of repute
 gbálè, to sweep the floor
 gbé, to lift
 —, to live in, inhabit
 —, to perish
 gbé . . . léjú, to make a display of
 gbèrò, to intend
 gbéyàwó, to marry
 gbékèlè (gbé), to trust
 gbèsan (gbà), to get revenge
 gbin, to plant
 gbó, to be ripe, old
 gbòfo (gbà), to get nought
 gbogbo, all
 gbóná, to be hot
 gbò, to hear, understand
 gbòdò, must
 gbón, to be wise, prudent
 gbónjú, to come to years of discretion
 gbónmi (omi), to scoop out water
 gbòorò, long and thin
- gbúrò, to hear news or a sound
- halè, to threaten, bluster
 hàn, to be obvious
 fi . . . hàn, to shew
 haanrun, to snore
 he, to pick up
 hó, to boil, bubble
 hó yèè, to shout loudly
 hun, to weave
 hùwà (hù iwà), to behave
- ibàjè, being spoilt, scurrility
 ibè, there
 ibi, place
 ibí, here
 ibití, the place that, where
 ibilè, native (adj.)
 ibínú, anger
 ibòòji, shade
 idálè, away from home
 idán, magic
 idánwò, examination
 idíkò, bus-stop, station
 idílè, family group
 idúró, standing
 ifòiyà, alarm
 igàn, piece (of cloth)
 igi, wood, tree
 igò, bottle
 igbà, time
 igba, 200
 igbá, calabash
 igbàtí, the time that, when
 igbe, shout
 igbe'ta, a shout was raised

igbèsè, gbèsè, debt
 igbésí aiyé, manner of life
 igbéyáwó, wedding
 igbé, forest
 igbó, forest
 igbooro, built up area
 ihò, hole
 ijà, fight, quarrel
 ijàngbò, trouble
 ijápá, tortoise
 ijètá, day before yesterday
 ijókò, sitting
 ijòyè, chief
 ijòsí, the other day
 iká, cruelty, cruel person
 ika, finger
 ikan, one
 ikoríta, road junction
 ikú, death
 ikùn, belly, mind
 ilà, face mark
 ilá, ocro
 ilàjú, civilisation
 ilé, house, home, building
 Iléyá, Greater Bairam
 festival
 ilẹ̀, ground, land
 ilẹ̀ aiyé, the world
 ilẹ̀ mó, day dawned
 ilẹ̀ sù, night fell
 ilẹ̀kẹ̀, bead
 ilù, drum
 ilú, territory, country, town
 imòràn, advice
 imótótó, cleanliness
 iná, light, fire
 ináwó, spending money,
 entertainment
 inú, inside, belly

ipàdè, meeting
 iparí, end, completion
 ipátá, rascal
 ipò, position
 ipónjú, distress
 irépò, friendship, harmony
 irésì, rice
 irin, iron, metal
 irin-àjò, journey
 iró, sound
 iró, woman's wrapper
 iròhin, news
 irònú, thought, pensiveness
 iró, lie, error, vain thought
 irójú, endurance
 irólé, early evening
 irù, tail
 irú, irúfẹ̀, sort, variety
 irun, hair
 isàlẹ̀, bottom part
 isimi, isinmi, rest,
 relaxation
 isinkú, funeral
 isò, market stall
 isẹ̀, work
 isẹ̀, destitution
 isòro, difficulty
 isu, yam
 itàn, story, history
 itàwé, book-selling
 ité, throne, nest
 itajà (ojà), selling wares
 itòsí, near
 itójú, care for, tending
 itúmò, meaning
 iwà, behaviour
 iwé, book, paper
 iwòsàn, medical treatment
 iwọ̀, you (sg. emphatic)

iwòn, measure; about
 iyà, suffering, punishment
 iyá, mother
 iyálé, senior wife
 iyán, pounded yam
 iyáwó, bride, wife
 iye, quantity, number,
 value
 iyàlenu, surprise
 iyanu, wonder
 iyen, that
 iyí (èyí), this
 iyókù, remainder
 iyonu, trouble, worry
 jà, to fight, quarrel
 já, to get to a place
 —, to find out, solve, see
 through
 jádè (òdè), to get out,
 emerge
 jáfáfá, to be active, keen
 jàgidijàgan, hooligan
 jagun (ogun), to wage war
 jàgbajàgba, untidy
 jàjà, at last
 jàmbá, accident
 jampata, to take trouble
 over
 jẹ, to eat, enjoy fruits of
 jẹ . . . n'iyà, to afflict with
 suffering, punish
 jẹ, to allow, venture to
 —, to be
 jẹkí, jẹ kí, to allow that
 jẹmó, to be connected with
 jẹwó, to confess
 jí, to wake, waken
 —, to steal, do stealthily

jibàtajibata, soaking
 jígí, dígí, glass, mirror
 jinnà, to be far
 jinnà sí, to be far from
 jó, to dance
 jó, to burn
 jóná, to be on fire
 jowú, to be jealous
 jọ, to be together
 jọ . . . l'ójú, to impress
 jójú, to be substantial
 —, to surpass, exceed
 jù, to throw
 jù . . . nù, to throw away
 (single object)
 juwọ̀ (ọwọ̀), to wave the
 hand

kà, to be placed on
 ká, to fold, encircle
 —, to pluck (fruit)
 kábà, dress, frock
 kàdàrà, destiny
 k'ágò (ké àgò), to ask
 permission to enter
 kalẹ̀ (ilẹ̀), to be on the
 ground; to be ready
 kàn, to touch, affect; to
 knock
 —, to get abroad
 kan, to be sour
 kán, one
 kán (ojú nkán mi), I am in a
 hurry
 kánjú, to be in a hurry
 kánkan, any
 kánnáà, the same
 kaná (iná), to be on the fire

kárí (ori), to go round all of a group
kàwé (iwé), to read
ké, to cry out
ké sí, to call to
kedere, clear, clearly
keji, second, other
kékeré, small
kéré, to be small
kéké pa, silence fell
kì, to push, ram
 —, not
kì ìṣe, it is not
kí, to greet
kiákíá, kiá, quickly
kígbe (ké), to shout out
kíni, kíl', what?
kínnikínní, very carefully
kiri, to go about
kírún, to recite Moslem prayers
kò, not
kò, to meet, come up against
kò iná, to push fire together
kó, to gather, put (collectively)
kó egbè, to keep company
kókó, lump
kòkò, cocoa
kólékólé, burglar
kórira (írira), to hate
korò, to be bitter
kò, to reject, refuse
kò . . . sílè, to divorce
kò jálè, to refuse point blank

kọ, to write; to sing; to direct towards
kọ ilà, to cut face marks
kọ (fi ẹ̀ṣẹ̀ ọ̀), to stumble
kọ mọ̀nà, to dazzle
kọ, to hang up; to teach, learn; to build; it is not
kọ̀bọ̀dù, cupboard
kọ̀já, to pass
kọ̀jú sí, to face
kọ̀ọ̀kan, each; one each
kọ̀kọ̀rọ̀, key
kọ̀lé (ilé), to build a house
kọ̀lọ̀kọ̀lọ̀, winding, twisting
kọ̀rẹ̀nṣi, paper money
korin (orin), to sing songs
kọ̀wé, to write
kọ̀wé, to study
kù, to remain, be over, be short
kú, to die; to be greeted
kùmọ̀, cudgel, club
kùn, to apply paint or powder
kún, to be full
kún fún, to be full of
kúrò, to leave, come away from
kúru, to be short
kúkúru, short

là . . . yé, to explain to
lá, to dream
lágbara, to be strong
láláí, ever, long ago
lálá (àlá), to have a dream
láná, yesterday

láárín, among, in the middle of
lásán, mere, worthless, bare
látí, from, since; to, in order to
lè, to be able
le, to be hard
lé, to be on
f'ori lé, to set off towards
lélè, on the ground
léráléra, repeatedly
lèhin, after, behind
lèsèkésè, immediately
létà, letter
lèwà, to be beautiful
lò, to use, spend
lódè, outside
lódè òní, in the world of today
lóni, today
lójoojúmọ̀, daily
lókè, aloft
lóri, on
lósòòsù, monthly
lówó, to be rich, have money
lọ̀, to grind, iron clothes
lọ̀, to go
l'òhùn, next but one (in time), yonder
lọ̀pọ̀lọ̀pọ̀, very much
lọ̀ra, to be slow
lọ̀sọ̀sọ̀, weekly
lọ̀ṣọ̀ (aṣọ̀), to iron clothes
lù, to beat, strike
lùlù (ilù), to beat drums

máìlì, mèèlì, mile
májèlè, poison

màlùù, ox
másè, do not (imper.)
m̀bẹ̀, exists
méjì, two
mélò, how many?
mélòkán, a few
méfá, six
mèrin, four
métá, three
mèwá, ten
mì, to swallow
m̀ràn, m̀lì, another
móoru, to be hot (weather)
mọ̀, to know
mọ̀, to build, mould; to be limited
mọ̀, to be clean, bright; any more; onto, against
mọ̀lémọ̀lè, builder
mọ̀nàmọ̀nà, lightning
mọ̀sáláṣí, mosque
mọ̀wé, to be educated
mu, to drink, smoke
mú, to be sharp; to grasp, cause
mú . . . wá, to bring
mú . . . nínú ònì, to cause to be happy

ná, first of all, for a moment
náà, the (referred to)
ni, it is, it was; to possess
'ni, ni, person, one
ní, to have; to say; in, at
níbè, there
níbí, here
nígbàgbogbo, always
nígbànáà, then
nígbàtí, when

nihín, here
 nikan, nikanṣoṣo, alone
 niláárí, to have value, worth
 niláti, to have to, must
 nilé, at home
 nínú, inside, among, of
 nípa, about, through
 níṣon, to be thick, weighty
 nítorípé, nítorítí, because
 nísisiyí, nísenyí, now
 nírun, to be hairy
 níṭòótó (ní t'òótó), in truth
 ñjé, indicates doubtful question
 nńkan, nkán, something
 nńkankan, nkánkan, anything
 ñkọ, what about?
 ñlá, big
 ñṣó, indicates beginning or continuation of action
 nũ, to wipe; to be lost

òbí, parent
 obì, cola-nut
 obinrin, female, woman
 òde, outside, down town
 òde aiyé, the world
 òde isisiyí, the present day
 òde òní, the present day
 odi, town wall
 òdindì, òdidi, complete, whole
 òfin, law
 ògiri, wall
 ogun, war
 ogún, 20; inheritance

YORUBA
 oògùn, medicine (often magical)
 ògbólógbò, dyed-in-the-wool
 ohun, thing
 ohùn, voice
 òjò, rain
 ojú, eye, face (see ch. 38)
 ojú ọ̀nà, road-way
 ojú tí mí, I am ashamed, shy
 ojúlùmò, acquaintance
 òkè, hill, mountain; up
 òkèèrè, distant point
 òkíkí, fame, reputation
 oko, farm, farm-plot
 òkú, dead person
 òkúta, stone; cwt
 olè, thief
 ológbò, cat
 olóriburúkú, ill-starred person
 olóòró, upright, vertical
 olóyè, intelligent person
 olóyè, titled person
 olúkúlùkù, oníkálùkù, each
 olùranlówó, helper
 olúwarè, the person in question
 omi, water
 òmùgò, fool
 òní, today
 oníbàrà, customer
 oníbòn, gunman
 onijó, dancer
 onilé, householder
 oníṣé, workman
 oníṣòwò, trader
 oníyebíyè, valuable

òpó, post
 opó, widow
 òpópó, street, road
 òpùrò, liar
 oore, good turn
 orí, head, top; on
 orin, song
 oríṣi, sort, variety
 orogún, co-wife
 òròmbó, orange
 orúkò, name
 òórùn, smell
 oorùn, sleep
 oòrùn, sun
 òsì, left (hand)
 osùn, camwood
 òṣì, destitution
 òṣiṣé, worker
 oṣu, month
 òtító, òótó, truth
 òtòṣì (ta), destitute person
 òun, he/she/him/her/it (emphatic)
 otútù, cold
 oúnjè, food
 owó, money
 òwò, trade
 òwúrò, òórò, morning
 òyinbó, òyibó, European

obè, stew, soup
 òbè, knife
 òbò, monkey
 òdà, paint, tar
 òdàrà, offender
 oḍe, hunter
 òḍò, young person
 òḍòmòbinrin, young woman

òḍòmòkùnrin, young man
 òḍò, person's presence
 oḍún, year, festival
 ofà, arrow
 òfè, gratis, free
 òfò, loss by death
 ofò, incantation
 ògà, master, sir
 ògèḍè, banana
 ògòḍò, swamp, marsh
 ogbà, garden, enclosure; fence
 ogbà olópà, police-station
 ogbón, wisdom, plan, trick
 oja, market
 ojò, ijò, day
 okàn, heart
 fi okàn tán, to trust
 okan, one
 òkánkán, òkákán, exact spot; distant spot
 okọ, husband
 okọ, hoe
 okọ, canoe, conveyance
 okọ, spear
 okùnrin, male, man
 ola, tomorrow
 olá, honour
 olàjú, civilised person
 òlè, lazy, lackadaisical person
 olidè, holiday
 olódà (òdà), painted, tarred
 olópà, policeman
 Olórún, God
 olòṣà, burglar, bandit
 omọ, child; girl

omòdé, young child
omòlanke, truck, trolley
omoléhìn, follower
omolúwàbí, refined person
òmòwé, educated person
òná, road, way
onà, adornment,
decoration
òni, crocodile
òpá, stick, wand, rod
òpé, palm-tree
òpeyìnbó, pineapple
òpé, thanks
òpólópò, many, much
òrán, matter, affair, case
òràniyàn, necessity
òrò, words, matter,
discussion
orò, wealth
orùn, neck
òrun, sky, other world
òsán, daytime; afternoon
òsàn, citrus fruit, orange
òsè, week
òsè, soap
òsò, finery
otí, spirits, strong drink
òtún, right (hand)
òtúnla, day after tomorrow
òwè, communal help
owó, hand

pa, to kill (see ch. 25)
pa igi, to cut wood for
roofs
padà, to return
padé, to meet
págà, good heavens!
pákí, cassava

páló, to ask riddles
pamó, to keep safe
fi . . . pamó, to keep safe
paná (iná), to put out
light/fire
pàànù, corrugated iron, pan
panumó, to keep quiet
pa . . . l'ènu mó, to shut
someone up
pàápáá, even, especially
paré, to disappear, be
destroyed
parí, to complete
pariwo, to make a noise
pàşè, to give an order
pátápátá, completely
pè, to call
pé, to say; that
—, to be complete,
profitable
peleke, to increase
péré, only (with numbers)
pèsè, to prepare, provide
pèsè (şèşè), to be present
pé, to be long, late
pépèpé, trifling
pérepèrè, in shreds
pin, to divide up, share
pinin, glossy
pinnu, to decide
pipé, long, late
pitàn, to tell stories
pòwe, to quote proverbs
pò, to be much, cheap
—, to be in a group
pòjù, to be too much, to be
very common
pọọku, small sum
pon, to brew, to draw water

pónùn, £1
pupa, to be red, fair; red,
fair
púpò, much

rà, to buy
rán . . . l'ówó, to help
rán, to send
rán . . . n'isè, to send on a
message
ránşé, to send a message
fi . . . ránşé, to send a
thing

rán, to sew
rán . . . l'etí, to remind
rántí, to remember
rará, at all
rè, to go
réderède, untidy, unruly
rere, good, kind, well
retí, to expect, await
rè, to tire
ó rè mí, I am tired
repetè, on a big scale
rèrin, to laugh
rí, formerly
—, is, was
—, to see, find
ribiribí, important,
substantial
rìn, to walk, travel
rírà, buying
ríràn, to have sight, to see
rò, to think, relate, reckon
rò . . . mó, to add to (in
reckoning)
ro, to till
ro, to pain

ojú ñro mí, I feel down in
the mouth
ró, to drape, put on a
woman's cloth
rojó (rò ejó), to complain
ronú (rò inú), to ponder
rorò, to be fierce
rò, to urge
—, to subside, fall (rain)
rojú, to carry on under
strain
rora, to be careful, gentle
rù, to carry
run, to crush
inú ñrun mí, I have a
stomach-ache

sà, to apply medicines etc.
sá, to air, dry in the sun
sá, to run off, escape
sá fún, to avoid
sáábà, usually
sáló, to run away
sàn, to be well
san, to pay
sanra, to be fat, stout
sanwó (owó), to pay money
sápamó, to run and hide
sáré (eré), to run
Sátidé, Saturday
sè, to cook, stew
séhìn, in the past, behind
sì, and (joining clauses)
sí, to
sí i, to it, more
sìbè, to that place; yet
sìbèsìbè, yet, nevertheless
sìbí, to this place, here
sigá, cigarette

sihin, to this place, here
silé, homewards
silè, down; ready
sílíkì, silk
simi, sinmi, to rest
sin, to accompany, escort
sin, to bury
sinú, into
sisi, 6d
siwájú, forwards
so, to tie
 —, to stand out (scar)
sódé, outside
sókè, up, upwards
sóri, onto
sòkalè, to dismount, get down, get off
sò . . . kalè, to put load down
sò, to throw
ariwo'sò, a noise broke out
sò sí . . . l'òkàn, to come into one's mind
sò . . . nù, to throw away
sonù, to be lost
sò, to say
sòrò, to speak
sú, to bore, weary
sunkún, sòkún, to weep
sùn, to sleep
sùn silè, to lie down
sùn lò, to fall off to sleep
şá, just, only
şàl, to fail to
şàájú, to precede
şàisàn, to be ill
şe, to do, to be
o/ş şe é, thank you

şé, asks confident question
şègbé, to perish
şè, to offend
şèlè, to happen
şénjì, change (money)
şíbì, spoon
şiré, şeré, to play
şisè, to work
şì, to make a mistake
şí, to open, to move away from
şiwó (òwó), to stop work
şòkòtò, trousers
şòrò, to be hard, difficult
şoso, only one
şò, to watch, take guard
şòpù, shop
şòra (ara), to be careful
şú, to get dark
şubù, to fall
şùgà, sugar
şugbón, but
tà, to sell
ta, to shoot, shoot out, sting
takú, to persist in refusal
tálákà, poor person
tàn . . . je, to deceive
tán, to end, finish; completely
tán (f'òkàn tán), to trust
tani, tal', who?
tànkálè, to spread
tanná (iná), to light a lamp
tààrà, straight
tàwétàwé, bookseller
télè, previously, already
tésàn, station

tè, to press on
tè wáyà, to send a wire
té, to spread out
 —, to be disgraced
téjú, to be flat
tèlè, to follow
tenumó, to emphasise
téjéré, thin, slender
tí, to push
 —, to fail, not to be so
 —, to be close up against
ti, property of, matter of
 —, to come from
 —, already, now (preceding verbs)
tí, that, which (relative), yet
tíjú, to be shy, ashamed
tikálára, self
tímótímó, close
timùtimù, cushion, pillow
tinùtinù, sincerely
títí, continually, until
títi, street
tò, to arrange
tó, to be enough, to reach standard of
tóbi, to be big
tò, to follow (road)
tò . . . wá, to approach
tòjú, to look after, put by
tòkòtaya, husband and wife
f'orè (ta), to make a gift
tòrò, to ask for
tòrò, 3d
tú, to pour out, undo, release
túká, to scatter
túláási, force, necessity

túlétúlè, home-breaker
tún, to repeat
tún . . . şe, to repair
tutù, to be cold, fresh, damp

wà, to be
 —, to drive vehicle
 —, to dig up
wá, to come
 —, to look for, want
 —, to prepare food
wádí, to make enquiries
wákàtí, hour
wàrà, milk
wáyà, wire
wáyí, as things are
wé, to twist round
wéré, quickly
wí, to say
wípé, to say that; that
wò, to look at
wò . . . sà, to cure
wò, which?
wó, to collapse
wòran, to look at a spectacle
wòye, to realise
wò, to enter, put on
wò sí, to put up at
wò, to be crooked
 —, to crawl, to drag
wòlè, to enter
wòlèwòde, to go in and out = to help in the house
wò, to be dear, scarce
wònú (wò inú), to go in
wònyí, these

wònyen, those
wópò, to be common
wòra (wò ara), deeply
 (enter body)
wòru, in floods
wù, to attract, please
wúlò, to be useful
wùrà, gold

yà, to turn aside
 —, to become
 —, to open
ó yà mí l'ènu, it surprised
 me
àgò' yà, entrance is open
ya, to flood in
yá, to lend, borrow
 —, to be quick, ready
yàà, copiously
yàn, to choose, set, appoint
yára (yá ara), to be quick;
 quickly

yàtò, to be different
yé, to be clear to
 —, to cease
yege, to pass a test, be
 successful
yẹ, to be right, proper,
 fitting
yẹ . . . wò, to examine
 (physically)
yèn, that
yẹra, to avoid
yi, to be tough
yi, this
yí . . . ká, to surround, go
 round
yìnbọn (ìbọn), to shoot a
 gun
yọ, to come out
yọ . . . kúrò nínú, to
 subtract from
yọ . . . l'ènu, to annoy,
 worry

Final "a," in the north of the Malay Peninsula, is shorter than the stressed open "a." It is pronounced like the last syllable of "Eva" or of "beaver," e.g.

kita (*we*) rhymes with "Rita".

In the south it is a sound made with more rounded lips, coming somewhere between the "ur" of English "curve," and the "eu" of French "feu."

In a closed syllable "a" is shortened. (But see par. 16c). Before a final "ng", it is almost like the "u" in English "cut," e.g.

lang (*eagle*) is nearer to English "lung" than to "lang".

Before any consonant which closes a stressed final syllable, the "a" tends towards this short "u" sound, e.g.

the second syllable of **pahám** (*understand*) is nearer to "hum" than to "ham" (see par. 15b for stress), the second syllable of **tahán** (*restrain*) is nearer to "hun" than to "han", the second syllable of **těbál** (*thick*) rhymes with "lull" rather than with "pal", and the second syllable of **sěkám** (*rice-chaff*) rhymes with "rum", rather than with "ram".

When the closed syllable is not stressed the "a" has not this short "u" sound, e.g.

in **lalat** (*a fly*) the two vowels are almost the same and the stress is usually even.

WARNING: The "a" of a final closed syllable never becomes the indeterminate sound that is heard in the unaccented last syllable of the English words "capstan" and "floral".

Par. 5. The Malay vowel "e".

(a) The Indeterminate "ě".

The symbol *ě* represents the indeterminate sound which fills a very slight pause between two consonants. It is like the "e" in "broken" or the "a" in "around", e.g.

bětúl (*correct*) **těbál** (*thick*).

A note on Stress.

Most Malay words are two-syllabled words, and if there is any stress at all it falls on the first of the two syllables, if that syllable ends in a vowel other than "ě", e.g.

pátah (*snapped*) : **lálát** (*a fly*).

In disyllables such as **bětúl** and **těbál**, where the first syllable ends in "ě", the stress, if there is any, falls on the second syllable.

When the first syllable is closed the stress is always even, e.g.

bimbang (*anxious*) ; **rantai** (*chain*).

In a word of more than two syllables, if the penultimate (i.e. last but one) syllable ends in "ě" the stress goes back to the antepenultimate (i.e. last but two), e.g.

ĵěntěra (*wheel—of a machine*).

Otherwise, the stress on a three-syllabled word is on the penultimate, e.g.

binátang (*animal*); **ĵěndéla** (*window*); **mahkámah** (*court of justice*).

Stress marks are inserted in this chapter only. Remember that the stress is very light. It is never wrong to pronounce a two-syllabled word with