

AN INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
YORUBA LANGUAGE

by

IDA C. WARD, C.B.E., D.Lit.

CAMBRIDGE  
W. HEFFER & SONS LTD.

1952

Dedicated to  
the Yoruba students  
who have worked with me in London and Nigeria  
for  
the willing help given on the  
preparation of this book.

*Printed in Great Britain at the Works of*  
W. HEFFER AND SONS LTD., CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	I
CHAPTER I. PRONUNCIATION	6
"  II. TONES OF YORUBA	29
"  III. NOUNS AND THEIR TONES	42
"  IV. NOUNS FOLLOWED BY THE DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVE	56
"  V. NOUNS FOLLOWED BY THE POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE	64
"  VI. ADJECTIVES	70
"  VII. VERB FORMS	76
"  VIII. NEGATIVE OF THE VERB	95
"  IX. VERBAL COMBINATIONS	106
"  X. QUESTIONS	117
"  XI. ABBREVIATIONS AND ELISIONS	123
"  XII. THE VERBS wa, ni, je, be, fe, si, ko, ETC.	134
"  XIII. THE WORDS ti	139
"  XIV. THE WORDS ba	142
"  XV. THE WORDS ni	144
"  XVI. PARTICLES ma AND maa	146
"  XVII. ADVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS. CONNECTIVES	151
"  XVIII. NUMBERS, TIMES, SEASONS	155
"  XIX. VERB IN COMPOUND AND COMPLEX SENTENCES	163
"  XX. MISCELLANEOUS	172
APPENDIX I. SUMMARY OF TONE CHANGES	175
"  II. FORMATION OF NOUNS	179
"  III. TONES OF NOUNS OF TWO AND THREE SYLLABLES	183
"  IV. SOME QUESTIONS OF SPELLING IN YORUBA	185



# TEXTS

(all with full tonal markings)

		PAGE
TEXT	I. SELECTED GREETINGS, ETC. - - - - -	194
	(1) At Different Times of the Day - - - - -	194
	(2) On Different Occasions - - - - -	194
	(3) Miscellaneous Opening Conversational Phrases - - - - -	195
	(4) Useful Phrases - - - - -	196
"	II. SENTENCES A STUDENT CAN USE WITH A TEACHER - - - - -	196
"	III. SHORT, SIMPLE CONVERSATIONS - - - - -	197
	(1) Enquiries after the Family - - - - -	197
	(2) Meeting - - - - -	199
	(3) War - - - - -	200
	(4) Hot Weather - - - - -	201
	(5) Going to Munshi Market - - - - -	202
	(6) Fish Market - - - - -	204
	(7) Pepper Seller - - - - -	205
"	IV. TWO LETTERS (FROM SOLANKE TO I. C. W.) - - - - -	206
"	V. FOUR SIMPLE STORIES - - - - -	208
	(1) <i>Ḑpolo meji</i> - - - - -	208
	(2) <i>Elede da epó nu</i> - - - - -	209
	(3) <i>Akukó ati ojiji re</i> - - - - -	210
	(4) <i>Ijapa ati Ojola</i> - - - - -	211
"	VI. VISIT TO A CHIEF - - - - -	213
"	VII. WORK OF A FARMER - - - - -	216
"	VIII. PEOPLE, BLACK, WHITE, BROWN - - - - -	220
"	IX. TWO CONVERSATIONS (MORE DIFFICULT) - - - - -	222
	(1) Conversation (General) between Alabi and Bande - - - - -	222
	(2) Between a Farmer and a Trader - - - - -	231
"	X. TWO STORIES (MORE DIFFICULT) - - - - -	238
	(1) <i>Ajala Akobinrinjo</i> (Ajala the Polygamist) - - - - -	238
	(2) <i>Sanusi nlo lola</i> (Story of a "Money-doubler") - - - - -	244
"	XI. TWELVE PROVERBS - - - - -	253
"	XII. THE LORD'S PRAYER. BENEDICTIONS - - - - -	255