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Assessment of Sociolinguistic and Religious Effects of Anti-Islamic Expressions among Yoruba-Muslims of Selected Southwestern States in Nigeria

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Abstract

Language and religion are cardinal aspects of human existence. It is also almost impossible to separate a language from its cultural and traditional attachments; the experience enshrined in Yoruba, a major Nigerian language, whose core practices take cue from traditional approach of worshipping. Hence, this study aims to analyse some expressions uttered by Yoruba-Muslims which are against their own religion, to sociolinguistically examine the antagonistic effects of such expressions to Islamic faith, and to proffer ways to guide against them. The research tool used is Dell Hymes' (1974) Ethnography of SPEAKING theory while the Yoruba data were interpreted using Baker's (2018) 'textual' and 'pragmatic' equivalence approach. The population comprised three (3) South-western (Yoruba-speaking) states of Nigeria which are Osun, Oyo, and Lagos States; and part of the North-central (Ilorin) where Islam is the main religion and Yoruba language is dominantly spoken. It was revealed through the *settings* of the utterances that surprisingly, educated Yoruba-Muslims use the expressions mostly as shown in the 49 (61.25%) respondents from

educational environments against 31 (38.75%) from domestic localities. However, there is a slight difference in the range of *participants* from both genders in the use of the utterances as 45 male respondents representing 56.25% and 35 female respondents representing 43.75% proof their difference. It is recommended that linguistic researches should be carried out on anti-Christian expressions in order to afford for sanctity of the society through the power of language without fear or favour of one religion over another. In conclusion, Yoruba-Muslims must navigate these complexities of the richness of Yoruba traditions and the significant challenges it poses to their Islamic orthodoxy and effective communication to ensure that their cultural expressions align positively with Islamic principles.

Keywords*:* Ethnography of SPEAKING, Islam, Religion, Sociolinguistics, Yoruba-Muslims

Introduction

As religion is a pivotal part of human existence, so is language. Approximately 3,000 languages remain undocumented, with little to no written records (Himmelmann, 2017, p. 32) while 18% are considered critically endangered (UNESCO, 2019, p. 20). Some of them get extinct on a daily basis, particularly with the challenge posed by many man-made (artificial) languages where some are seen as "…deviant and deficient. Language thus holds the key to challenging and changing…" (Romaine 2000, p.107).

More often than not, it is almost impossible to separate a language from its cultural, traditional and customary attachments; this is the experience enshrined in Yoruba, one of the three major Nigerian languages, whose core practices are related to traditional approaches of worshipping. Hence, giving homage to deities like *Egungun, Ifa, Orunmila,* among others appeals as an age-old normal practice to many of the speakers of the language. Apparently, all these have a huge role to play in patterning and modeling their ways of thinking, behaving and even speaking.

There is no argument that some of Yoruba proverbs and idiomatic expressions are in tandem with the ideology and principles of Islamic monotheism; in fact, some are used in public sermons by rightly guided Islamic clerics. Nevertheless, some Yoruba-Muslims still err with their use of some uncomplimentary expressions to Islamic tenet, forgetting that the religion frowns at all forms of pluralistic beliefs, notions and doctrines that go against its basic principle of monotheism (belief in oneness of Allah). Instead of such so called Nigerian Yoruba-Muslims to stand up to any non-Muslim upon ill-informed and negative expressions against their religious belief, many of them, particularly from Southwestern and North-central parts of the country, seem to be propagators of the uncouth act.

Against this background, it is hoped that this study presents a lasting solution to religious suspicion and prevent annoyance from core Islamic religious adherents among the Yorubas. Consequent to these, this work could serve as a propeller of better peaceful co-existence of Yoruba-Muslims (with different Islamic ideologies) and non-Muslims in southwestern region of Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are to:

(i) analyse linguistic expressions that are uttered by Yoruba-Muslims which constitute mistakes against their religion;
(ii) examine, through sociolinguistic lens, the antagonistic effects of such linguistic expressions to Islamic faith;
(iii) proffer ways Yoruba-Muslims could guide against anti-religious utterances in their communicative and social endeavours.

Literature Review

Islam among Yoruba-Muslims

Language and utterances of practitioners of any religion can determine its position and give it a face in the society; it can give it an image that the public aligns with. According to Bidmos (2013),

Islam represents different things to different people based on the force of operation of an individual. But then, Islam as a designed structure must have an identity represented in one image. In case there are multiple images, as currently in circulation, the innocent knowledge seeker would like to, and should be assisted to identify which of the images is authentic. Olurode and Olusanya (2005, p.81) portray how Yoruba language and its culture have influenced the thoughts and speeches of some Muslims who are deeply rooted in Yoruba traditional practices: "Olorun created everything including Obatala or Orisa. However, he did not complete the work. Olorun is said to have made man as a rough figure and it was Obatala's task to put finishing touches by providing a face, a mouth, a nose, eyes, ears and skull".

It is pertinent to establish that Yoruba language has its own peculiar genres as parts of its properties of effective communication. Eulogy (*Oríkì)* expresses praise and admiration for individuals, deities, or ancestors (Adedimeji, 2015, p. 123; Oyebade, 2018, p. 78). Proverb (*Òwe*) conveys wisdom and moral lessons (Afolayan, 2017, p. 145; Bamgbose, 2011, p. 167). Riddle (*Àlọ*) encourages critical thinking and problem-solving (Ogunbiyi, 2014, p. 90; Adeoye, 2019, p. 201). Storytelling (*Itàn*) shares historical and cultural experiences (Nwaokorie, 2016, p. 170; Oloidi, 2018, p. 185). Satire (*Èyà Àrò*) criticizes societal ills and promotes change (AbdulRaheem, 2019, p. 210; Sanni, 2020, p. 234). Elegy (*Èlégì*) expresses sorrow and mourning (Oyebade, 2018, p. 92; Adedimeji, 2015, p. 130). Panegyric (*Orí*) praises individuals or groups for achievements (Afolayan, 2017, p. 150; Bamgbose, 2011, p. 172).

Studies have shown that Yoruba-Muslims employ traditional Yoruba rhetorical devices, such as allusion and allegory, to convey Islamic messages (Ogunbiyi, 2014, p. 78). Even though it facilitates communication and enhances the relevance of Islamic teachings within the Yoruba cultural context (Afolayan, 2017, p.

145), the integration of certain Yoruba traditions (such as taking and believe in concoction by some Muslims or celebrating funeral like child-birth) into Islamic practices has raised concerns and has compromised Islamic orthodoxy, conflicted with Islamic principles relating to family and marriage, distracted attention from the primary focus on Allah and Prophet Muhammad, and hindered effective communication of Islamic messages (AbdulRaheem, 2019, p. 210; Nwaokorie, 2016, p. 170; Oyebade, 2018, p. 208; Adedimeji, 2015, p. 130). In essence, while Yoruba traditions have enriched Islamic practices in some ways, significant challenges they pose to Islamic orthodoxy and effective communication are much more.

Sociolinguistics as a Mediating Field in a Multi-Religious Society

Since linguistic anthropological studies of various categories have maintained that language, society and culture cannot be uniform, they are bound to operate in accordance with people's thought and behavior. However, all of them are ascribed different characteristics and sub-themes in the sociolinguistic concept of Ethnography of SPEAKING. As Fitch and Philipsen (1995, p. 264) point out, "these components were not 'a checklist of things to describe' but rather 'an initial set of questions and descriptive possibilities in the study of ways of speaking in particular communities'". In essence, the concept of Ethnography of SPEAKING is encompassing in its analytical features, so much that its application is not only limited to linguistic anthropology but recently well-used as a vital tool to analyse linguistic works (Salzmann, Stanlaw and Adachi, 2012, p. 202).

The above assertion can be supported by the three goals of sociolinguistics orientations highlighted by Hymes (1997) as: (1) the socio as well as the linguistic; (2) socially realistic linguistics; (3) socially constituted linguistics. This is detailed in the opinion of Senft (2014) that, just like social organization, politics, religion, economics and law, language and speech have a patterning of their

own, and these make them deserve attention by anthropologists. Though the patterning is linguistic, it is more of cultural in organization than being identical to the grammar of a language in the traditional sense (p.120).

Holmes (2013, p. 373) authenticates: "The framework highlights features that contrast between cultures". To validate this within Nigerian context and beyond, Oloidi (2018 p. 190) demonstrated that shared linguistic practices facilitated cooperation among Muslim and Christian leaders; Gaudio (2015, p. 215) highlights the complex interplay between language, culture, and religious affiliation while Davies (2017, p. 201) illustrates how language use reinforces or challenges traditional religious categories. Similarly, among Christian communities, language and discourse shape theological interpretations and communal relationships (Baumgartner, 2017, p. 145).

On this basis, it is sacrosanct to give a more elaborate description of the factors and functions of the theory of Ethnography of SPEAKING: The **Setting/Scene (S)**. Setting refers to the time and place in which speech takes place and scene refers to the abstract psychological circumstance. The **Participants (P)** include various combinations of speaker–listener, addressor–addressee, or sender–receiver. **Ends (E)** refers to the conventionally recognized and expected outcomes of an exchange as well as to the personal goals that participants seek to accomplish on particular occasions. **Act Sequence (A)** refers to the actual form and content of what is said: the precise words used, how they are used, and the relationship of what is said to the actual topic at hand. **Key (K)** refers to the tone, manner, or spirit in which a particular message is conveyed: light-hearted, serious, precise, pedantic, mocking, sarcastic, pompous, humorous and so on.

In furtherance, **Instrumentalities (I)** refers to the choice of channel, for example, oral, written, signed, or telegraphic, and to

the actual forms of speech employed, such as the language, dialect, code, or register that is chosen. **Norms of Interaction and Interpretation (N)** refers to the specific behaviours and properties that attach to speaking and also to how these may be viewed by someone who does not share them (e.g., loudness, silence, gaze return, and so on). **Genre (G)** refers to clearly demarcated types of utterance; such things as poems, proverbs, riddles, sermons, prayers, lectures, and editorials. These are all marked in specific ways in contrast to casual speech. (Wardhaugh and Fuller 2015, pp. 232-234)

Simply put, Sociolinguistics, through the lens of Ethnography of SPEAKING, offers critical insights into the complex relationships between language, religion, and society. By examining language use in multi-religious contexts, researchers can better understand the dynamics of cooperation, conflict, and identity formation, ultimately promoting more effective communication and dialogue among diverse religious groups.

Empirical Review

The dearth of proper orientation and solution on how to differentiate core religious practices from traditional and cultural heritages is now posing problem to many Muslims; hence, it is both linguistic and religious challenge. Apart from Ferguson (1996) and Wardhaugh (2006) who had made findings on religious factors in language spread and hindrance of development of a nation, enough insights are yet to be lingual-religiously proffered for Nigerian situation.

Therefore, Adekola (2013) worked on *Religion as an Instrument for Enhancing Human Security in Nigeria* and discovered that without giving recourse to linguistic factor, that human security is threatened by seven key dimensions of human life. Nevertheless, Ifeanyi (2014), in his study titled *Ethno-religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Causes, Challenges and Management*, submitted that

conflict of ethnic rivalry and religious intolerance in Nigeria is as a result of Nigerians' cleavage to and the elite use of religion to promote ethno-primodial, political and economic interests.

Adedimeji (2015), in his work titled *Islamic discourse in Yoruba language: A study of sermon delivery among Yoruba-Muslims* concluded that research has shown that Yoruba idioms and proverbs, when used in Islamic sermons, can obscure the intended meaning and create confusion among listeners. In relation to this, AbdulRaheem, (2019) in his study *Bid'ah and cultural innovation in Yoruba Islam* raised concerns on how it is nearly impossible for a Yoruba-Muslim to go scot free from the negative effects of Yoruba tradition on his religion. He then observed that the intersection of Yoruba traditions and Islam also raises tensions and debates.

This work, therefore, sets out to proffer possible solutions and recommendations via first-hand observations from the speech behaviour of the unguarded expressions of some Yoruba-Muslims, including some non-Muslims Yoruba speakers, who take advantage of the Muslims' laxity to use certain uncomplimentary expressions to Islamic belief in supporting their views or proofing their point during their daily conversations, in Southwestern States and part of the North-central region of Nigeria. Consequently, the study sees to how the negative effects of misinterpretation of such expressions by the public could be dealt with by ardent and cautious Muslims in order to avoid unrest and religious war of words.

Theoretical Framework

The main research tool here is Hymes's (1974) Ethnography of SPEAKING theory. But before deploying this theory, Baker's (2018) 'textual' and 'pragmatic' equivalence approach was used to interpret the questionable expressions used by Yoruba-Muslims of Southwestern Nigeria.

Methodology

This research adopted qualitative research design to generate data from three South-western states (Yoruba-speaking states) of Nigeria which are Osun, Oyo, and Lagos States and part of the North-central (Ilorin) where Islam is their main religion and Yoruba language is dominantly spoken. The two main instruments used for this study include: primary data (anti-Islamic expressions to Islamic faith gathered from Yoruba-Muslims) and an interview guide. Multi-stage sampling technique, comprising simple random sampling and stratified random sampling, was used to select and categorise the available data. First, simple random sampling was employed for selection of primary data. Thereafter, educated people in secondary schools and uneducated residents of the visited areas were purposively selected and considered for interview. Finally, stratified random sampling was deployed to group the primary data based on their compatible features into three strata (each stratum containing three data with labels A, B, C) for analysis. Therefore, the total number of analysed data in the three strata is nine (9) respectively.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Stratum Data 1: (***denoting aberration of Islamic religious symbolic attachments***)

a.) Òfin tí ó mú éégún lómú ẹlẹ́haà. (Meaning: **the binding law on a masquerade does on *eleha* (*niqab*-using female Muslim)**).

b.) Ẹlẹ́ha tórí sandíìnì, gẹ̀gẹ́ se gẹ̀gẹ́ ni. (Meaning: **If *eleha* meets with sardine, she comes to terms with it**)

c.) Ìyáa Súnà aborí mábo ìwà, ìbòrí kò jẹ́ kí ámọ ìyá àjẹ́. (Meaning: ***Sunnah*-practicing lady covers nudity but not modesty; cape conceals the identity of a witch**)

S: Settings and Scenes: The common places to hear these utterances are informal setups like local ceremonial occasions, market squares and compounds populated by extended family members.

P: Participants: The common Sayers of (a and b) are males, females, the young and adults of little or no Islamic knowledge about the beauty and reward attached to *niqab.* Also, utterance (c) users are commonly seen among females of different ideologies to Islamic dress-code and of people with malicious opinion towards *hijab*.

E: End: Utterances (a and b) utterers reveal the utterers' dearth of understanding of acceptable Islamic appearance and its difference from *Egúngún* (a traditional demi-god in Yoruba land) and sardine (canned fish). Their orientation stems from the fact that the identities of any female under Islamic *pudah* (general word for Islamic attire comprising *niqab* used for total covering and *hijab* used for partial covering of Muslim females nudity) and those of *Egúngún* and sardine are concealed and therefore forbidden for anyone to know, except the rightful ones and initiates in traditional belief as the case may be. Meanwhile, utterance (c) users show total lack of respect for covering of nudity and *sunnah* (prophetic actions and sayings) as they verbally proscribe those that use *hijab* on their humanly flaws. More ironically, its users are falsefully portrayed as evils and magical people as they are called 'ìyá àjẹ́' - Yoruba equivalence to 'witch'; this powerful but false attachment consequently disinterests some other female Muslims from using *hijab*.

A: Act Sequence: Utterances (a and b) apply in scenarios of unwarranted analogy and identity confusion among Yoruba-Muslims. However, utterance (c) is used in relation to cases of abuse, particularly among uneducated female Yoruba-Muslims to spark malicious innuendo leveled against Muslim women.

K: Key: While utterances (a and b) have undertones of humour accompanied with mockery in negligent manner, utterance (c) can be regarded as being serious and sarcastic in tone and manner, laced with hatred and malice against Islam.

I: Instrumentality: The media used in all the utterances are Yoruba and borrowed words (sardine and *sunnah*) but with different orientations in diverse environments to pass comments

and to buttress points in relation to the common ideology of the users' co-participants. Commonly, users of utterances (a and b) follow up their sayings with hand-on-the-face gesticulation. Conversely, users of utterance (c) brace up their sayings with both bold-eyeing and top-bottom wipe of their head.

N: Norm of Interaction and Interpretation: Islamic leaders are unanimously unhappy about the way *hijab* is untruly termed and disrespected. Different Islamic sects comprising the *Zumurahs* (known as Màkóndòró), the *Sunnis* (considered as moderate *sunnah*-practicing Muslims), the *Salafys* (popularly considered as ardent *sunnah*-practicing Muslims) and the *Sufists* (commonly known as the ascetic Muslims) are discontented based on the way Yoruba-Muslims derogatorily demean the essence of *hijab* as a successful Islamic practice. Hence, each of them wants such expressions to be totally dumped by all their users.

G: Genre: Each of the utterances (a and b) is now regarded as riddle (*Àlọ*) in form of humour in the midst of Yoruba-Muslims of little or no religious awareness; utterance (c) is placed in position of Satire (*Èyà Àrò*), gradually becoming colloquial expression among Yoruba-Muslims.

Stratum Data 2: (***denoting irrelevant analogy between traditional gods and Islamic monotheism***)

a.) Èsù tí atimọ̀ lọ́jọ́ pípẹ́, ósàn ju màláíkà tí a sẹ̀sẹ̀ mà lọ. (Meaning: **The devil that is long known is better than the angel recently known**)

b.) Àáfà tí yíò mú èsù, yíò pẹ́ ní oríta. (Meaning: **For an Islamic cleric to capture the devil, it requires a long stay at T-junction**)

c.) Eégúñlá níún kẹ́yín ìgbàlẹ̀, Àáfàñlá nín kẹ́yín másálási. (Meaning: **Grand masquerade leaves the groove last, great Islamic cleric leaves the mosque last**)

S: Setting and Scene: The first two utterances are always used in environments with dominant hooliganism and insecurity while the

third one is dominantly used in informal setups and during ceremonies.

P: Participants: Users of utterances (a and b) cuts across both genders of various ages, particularly the adults. Users of utterance (c), however, are commonly Islamic representatives in form of clerics.

E: End: Utterances (a and b) speakers here are usually dubious and reckless in their dealings. Many people in this category are either nominal-Muslims or seekers of spiritual support from traditional worshipers, and thereby subscribe to their notion too. This shows their preference for the devil over angelic or Godly means in as much as they accomplish their desires; because they belief he (the devil) is insurmountable in life. Nonetheless, utterance (c) described the poor mentality of its Sayers who needlessly draw comparison between two opposite figures of the two sectors - *Àáfà* (a leader/scholar of Islamic faith) and *Egúngún* (a demi-god who traditional believers worship and pay obeisance to). In fact, their comparison of places of worship (mosque and groove) affirms their knowledge that both are for religious purposes; whereas mosque is simply attached to Islamic purity while groove is Yoruba traditional place of worship which is attached to initiation and reverencing of notable figures in traditional Yoruba belief (religion).

A: Act Sequence: Utterance (a) usage environment is political space; utterance (b) is commonly heard in competitive (e.g. football, wrestling) boasting and political campaign scenarios; utterance (c) is always used in cases of religious eulogy

K: Key: Utterance (a) has uninformed counteractive analogical tone and spirit of evil; utterance (b) contains confident and pompous tone; utterance (c) is embedded with hyperbolically emphatic tone and lack of contextual sensibility.

I: Instrumentalities: Apart from the borrowed Arabic word – *Àáfà,* other lexical items in the three utterances of this stratum are rendered through Yoruba language. Utterances (a and b) are employed in interviews and debates to gain advantage over their

adversaries. In the process, they do accompany each of their words with use of thumb behind their shoulders and index finger marauding in front of their faces. Utterance (c) is commonly pronounced in clerical monologues to ascertain a person's importance in the midst of others.

N: Norms of Interaction and Interpretation: All well-meaning Muslims count these as insulting and detrimental to the holiness of Islam, hence the assertions are considered as rejected, unfound and unworthy of Islamic monotheism. This is based on the fact that there is no iota of concomitance between a religion of polytheism and Islam which purely symbolizes monotheism.

G: Genre: The type of utterances (a and c) are now being regarded as dead metaphors because attempts to put stoppage to using them proof very difficult. Utterance (b) is considered a declaration on the ground of general day to day casual saying which is gradually becoming Eulogy (*Oríkì)* to those it is ascribed to.

Stratum Data 3: (***denoting total lack of respect for Islamic scholars and clerics***)

a.) Àáfà jóná ẹ̀ún béére irungbọ̀n. (Meaning: **Never mind searching for beard from (the body of a burnt Islamic cleric**))

b.) Ọ̀lẹ ún tẹ̀lé Àáfà, alágbára ún tẹ̀lé olówó. (Meaning: **Weak disciples follow Islamic scholars, strong entourage accompany the rich**)

c.) Àwọn Ààfáà ọ̀fa tẹ̀sùbáà fa iná mára. (Meaning: **Rosary-using Islamic clerics draw the Hell-fire closer to themselves**)

S: Setting and Scene: The common physical space for utterances (a and b) is lowly-educated society during scenes of jest. Utterance (c) can be heard in circumstances of animosity and ill-opinion against an acclaimed Islamic-cleric.

P: Participants: Usual Sayers of utterances (a and b) are Islamic-knowledge illiterates. Utterance (c) is realizable mostly by less-cautious groups within Yoruba-Muslims.

E: Ends: Utterances (a and b) are purposely used by their Sayers to make jest of another person in the geographical milieu; while

utterance (a) is used as a form of allusion, utterance (b) is employed as form of comparison to buttress their statements. The scholarly value and religious leadership of Islamic-clerics is so disreputable to such users to the extent that they allude their beard (a strong Prophet M/uhammad's recommendation for identification of a good and sincere Muslim) to nothing than burning and only represent their social prestige by 'weakness'. Utterance (c) is mainly unleashed by its users to hurt their antagonist's feeling, regardless of who is present at the occasion and what possible sentiment their words may generate from both Muslims and non-Muslims.

A: Act Sequence: The common environment of utterance (a) is domestic milieu when its users want to clear all doubts; utterance (b) occurs in informal scenarios where levels of caliber and social class level is under debate; utterance (c) comes to play in purely circumstances of heated argument between two or more conflicting ideologies.

K: Key: Utterance (a) possesses a tone of being valueless, high sense of mockery and lack of respect; utterance (b) is employed with a tone of inferiority and sense of disregard; utterance (c) comes with a great deal of sentiment, abusive tone and spirit of confrontational battle.

I: Instrumentalities: The medium of expression of all the utterances is oral. But more emphatically, utterances (b and c) are usually pronounced with a specially prolonged tone of voice. This always applies with back and forth hand-swipe gesture and rosary-counting hand demonstration. Nevertheless, utterance (a) rendition is heard in sarcastic verbal juxtaposition, in fact, it is said in conjunction with their hand on jaw gesticulation for 'beard'.

N: Norms of Interaction and Interpretation: Islamic scholars consider the users of (a and b) utterances as transgressors and incautious Muslims. This is because they berate and undermine the virtue and value of their religious leaders to the lowest of the low. Utterance (c) users are considered discriminating and self-praising

as against the Qur'anic order of Allah (SWT); no one should pride himself good for only Allah knows the pious.

G: Genre: Utterances (a and b) are more or less treated as jokes and casual expressions. To be more explicit, they are used on a daily bases among many Yoruba-Muslims. Meanwhile, utterance (c) fills the position of invective and verbal eruption to gain the effect of satire (*Èyà Àrò*).

Summary Tables for Data Discussion

Na	Schools in Each Local Government Areas and other Localities Visited (Numbers of Respondents are Indicated in the Brackets)				Respondents Percentage by Numbers
Osun State	Iwo **Schools**: Kazybal Schools(2); Iwo Grammar School(1) **Localities**: Kara Area(2); Agbo Owo(1)	Ejigbo **School**: Muslim Commercial High School(1); Unity High School(2) **Localities**: Ife Odan(1); Idi-Igba(1)	Odo-Otin **Schools**: Odo-otin Grammar School(1); Inisa Grammar School(1) **Localities:** Okuku(1) ; Oyan(1)	Ilesa-East **Schools**: Muslim Comp. College(2); Ijesa Muslim Grammar School(1) **Localities**: Oke Ooye(1); Sabo Irojo(1)	11 (55%) 9 (45%)
Oyo State	Ibadan-SouthWest **Schools**: Ansar-U-Deen High School(2); Ibadan Boys High School(1) **Localities**: Ring Road(1); Apata(1)	Iseyin **Schools**: Anwar-Ud-Deen Secondary School(2); Muslim Sec. Grammar School (2) **Localities**: Osoogun(1), Ado Awaye(1)	Ona Ara **Schools**: Community Gram. School Akanran(1); Zumratul-Hujaj Comm. Sec. School(2) **Localities**: Idi Osan (1)	Ogbomosho North **Schools**: Owode Community Grammar School(1); Nurudeen High School(2) **Localities**: Sabo(1); Aare Ago (1)	13 (65%) 7 (35%)

Lagos State	Ikeja **Schools**: Afraz Schools(2); Oke-ira Junior School(1) **Localities**: Maryland(1); Ojodu(1)	Badagry **Schools**: Ikoga Senior Grammr School(2); Lagos State Sr. Model College(1) **Localities**: Ajara; Ebute Olofin(1); Kankon(1)	IfakoIjaye **Schools**: Ifako Ijaye Sr. Comp High School(1); Iju Jr. Grammar School (2) **Localities**: Iju(1); Ajegunle(1)	Agege **Schools:** Orile Agege Comm Jr. High School (1); Alhikmat College (2) **Localities**: Eterland Busstop(1); Dopemu(1)	12 (60%) 8 (40%)
Kwara State	Ilorin-East **Schools**: Govt. Day Junior Sec. School, Ojagboro(2) ; Ansarul-Islam Sec. School, Marafa-Oja(2) **Localities**: Alagbado(1)	Ilorin-South **Schools**: Ansarul- Islam Sec. School, Oke Aluko(2); Harmony College, Kilanko(1) **Localities**: Tanke(1); Sango(1)	Ilorin-West **Schools**: IQRA College, Ilorin(2); Government High School, Adeta(1) **Localities**: Gaa Odota(1); Ita Ogunbo (1)	Asa **Schools**: Government s sec. School, Afon(1); Govt Day Sec School, Aboto-Oja(2) **Localities**: Ote(1); Alapa(1)	13 (65%) 7 (35%)
Total	Summation of all 80 respondents from the four states				Schools: 49 = 61.25% Localities: 31 = 38.75

Table 1: Places Visited in each Local Government Areas across the Four States

Name of States	**Respondents Information and Results of Findings by Number**							
	Gender		Age		Educational Status		Yoruba Proficiency	
	Male	Female	Below 30 & 50	Below 50 & 70	Educated	Not Educated	High	Low
Osun	13	7	5	15	11	9	19	1
Oyo	12	8	9	11	13	7	20	0
Lagos	9	11	8	12	12	8	18	2
Kwara	11	9	10	10	13	7	20	0
Total	**45**	**35**	**32**	**48**	**49**	**31**	**77**	**3**

Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Information and Results according to the States

Percentage of Respondents Common Knowledge and Usage of the Expressions per Stratum Data across the Four States				
States	**Stratum 1**	**Stratum 2**	**Stratum 3**	**Total**
Osun State	A and C are commonly used	A and C are commonly used	A and B are commonly used	6 of 9 commonly used = **66.7%**
Oyo State	A, B and C are commonly used	A, B and C are commonly used	A and B are commonly used	8 of 9 commonly used = **88.9%**
Lagos State	A and C are commonly used	A and C are commonly used	A and B are commonly used	6 of 9 commonly used = **66.7%**
Kwara State	A and C are commonly used	A and C are commonly used	A, B and C are commonly used	7 of 9 commonly used =**77.8%**

Table 3: Respondents Information Guiding Data Analysis

Discursion of Findings

Based on the consideration of the data for this work, it was discovered that Yoruba speakers, both Muslim and non-Muslims are very creative with words. However, their creativity has led to formation of three categories of anti-Islamic utterances which are popularly wrongly used by Yoruba-Muslims; they include: the ones denoting aberration of Islamic religious symbolic attachments, the ones denoting irrelevant analogy between traditional belief and Islamic monotheism, and the ones denoting total lack of respect for Islamic scholars and clerics.

It was equally found from the *norms of interpretation and interaction* of Yoruba-Muslims that the unguarded utterances of some of them practically work against the teachings and norms of Islam; their users employ them only for satisfaction of their own wishes in different occasions due to regarding them as a *genre* of the language; they therefore use them to represent dead metaphors, casual jokes (which occurs mostly as proven with five (5) data, the highest represented of all with 55.5%), humours, and colloquial utterances.

Consequent to this, the *Ends* segment of the data analysed has shown that the Yoruba philosophical orientation interference has alarmingly had its effect on the Islamic ideology of many Yoruba-

Muslim users of the utterances. Hence, they do not consider their assertions as sacrilegious to Islam but as normal day to day expressions; though, the context of situations always have a great control on the most popular *keys* used in the realization of the utterances such as the use of serious and comparative tone of voice, accompanied with myriad forms of gesticulations to suit their contextual intentions.

The *settings* of the utterances also revealed that surprisingly, educated Yoruba-Muslims use the expressions mostly as shown in the 49 (61.25%) respondents from educational environments against 31 (38.75%) from domestic localities. However, there is a slight difference in the range of *participants* from both genders in the use of the utterances as 45 male respondents representing 56.25% and 35 female respondents representing 43.75% proof their difference; the expressions are therefore varied according to their contexts of usage.

Similarly via *instrumentality* segment of the theory used, it was discovered that Yoruba-Muslim users of the utterances employ them in both monologues and dialogues with plenty non-verbal cues. This is because the utterances always follow the sequence of discourse and conversational turn-taking between two or more parsons as the case may be. It was also detected via the data that the most abused type of human in Islam by Yoruba-Muslims is *Afas* (Islamic clerics). Out of all the nine utterances in the data, five (5) of them, which represent 55.5% are premised around *Afa*, three utterances more than its closest utterances on *Eleha*.

Finally, it was shown that most Islamic clerics and some ardently-cultured Muslims frown at the use of the utterances, no matter what the case may be. However, some unguided ones are bent on the use of some of the utterances to disprove certain acts in Islam itself.

Recommendations

It is recommended that linguistic researches are also carried out on anti-Christian expressions. It affords the two religions sanctify in Nigeria through the power of language without causing harm on believers in traditional mode(s) of worship.It is likewise recommended that Islamic scholars intensify their effort on preaching the essence of good utterances and discourage anti-religious speeches. Godly-assigned punishments should equally be emphasised for any Muslim that goes against the stated rulings in the Qur'an and Prophetic Hadith.

It is indeed recommended that parents and guardians orientate their children on Islamic manners of communicating with people of diverse understanding in Islamic way. This determines the trajectory of the children to good interlocutors and good ambassadors of Islam in any socio-cultural or socio-ethnic milieu they find themselves.

Finally, it is suggested that Islamic basic schools and colleges incorporate *a system of Islamic speaking* into their existing curriculum. This grooms the children simultaneously with the modern system of learning and drastically reduces Muslim speakers' poor and unscrupulous utterances against their own religion until such act totally fades away.

Conclusion

Each religion has its etiquettes and principles of operation. For Islam, unguarded speeches and sayings in all manners are totally abhorred because language is considered a powerful tool that can either make or mare the essence of anything on Earth. It is thus not accidental for this research work to use a sociolinguistic theory in exploring one of the ills of Yoruba-Muslims use of the Yoruba language which directly shows their credence as Muslims. Since researches have proven that God (Allah) created the Earth via words, little or nothing can survive without gaining its strength from proper use of words and utterances.

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