



ON THE PLACE OF DIALECTS IN SELECTED YORÙBÁ VIDEO FILMS

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Abstract

Yorùbá language is a national language of over thirty million people that constitute the Yorùbá ethnic group in South West Nigeria. The language has a place of honour among its dialects as it is the only variant that is socially defined. It is used in education, religion, commerce, broadcast and print media, entertainment and other socio-political activities. Due to the status accorded the language and its commercial viability, the language has become the linguistic medium in contemporary Yorùbá video film productions. However, as one begins to watch some of these Yorùbá video films, the use of dialects becomes apparent from the first scene. Consequently, this paper explores the place of Yorùbá dialects in Yorùbá video films. The paper shows among other things that a handful of the numerous Yorùbá dialects are used in dialogue in the Yorùbá video films. The dialects are Ọ̀yọ́, Ọ̀wọ̀, Ègbá, Ìjẹ́bú Ìkálẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀sà, Ìgbómìnà and Oṅdó. Our findings show that majority of the film actors/producers are from these dialectal areas. The paper also reveals that these dialects are used for specific purpose in Yorùbá video films. These include (a) showing affection and sentiments; (b) dousing tension; and (c) showing that no Yorùbá community is linguistically homogenous. Among the dialects used in the video films however, only two (Ọ̀yọ́ and Ọ̀wọ̀) have been used to shoot full-fledged video films. The paper therefore, examines the linguistic variables peculiar to these two dialects with the aim of documenting them, thereby preserving them in written form for posterity.