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Effect of Indigenous Language Interference on the Yoruba People Proficiency in English: A Syntactic Approach

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A B S T R A C T

A common phenomenon in a multilingual nation, especially a nation where a second language exists among different native languages, is the 'linguistic interference' which impedes effective communication among the people that use such a second language. This issue could be attributed to the fact that the second language users do not have all-encompassing knowledge of the rules which guide the use of the language. This research takes a run at finding out the effect of interference of indigenous language on proficiency in English (in both oral and written communications) among Yoruba People in Nigeria. This study focuses on the linguistic interference which usually occurs at the syntactic level of the indigenous language (Yoruba) and the Nigerian 'lingua franca' (English). The research adopts a descriptive survey method and error analysis approach for data analysis. The findings of this study show that the second language users of English bring the knowledge of the rules and features of their native languages into existence in the use of English in communication. This results in ungrammatical expressions in their everyday communication.

A R T I C L E I N F O

I.   INTRODUCTION

Recognising differences in features of languages, particularly the second language and the indigenous languages in a multilingual nation, is of great significance. This is because every community has 'natural order of thoughts' which is usually expressed by 'order of words' (Chomsky, 1965). Failure to be cognizant of this by the second language users results in coming up with very simple structures of the second language, based on the knowledge of the lexical features of their indigenous languages, for communication in their respective communities. And Chomsky (1965) asserts that the 'acceptability' of an expression (a sentence) in a speech community does not warrant its 'grammaticalness'. To him, for a sentence to be 'acceptable', it means that such a sentence is capable of portraying clearly, the idea or message for which it is used for among members of a speech community, while the 'grammaticalness'

of a sentence lies in its conformity to the rules guiding the structures of a language within which it is used. Chomsky uses some pairs of sentences to explain the concept of acceptability and grammaticalness. One of the pairs of these sentences is:

1. I called up the man who wrote the book that you told me about.
2. I called the man who wrote the book that you told me about up (p.11).

He continues his description of the two sentences by saying that the first sentence, because of the simplicity in the order of words, seems to be acceptable but not grammatically correct. Contrarily, the second sentence might be rejected because of the strange arrangement of words (that is, the preposition 'up' which immediately follows the verb 'called' in the first sentence, but comes last in the second one, or placed side by side with other preposition in the second sentence), but it is the grammatically correct one (Chomsky, 1965). He clarifies this assertion by saying that a sentence could be grammatical but meaningless if the structure does not conform to selection and insertion rules of 'the lexicon' which feature in his second model to language study (Chomsky, 1965; Olujide, 2016). Chomsky's popular sentence used to buttress this is, 'colourless green ideas sleep furiously'. This expresses the fact that syntax cannot be disconnected from semantics, a branch of linguistics whose focus is on meanings of words and/or other grammatical structures (Olujide, 2016).

No two languages are similar in structures and features. What causes linguistic interference among different languages is the disparity in features at different levels (phonological, morphological, syntactic levels and so on). At the syntactic level of languages, which is the focus of this study, the structure of words varies from one language to another. To exemplify this, the arrangement of adjectives and nouns in Yoruba and English languages is different. Let us consider the structure of the phrases in the table below.

Table 1

S/N	Yoruba Form	English Form
1.	maalu dudu **Noun** **Adjective**	black cow **Adjective** **Noun**
2.	Omobinrin sisanra **N** **Adj.**	Fat girl **Adj.** **N**

Based on the illustration above, it is obvious that the position of adjective (Oro Asapejuwe) and noun (Oro Oruko) in Yoruba language is not the same as we have in English. The noun in Yoruba language comes before the adjective that qualifies it, whereas in English, an adjective prequalifies a noun as we can see in the above examples; except if an adjective performs a predicative function in an utterance/a sentence, that is, occurring at the end of a sentence, functioning as a verb complement or giving additional information about the subject of such a sentence. If the users of languages, that is, people who use a second language along with their mother tongues are unable to distinguish between structures of their L1 and L2, it leads to linguistic interference whereby the

knowledge of their indigenous language negatively affects the learning and use of the second language.

Ellis (1997), in Idris (2016) and Aje (2019) puts, "interference is a transfer, that is, the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2" (p.11 & p.18 respectively). According to Idris (2016), the theorists of interference believe that the acquisition of the first language usually influences the performance of the native users of such a language in subsequent language acquired. The linguistic interference could be negative or positive. The negative interference is when the knowledge of the first language constitutes a major problem in learning or using the second language. If on the other way, the learning and proficient use of the second language is facilitated by the indigenous language, it is called positive interference (Idris, 2016). Aje (2019) reports that Ellis has the thought that one can understand the concept of interference of two languages, as errors in the second language can be traced back to the indigenous language (Ellis, 1997, in Aje, 2019). Errors can be defined as the use of words, speech or grammatical items in a way that show imperfectness and an incomplete acquisition or learning of a second language. Errors are seen as constant deviations that happen when a learner has not fully absorbed the study of a concept, thereby making such a learner continually get it wrong (Norrish, 1983, from https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/erroranaly sis- (linguistics). Hendrickson explained that errors are 'signals' that show an actual learning process taking place, and that a well-structured competence in the target language has not yet been mastered or displayed by the learner (Hendickson, 1987, from https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/erroranaly sis-(linguistics). Additionally, errors are deviations from the rules of the use of a language which cause a breakdown in communication (Ajayi, 2007). The errors of the second language users of English

can be easily identified by the natives of English language and the highly educated ones. Ajayi (2007) explains that studies have revealed that most Nigerian top level medical doctors, professors and other professionals working and studying in Britain are facing serious problems of being understood when communicating in English with the native speakers and the educated people in that country. This is because, according to him, the major effect of errors on communication is that they cause intelligibility failure. From the above definitions of errors, it is quite clear that errors are systematic or constant deviations that the second language users are not conscious of, which are caused by indigenous language interference on the second language. Anefnaf (2017) posits that the main cause of committing errors in the process of second language learning is the L1 (Anefnaf, 2017, from https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/error_anal ysis-(linguistics). The behaviourists opine that language acquisition or learning was a question of habit formation, and it could be facilitated or hindered by existing habits. Hence, the difficulties experienced in learning certain structures are caused by the differences between learner's L1and L2 (Idris, 2016). Idris posits that the greater difference between two languages, the more negative effect of interference is expected. Bamisaye (2006) comprehensively explains the alterations that do occur to the Standard English variety (i.e. Native English) as a result of the interference of indigenous languages within the Nigerian community. The synopsis of her work is that the structure of English, as a foreign language chosen to be the language of communication in Nigeria, has been modified to become a fit to the Nigerian context in the process of communication. The alterations of the elements of English, which results from the indigenous language interference, can be seen at phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic levels and so forth (Bamisaye, 2006).

Many studies have been carried out in the area of the indigenous language interference on the second language, among these studies are Idris (2016), centred on the influence of the native language on the use of English question tags; Ogundipe (2018) which probes the teaching of reading, of which a heading deals with mother tongue interference on the effective teaching and learning of English reading comprehension; Aje (2019) investigates the interference of the first language on the acquisition of English, to mention a few. These three aforementioned studies are pertinent to this present study in the sense that all of them inspect the influence of native languages on the use/learning of English as a second language. The points of divergence of those previous studies from this present study are the type (i.e. level) of language interference and the methods employed for data collection and analysis. This is because the present study is preoccupied with the linguistic interference that betides at the syntactic level of Yoruba and English languages. Also, error analysis (hereafter, EA) and aspects model (henceforth, AM) of Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar (henceforward, TGG) are used for data analysis.

The inception of EA can be traced to the effort of Corder in the 1960s to find an appropriate approach that would seek into the deficiencies that occur in the acquisition of the second language (Idris, 2016). In the second language acquisition, the aim of EA is to study the types and causes of language errors. It is an alternative approach to contrastive analysis which the behaviourists used in the study of human habits in relation to the acquisition of the second language, i.e. the negative relationship between the mother tongue and the second language (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/error_anal ysis-(linguistics). EA is an aspect of applied linguistics which is aimed at identifying the errors of the second

language users of a language, especially English, so as to determine whether such errors are systematic (that is, constant) or unsystematic (occasional as a result of the state of emotion of a second language user and/ or slips of tongue). Also, the probable task in EA is the explanation of the causes of errors. Corder identified some steps to be taken in EA, these are: collection of samples of learner language (that is, gathering the expressions of the second language users or learners), identification of errors, which involves bringing out the deficiencies in the expressions, description or explanation of the identified errors− giving a clear explanation of the cause of such errors, and evaluation or correction of the errors, which is the last step where the analyst has to write the correct form of the wrongly used expressions by the second language users (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/error_anal y   sis-(linguistics).

TGG's birth certificate was signed and championed by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s as a reaction against the traditional and structural grammarians that were prescriptively and structurally inclined in their studies and descriptions of language. The two approaches (traditional and structuralist approaches) to language study, prescribe rules for the use of a language, e.g. English, and accentuate 'structure (i.e. surface structure)' as the utmost important concept to the study and analysis of language, without being considerate of the relationships which ought to exist between different elements of the language before effective communication takes place. So, Chomsky criticizes these two earlier approaches for being prescriptive (i.e. recommending and imposing rules) rather than being descriptive, that is, presenting language as it is, showing how it works by giving explicit descriptions of the relationships that must exist among different lexical items of the language (Chomsky 1965, Olujide, 2016). Additionally, one of the aims of TGG is to evaluate the use of a

language by other users, e.g. English language used by non-native speakers.

Chomsky's approach to language study is mentalistic in nature, as he believes that language is an expression of the underlying behaviours of the speaker-hearer (Chomsky, 1965, Barman, 2012). Also, TGG is seen as being analytic in its approach. This is because TGG creates a small set of rules which can assist in bringing into being, the correct combinations of words, viable for the formation of grammatical or correct sentences. The founder of TGG was successful in his effort by using algorithm (a precise step-by step plan for a computational procedure that begins with an input value which yields an output in any computational task of quantifying and describing an infinite number or concept) to predict all grammatically correct sentences (Barman, 2012; Olujide, 2016).

Chomsky (1965) says that "a fully adequate grammar must give a structural description to a boundless range of sentences, showing how these sentences are comprehended by the ideal speaker-hearer (p.5)". So, his second theory/model of syntax, aspects model, came into existence to correct the misconceptions in the first theory/model called 'syntactic structures model', in order to actualize the above quotation. Aspects model contains three main components which are syntactic, semantic and phonological components. The syntactic component, the focus of this study, contains a system of rules, under which two subcomponents are identified, namely: 'base', a set of rules and 'transformational component', which focuses on changes in structure that occur to a sentence through the processes of substitution, addition, rearrangement, deletion and so on. The base is a subcomponent, comprising a set of rules which are phrase structures or categorial rules that are used to explain the grammatical functions of different phrase components of a sentence, so as to determine the abstract underlying order,

called deep structure; and the lexicon which is mainly concerned with the selection and insertion of appropriate lexical items in the specified position in the base phrase-markers (Olujide, 2016). For the purpose of this study, selection and insertion rules (the lexicon) are preferably employed for analysis. The lexical features in the lexicon, as contained in his model−AM, are transitive and intransitive verb restrictions, subject-verb restrictions, verb-noun restrictions, the common-proper noun restrictions, countable-uncountable noun restrictions, determiner and noun restrictions, and the concrete-abstract noun restrictions (Olujide, 2016).

Transitive and intransitive verb restrictions for instance, show that some verbs are usually accompanied by obligatory objects, NPs; verbs of which are indicated as [+___NP], e.g. 'kill, slapped, beat etc. The sign '+' in the bracket means 'plus', that is, an 'NP' required, while the long horizontal line after the sign shows the position of the verb before the required 'NP'. On the contrary, some verbs are not suppose to be accompanied by obligatory objects (i.e. NPs); these verbs are entered as [-___NP], examples are 'died, cry' and so forth. The small line, looking like dash in the bracket, represents 'minus' while the long one indicates the position of the verb that does not require an 'NP'. Nevertheless, Olujide states it clearly that some verbs could be used both transitively and intransitively. For example, the verb 'run' can be used as transitive or intransitive, depending on where (sentence) it is used. In the sentences, 'they run their father's company' and 'I was asked to run'; 'run' is used as [+____NP] in the first sentence, and as [-___NP] in the second one. She therefore concludes that what lexical feature that a verb has relies on its semantic interpretation−meaning (Olujide, 2016).

Subject-verb restrictions lay down guiding rules in the use of nouns as subjects of sentences and the appropriate verbs that can be used with them in the

formation of grammatical sentences. Nouns that name humans are indicated as [+human] nouns, while nouns that do not refer to humans are termed [-human] nouns. Also, verbs can be indicated as [+human] as well as [-human]. Therefore, the use of a [+human] noun with a [-human] verb constitutes incompatibility in structure, which leads to an ungrammatically formed sentence. In addition, some attributes are common to both animals and humans, e.g. animals can move, run, see, or feel pain like human beings. Hence, another category of nouns that includes both animals and humans are needed. So, nouns like elephant, lion, woman, boy, are labelled with the feature [+animate] while nouns like soil, grass, food, are identified as [-animate]. The verbs that cannot be used with the inanimate nouns are termed [-[-animate]-] verbs, examples of these verbs are taste, smell, bite; while those verbs that permit animate nouns are identified as [+ [+animate] +] verbs (Olujide, 2016). In addition, we can sum the lexical features of 'the lexicon' which are listed, and some that are explained above, to only one. This can be referred to as 'lexical items restrictions' which give explicit descriptions of the relationships among different classes of words, and other lexical items which might not be mentioned in the identified restrictions in the formation of the grammatical sentences (that is, what class of words or lexical item can be used with the other in a sentence and vice versa). To crown it all, syntactic component of aspects model specifically states for each sentence, a deep structure that figures out its semantic interpretation and surface structure which determines its phonetic interpretation (Olujide, 2016; Nordquist, 2019).

II. METHOD

This research employs a descriptive survey method and error analysis approach, using qualitative data since the purpose of the research is to identify the erroneous English expressions which are caused by indigenous language interference. According to Patrick (2000, as cited in Ogundipe, 2018), a descriptive survey method attempts to describe, find out and interpret conditions, events and trends that are developing. It is also defined as a method of obtaining information from a group that represents the entire population as event unfolds. Error analysis approach, being the second method used for data analysis, is a linguistic activity that involves the collection of samples (English expressions) of second language users/learners, identification of errors from the expressions, explanation of the causes of the identified errors and evaluation/correction of those errors. Hence, the data collected for this study are given a comprehensive qualitative analysis/description.

Thirty (30) respondents are randomly selected for the study among the second users of English from Yoruba, of which ten (10) were upper primary school pupils; ten (10) secondary school students; whilst the remaining ten (10) were adults who have graduated from higher institutions. Data are collected from the upper primary school pupils through observation of their conversations and orally assigned Yoruba sentences which they are asked to translate to English language. An inquiry instrument (a paper); containing Microsoft typed Yoruba sentences, is given to each of the secondary school students and the graduate adults. However, these sentences are selectively assigned to the two categories of the respondents based on their level of education/qualification, and they are asked to translate them to English language.

TGG and EA have been used to analyze the sentences that are gathered from all the categories of the samples to explore the interference that occurs at the syntactic level of English and Yoruba languages. Twelve (12) sentences are selected and analyzed. Four (4) sentences out of them are analyzed, using

Chomsky's 'Aspects Model' of TGG; and EA is used to analyze the other eight (8) sentences. In addition, the analysis of data (that is, all the twelve sentences) are guided by the steps of error analysis approach which are explained in the preceding section of this study.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section gives a list of the data (sentences) gathered from the research samples, followed by the analysis and discussion of findings.

Presentation of the Ungrammatically Formed Sentences Gathered for the Study and Analysis

Sentence 1: I heard the odour of the rotten egg.
Sentence 2: Bola killed the tap.
Sentence 3: Kunle is my tight friend.
Sentence 4: He used long leg/ leg to win the contract from the Federal Government.
Sentence 5: He ate in my food.
Sentence 6: They (referring to an elderly person) said they are coming.
Sentence 7: I am coming (when leaving a place to attend to another issue).
Sentence 8: People that work have no food to eat, talkless of those that do not work.
Sentence 9: I can read it off head.
Sentence 10: A forty years old man died in the village yesterday.
Sentence 11: There was go-slow at Ikorodu yesterday.
Sentence 12: I give you two minutes more.

Data Analysis

This subsection analyzes the above ungrammatical sentences used by both Yoruba adults and children, which reflect the negative effect of their indigenous language interference on the proficient use of English.

Analysis of the First Four Sentences Using Chomsky's Aspects Model

Sentence 1

_____
I *heard*   the   *odour* of the rotten egg.
V (…hearing)   **N (…smelling)**
_____

The analysis above indicates that a verb relating to the sense of hearing is used with a noun that refers to the sense of smelling. Yoruba children, and probably among other tribes who live in the Yoruba community, wrongly apply their knowledge of the mother tongue, 'Yoruba' in the formation of the above English sentence. This is caused by the notion behind the Yoruba sentence 'Mo gbo oorun'. The oro ise (verb) 'gbo', meaning 'heard', is brought into being in expressing the same sentence in English. The 'verb-noun restriction', a selection and insertion rule in Chomsky's second model states that there are some verbs that cannot be used with some nouns in English expressions. The verb 'heard' goes with the auditory aspect of human senses (that is, anything that has to do with sounds e.g. noise, music e.t.c.). The noun 'odour', on the contrary, is connected to the sense of smelling. Therefore, one cannot hear the odour or scent of a thing, rather, one perceives or smells it. The sentence should be 'I perceived or smelled the odour of the rotten egg'.

Sentence 2

_____
Bola   *killed*   the   *tap.*
    AV   **IN**
_____

In the above sentence, an animate verb is used with an inanimate noun. In Yoruba, it is common to say 'Opa ero amomiwa'. The verb-noun restriction is also applied to the analysis of this sentence. The verb 'killed' is an 'animate or human' verb (i.e. a verb that shows the action of a subject or extends the action of the subject to the object which is either an animal or a human being. The noun 'tap' is a name of thing (inanimate noun). So, it is wrong to say 'Someone killed the tap' in English; expression of which was discovered among some primary school pupils in the Yoruba community. In addition, one cannot kill a non-living thing (ordinary object); it is only living things (e.g. animals or human beings) that can be killed. 'Bola closed the tap' should be the correct version of the sentence.

Sentence 3

_____
Kunle is my *tight* *friend.*
N (human) **Adj.** **N (human)**
_____

The lexical items restrictions state that a certain lexical item cannot be used with another one in an utterance or a sentence. The above sentence is not grammatically correct because of the wrong choice of the adjective, 'tight'. The constant use of this expression in the Nigerian community, specifically Yoruba, can be traced to the Yoruba word 'timotimo' which expresses a sense of intimacy or togetherness between two people. The adjective 'tight' is grammatically used to qualify a noun (inanimate noun) that is firmly tied to another thing, or a path/space which is difficult for something or somebody to pass. However, the sentence is used as a colloquial expression which can only exist in an informal setting. Hence, the grammatical (correct) form of the sentence is 'Kunle is my bosom or intimate friend'.

Sentence 4

_____
He used *long leg/ leg to win the contract* from the Federal Government.
S **V** **NP (object)** **PP (complement)**
_____

In the above sentence, there is no structural relationship between 'long leg/ leg' and 'contract' (that is, the relationship that assures the placement of the two words in the same structure). This is caused by a Yoruba expression, 'O lo ese gungun/ese', which can be regarded as a Yoruba idiom that is used to refer to a person who knows or has an intimate relationship with the people of high prestige, people in power, and people in the highest class of the social hierarchy. The noun phrase 'long leg' or the noun 'leg' could have a structural relationship with words like 'relay race', 'football game' in athletics, e.g. 'He used his long leg to win the relay race'. But it becomes ungrammatical in English to say 'one uses one's long leg or leg to win a contract; rather, one uses one's reputation, connection or one's intimate relationship with the famous people to obtain something that is difficult for others to get. Hence, the sentence is grammatically rendered as 'He used his reputation or connection to win the contract from the Federal Government'.

Note:
AV   : Animate Verb
NP   : Noun Phrase
N   : Noun
PP   : Prepositional Phrase

IN   : Inanimate Noun   Adj   : Adjective

Analysis of the Remaining Eight Sentences Using Error Analysis Approach

STEP 1 Identification of Errors	STEP 2 Causes of Errors	STEP 3 Descriptions of Errors	STEP 4 Corrections of Errors

Sentence 5

He ate in my food.	wrong selection of a lexical item	The proposition 'in' is used in place of 'out'.	He ate out of my food.

Sentence 6

They (referring to an elderly person) said they are coming.	wrong use of a pronoun	The third person plural pronoun 'they' is used to refer to a singular person in the sentence.	He or she said that he or she was coming (indirect speech).

Sentence 7

I am coming (when leaving a place to attend to another issue).	wrong selection of lexical items	'I am coming' is wrongly used in lieu of 'excuse me please' or 'just a minute please'.	Excuse me please/ just a minute please, or I will be back shortly.

Sentence 8

People that work have no food to eat, talkless of those that do not work.	the use of a wrongly formed word	The derivational bound morpheme 'less' is wrongly attached to the free morpheme 'talk', forming the word 'talkless' which is wrongly used in place of 'let alone' or 'not to talk'.	People that work have no food to eat, let alone or not to talk of those that do not.

Sentence 9

I can read it off head.	wrong selection of a lexical item	The prepositional/adverbial phrase 'off head' is inappropriately used in this sentence.	I can read it off hand.

Sentence 10

A forty years old man died in the village yesterday.	wrong inclusion of an inflectional bound morpheme to a free morpheme, and absence of hyphen between the adjectives in the sentence	the inclusion of the plural marker 's' to the word 'years' and the absence of hyphen (-) between the adjectives 'forty' 'year' and 'old'	A forty-year-old man died in the village yesterday.

Sentence 11

There was go-slow at Ikorodu yesterday.	wrong selection of a lexical item	The word 'go-slow' is wrongly used instead of 'traffic hold-up'/traffic congestion.	There was traffic hold-up or traffic congestion at Ikorodu yesterday.

Sentence 12

I give you two minutes more.	misplacement of a lexical item	The adjective 'more' is misplaced in the sentence. It should be placed before the noun 'minutes' it qualifies.	I give you two more minutes.

This research is concerned with the effect of the indigenous language (Yoruba) interference on the use of the second language (English) in communication. From the analysis of the crucial elements of the first four sentences gathered for this study, using Chomsky's aspects model, it is discovered that Yoruba people apply their knowledge of the lexical features of Yoruba language to the use of English language in their daily communication.

Also, the analysis of the other eight sentences which is done by using error analysis approach shows similar result. For example, in the analysis of the fifth sentence, the preposition 'in' means 'ninu' in Yoruba language. So, it has become a habit to Yoruba children, and even adult sometimes, to say 'she ate in it' (Oje ninu re).

For the sixth sentence, it is common among Yoruba children, and 'a slip of tongue' to some adults to use the third person plural pronoun 'they' to refer to a single person. This is because, one of the ways that our respect is expressed when referring to an elderly person in the

Yoruba community is the use of 'won'-Oro Aropo Oruko, which is called 'pronoun' in English. There is no equivalence of this word when talking about an elderly person in English language. It is either one says he/she or him/her, depending on the gender or the position where it is used.

The error in the seventh sentence is commonly noticed among Yoruba adults and children whenever they are asking for permission to leave a gathering and attend to another thing that is different from what they are doing in the gathering. For example, someone in a meeting whose phone rings, and he wants to go out to receive the call. It is common for such a person to say 'I am coming'. This is because in Yoruba, we do say 'Mo nbo' when asking for permission to leave a gathering for a particular reason.

The use of the word 'talkless' (i.e. talk and the suffix 'less', meaning 'without' or not) in the eighth sentence is caused by the Yoruba word' kamai tiiso' which denotes negation or exclusion.

The language interference in the

ninth sentence can be traced to the Yoruba sentence 'Mo le kaa lori/ni ori'. This Yoruba expression is used to indicate one's ability to read a written information without holding the paper where such an information is found or in a direction away from the speaker's hands, or from where he/she can have access to the paper where the information to be read is. The prepositional phrase, 'off head', which performs the function of the adverb of manner, is used to refer to a mentally retarded person, and/or to modify the action of such a person. Therefore, it is wrong to say, 'I can read it off head'; but because 'Ori' (head) is mentioned in the Yoruba form of the sentence, the last phrase is translated to English as 'off head'.

As seen in the tenth sentence, it is a difficult task for Yoruba people, even the second language users of English from other tribes in Nigeria, to identify how some nouns which function as adjectives in their native languages can be correctly represented in English language. For instance, the noun 'years' which precedes the adjective 'old' is no more a noun in the context, it functions as an adjective. So, the plural marker 's' in the word 'years' is not appropriate.

The use of 'go-slow' in the eleventh sentence is caused by the Yoruba word 'Sunkere-fakere'. In a situation whereby the movement of vehicles is retarded on a road as a result of a lot of vehicles and people, Yoruba people will say 'Sunkere-fakere oko wa ni oju popo', which is simply interpreted as 'There is go-slow on the road'. Using the compound word 'go-slow' is influenced by the Yoruba word 'sunkere-fakere'.

The misplacement of the adjective 'more' in the twelfth sentence is attributed to the Yoruba word 'sii' which means 'in addition to' an already existing thing or concept, and because it ends the sentence in the above expression, it influences Yoruba people in expressing it in English. An attributive adjective, that is an adjective that prequalifies a noun, cannot be separated from the noun it qualifies. The adjective 'more' and the adjective of number, 'two', qualify the noun 'minutes'.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the collected data and the findings thereafter, it can be concluded that Yoruba people rely on their knowledge of the features of Yoruba language in using English language to communicate. As these people find themselves speaking the language that is not theirs, and the difficulties that accompany the acquisition and use of the language in their everyday communication, they bring the lexical items and knowledge of their native language into being in the use of English. This attempt leads to language interference due to the misapplication of the rules of the L1 in the acquisition of L2.

Therefore, the findings of this study will be utilitarian to all the second users/learners of English language in Nigeria, as these findings point out the need to discern the structures of English from their respective indigenous languages through thorough studies of the rules and structures of English language separately from the rules and structures of the indigenous languages.

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