A sociolinguistic survey of the Ede language communities of Benin and Togo
Volume 8
Southern Nago language area

Michael M. McHenry
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A SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEY OF THE EDE LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES

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BENIN AND TOGO

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Abstract

The Southern Nago language of southeastern Benin is part of the larger Ede language continuum. The Ede languages are spoken in the southern part of West Africa stretching from western Nigeria across Benin to the eastern part of central Togo. Among the Ede varieties, two have thus far undergone language development on a larger scale: Yoruba both in Nigeria and Benin, and Ife in Togo. A survey of the Southern Nago communities was conducted to assess whether and to what extent existing literature and literacy efforts in Yoruba could extend to these Nago communities and to determine the nature and extent of SIL’s possible involvement among these communities.

Through the administration of community and individual interviews, as well as the elicitation of word and phrase lists, the survey researchers collected data concerning: tested and reported levels of dialect intercomprehension; language vitality; language attitudes toward both written and oral forms of Nago and Yoruba; reported proficiency and attitudes regarding French; and literacy levels.

Overall, the results show high levels of comprehension of Yoruba and language attitudes toward Yoruba by native Southern Nago speakers appear to be positive. There are, however, no indications of language shift.

1. Introduction

This paper reports on a sociolinguistic survey conducted among the Southern Nago speech communities of southeastern Benin (Ouémé province). The Southern Nago variety belongs to the Ede language continuum (Defoid language group) which is situated in the southeastern part of West Africa, in southwestern Nigeria, central Benin, and in the eastern part of central Togo.

Among the Ede varieties, two have thus far undergone language development on a larger scale: Yoruba both in Nigeria and Benin, and Ife in Togo. To assess whether and to what extent existing literature and literacy efforts in Yoruba could extend to the remaining Ede communities, or whether additional language-based development programs in some of the remaining communities would be beneficial and to determine the nature and extent of SIL’s possible involvement among these communities, a sociolinguistic study of the Ede communities of Benin and Togo was launched in the early 1990s.

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1 In general, all language names are spelled using the English alphabet. For a complete listing of alternative spellings see Volume 1, Appendix B.
The sociolinguistics survey reported here is part of this larger study and was carried out in two stages between March 1992 and October 1997 by various researchers of CENALA (Centre National de Linguistique Appliquée) and the Togo-Benin branch of SIL International.

In the following sections, general background information on the Southern Nago area will be given (Section 2), followed by a presentation of the research questions (Section 3), and a description of the applied methodology (Section 4). In Section 5, the results of the survey will be discussed, followed by conclusions in Section 6. The report closes with a set of appendices and a list of references.²

2. Background information

In the following sections, pertinent background information will be presented in regard to the language situation, history of migration, as well as population, existing regional literacy programs, and the religious situation. Some of the data were gathered during community interviews.³

2.1 Language situation

This section discusses the language classification of the Southern Nago language and the area in which it is spoken.

2.1.1 Language classification

Capo (1989), building on Akinkugbe’s (1978) and Williamson’s (1989) work, proposes the following classification for Nago:

Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, (New) Benue-Congo, Defoid, Yoruboid, Edeki:

- Ede, Southwest Ede, Nago

Alternative names and spellings are:

- Nagó (Capo 1989:280)
- Ede-Nago (CENALA 1990)
- Nagots, Nagot, Ede Nago (Grimes 1996:168)

No dialects of Nago are listed either by Capo (1989) or in the Ethnologue (Grimes 1996).

According to the language map of Benin by CENALA (1990) and the corresponding map in the Ethnologue (Grimes 1996:166), there are three major Nago-speaking areas in Benin: one in the Ouémé province in southeastern Benin and two in the Atakora province of northwestern Benin.

² The author wishes to express his gratitude to D. H. Hatfield and A. Kluge of SIL Togo-Benin for the editing of this report, and to J. A. Durieux of SIL Africa-Area for his input on Section 4.
³ More general background information on the Ede language continuum and its communities can be found in Volume 1, Section 1.
The name “Nago,” as used by Capo (1989), as well as the language map of Benin by CENALA (1990) and the *Ethnologue* (Grimes 1996), denotes the Ede speech varieties in each of these areas. The Nago communities of the Ouémé province are the focus of the current study, whereas the two in the Atakora province (one set of communities located in and around Manigri and a second set of communities located further north around Alédjo-Koura) are dealt with in separate reports (see Volumes 6 and 7) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Nago areas of Benin (based on Microsoft Corporation 2002)

Both the communities of the Ouémé province as well as those located in and around Manigri in the Atakora province refer to their speech form as “Nago.” In order to distinguish these communities, Capo (1997, personal communication) suggests the term “Southern Nago” or “Nago (Southern)” for the communities of the Ouémé province and “Northern Nago” or “Nago (Northern)” for the Nago communities of the Atakora province. In this report, the language name for the Southern Nago communities will not include, for the most part, the specification “southern,” except in order to distinguish this speech variety from that of the Atakora province.

As regards the communities located north of Manigri, around Alédjo-Koura, they are included by Capo (1989:280) in his listing of Nago. However, the results of a separate study of these speech communities located in and around Kambolé in the Centre region of Togo. (See Volume 7.)
communities indicate that the Northern Nago communities and the communities around Alédjo-Koura are better viewed as two distinct speech communities than as one larger community with the local name for the Alédjo-Koura speech variety found to be “Kura” (see Volume 6).

2.1.2 Language area

The Nago communities of the Ouémé province of Benin are found starting north of Porto-Novo in the town of Daagbe and continuing north to Kétou (see Appendix A for maps of the area). To the east these communities are bordered by Nigeria, and to the west by the Ouémé river. Within this region, Nago villages and towns are spread across the sous-préfectures of Sakété (26 km north of Porto-Novo), Pobè (64 km north of Porto-Novo), Ikpinlé (between Sakété and Pobè), Adja-Ouèrè (to the west of Pobè) and Kétou (108 km north of Porto-Novo).

The *Atlas Sociolinguistique du Bénin* (CNL du Bénin 1983:59) cites the southern hamlets of Kouti and Sado, both located within 6 km of Avrankou (11 km northeast of Porto-Novo) as geographically belonging to the Nago-speaking region. However, according to J. B. Honnouvo, “Chef Division de la Planification et de l’Evaluation” of the Ouémé literacy department in Porto-Novo, and C. O. Adjibadé, literacy coordinator for the sous-préfectures of Adja-Ouèrè and Pobè (Adjibadé et al. 1997), the primary languages spoken in Sado and Kouti are Gun and Toli. During the current study, their observations were verified. Ethnically, there is a Nago presence in both villages, however, the Gun and Toli are in the majority. Consequently, these are the more commonly used languages while Nago is rarely spoken.

The Nago people of southeastern Benin have as their neighbors the Cabe and Idaca people to the north and northwest, the Maxi, Ije, Fon and the Weme to the west and southwest and the Tofin to the south. The Nigerian border forms the boundary to the east.

2.2 History of migration

The following information is taken from Parrinder’s article entitled “Yoruba-Speaking Peoples in Dahomey” (1947) in which he describes the history of migration of the Yoruba people from modern Nigeria westward into Benin and Togo.

According to tradition, hundreds, perhaps even thousands of years ago, there was a migration of Yoruba people westward, perhaps from the region of Ilesha (Oyo State, Nigeria). During the last century or two, there have been successive waves of immigrants from Nigeria. This time the immigrants were the Egba people from the region of Abeokuta (Ogun State, Nigeria). They spread from the ethnically mixed town of Porto-Novo (today containing a mix of Gun and Yoruba peoples), near the Nigerian border, northward, taking in Sakété, Pobè and Kétou. From there they spread across the ancient kingdom of Abomey, reaching the towns of Dassa-Zoumé, Savè and Kilibo.
2.3 Population

The number of (northern and southern) Nago speakers in Benin is listed by the *Ethnologue* (Grimes 1996:168) as 175,000 (an estimate based on Vanderaa 1991:75).

More recent population data were elicited during the 1992 Benin Census, which gives population totals both by ethnic group as well as by political community. Figures in the census list the total (northern and southern) Nago population as 348,563 (168,955 males, 179,608 females) (Ministère du Plan 1994a:47).

However, it is noted that both the *Ethnologue* (Grimes 1996) and the 1992 Benin Census Data refer to the combined Nago communities of the Atakora and the Ouémé province. Therefore, the number of Southern Nago speakers, i.e. those of the Ouémé province, is lower, and possibly considerably so.

The total Southern Nago population given by political communities for those villages and towns which, according to interviewed Nago elders, belong to the Nago language area in the Ouémé province is 203,173. However, the Census total given includes villages which the interviewed elders stated were not “pure Nago”. The total population for those villages with reportedly no ethnically mixed population is 103,393 (Ministère du Plan 1994b).

In addition, the 1992 Census (Ministère du Plan 1994a:47) lists the Kétou people separately from the Nago speakers, with 104 people. However, the people of Kétou are Nago speakers.

Therefore, it is estimated that the Southern Nago population falls between 100,000 and 200,000 speakers in the Ouémé province. (For further details, refer to Appendix A for maps of the surveyed area.)

2.4 Non-Formal education

In 1992, six national languages were selected by the government of Benin for non-formal adult education (Direction de l’Alphabétisation 1992): Aja, Bariba, Dendi, Ditammari, Fon and Yoruba.

Apparently it was assumed that all Ede communities in Benin will be able to use the Yoruba language for literacy, since it is linguistically close to these varieties and is the language of wider communication for these communities. (For more information on Yoruba language development, see Volume 1, Section 1.7.1.)

As far as non-formal education in the Ouémé province is concerned, J. B. Honnouvo, “Chef Division de la Planification et de l’Evaluation” of the Ouémé literacy department in Porto-Nov, and C. O. Adjibadé, literacy coordinator for the sous-préfectures of Adjja-Ouèrè and Pobè, gave the following information (Adjibadé et al. 1997):

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5 Vanderaa notes that all population figures for ethnic groups in his report are for 1990, applying appropriate growth rates to older figures for ethnic groups (1991:vi Notes).

6 It is noted here, that during the census individuals were asked to which ethnic group they belong and not which language they speak as their first language. Thus, interviewees identified with their father’s ethnic group, even though they might not speak his language nor live in the language area.

7 It is noted that the Census data does not include all villages mentioned by the informants.
Regional literacy efforts exist in Yoruba but not in Nago. The Yoruba literacy program began in 1978 in Adja-Ouèrè, Kétou and Pobè but did not start to gain in popularity until after 1980. Post-literacy work started in 1995 with evaluation of the students beginning in 1997. Strong centers ("régions fortes") of current literacy work are the sous-préfectures of Adja-Ouèrè, Ifangni and Kétou, whereas weak centers ("régions faibles") are the sous-préfectures of Pobè and Sakété and the towns of Adja-Ouèrè, Ahoyéyé, Pobè and Porto-Novo.

By October 1997, the Yoruba literacy program had been organized in two stages. The first stage consists of three primers and one arithmetic book with the focus on reading, writing, dictation and calculation. The second stage focuses on intensified reading, the continuation of the calculation course and the writing of essays. A third stage, envisioned to start possibly in 1998, may include sessions on business management, the usage of the telephone and calculator, and telling time on a watch.

It is hoped that Yoruba can be introduced in the primary schools as the language of instruction, but as of October 1997 this had not yet happened.

2.5 Religious situation

Within the traditionally animist Nago-speaking region, there exist substantial Muslim and Christian communities (Vanderaa 1991:7). Throughout the course of the survey, it was noted that in all locations, both mosques and churches were present. In each location visited by the team, the Roman Catholic church appeared to be well established. In the smaller surrounding locales, most survey subjects claiming to be Christian identified themselves as belonging to the Catholic church. However, Protestant churches such as Methodist, Baptist, “Eglise Evangélique” (Evangelical church), “Eglise Evangélique Universelle” (Universal Evangelical church), Foursquare and many African Independent Church (AIC) congregations (“Christianisme Céleste,” Omega, etc.) also exist in the region.

3. Research questions

The purpose of this survey was twofold: (1) to assess whether and to what extent existing literature and literacy efforts in Yoruba could extend to the Southern Nago communities, or whether an additional language-based development program in Southern Nago would be beneficial, and (2) to gather data that would help determine the nature and extent of SIL’s possible involvement among these communities.

For the current study, the evaluation of a need for separate literature was to be based on criteria established by Marmor (1997). More specifically, the evaluation of literature development needs was to be based on the factors of dialect intercomprehension, language vitality, and language attitudes with emphasis given to the following topics:8

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8 Answers to these research questions, as far as they can be given, are presented in Section 5.
1. Dialect intercomprehension
   - What are the geographical boundaries of the Southern Nago speech variety, which
dialects of Southern Nago, if any, exist, and what is the degree of internal
comprehension within the Southern Nago speech community?
   - What is the degree of lexical similarity between Southern Nago and Yoruba?
   - What is the level of comprehension of Yoruba throughout the Southern Nago
   communities? 9

2. Language vitality
   - What are the language use patterns in various social domains, both public and private?
   - Is the pattern of language use stable, or is language shift occurring or impending?

3. Language attitudes
   - What are attitudes toward Southern Nago and its development, with special attention
given to language development work already in progress?
   - What are attitudes toward the oral and written forms of Yoruba?

There were some additional questions, most of which are directly related to the priority and
strategy criteria outlined above and which provide updated information for the area. These
questions are:

   - What is the size of the group?
   - Which infrastructures already exist?
   - What is the education situation and literacy rate in the area?
   - What is the religious situation?

Although bilingualism was not of major concern for this survey, some data were collected in
order to provide SIL Togo-Benin administration with relevant and updated information about the
level of reported proficiency and attitudes regarding French.

4. Methodology

In the following sections, various aspects of the applied methodology are discussed: techniques,
implementation, analysis and applied terminology. 10

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9 Marmor (1997:2f) presents the following guidelines by which to draw conclusions from comprehension testing
results, along with the suggested type of SIL involvement in language development efforts (see also Volume 1,
Section 3):
   a) High intercomprehension is defined by an overall test average of “over 90% by all segments of the
      population” (under 45 years of age). In this case, it is assumed that there is no need for separate literature.
   b) Mixed intercomprehension is defined by a situation in which “no segment of the population scores below
      80%, but some segments score below 90%.” In this case the need for separate literature depends upon
      language attitudes and/or the possibility of a second dialect acquisition program.
   c) Low intercomprehension is defined as an “overall average below 70%.” In this case, there is a need for
      separate literature, or if attitudes permit, a strong second dialect acquisition program.

10 A general description of the methodology as applied for the larger Ede language continuum survey can be found
in Volume 1, Section 4.
4.1 Techniques

In order to arrive at answers to the research questions mentioned, a variety of techniques were chosen:

1. Dialect intercomprehension was assessed through:
   - Lexical similarity comparisons between Nago and Yoruba;
   - Recorded Text Testing (RTT) assessing comprehension levels of Yoruba;
   - Interviews with community elders regarding the degree of internal comprehension within the Nago speech community;
   - Self-assessed (reported) active and passive proficiency, both direct and indirect (e.g. understanding of radio programming in Yoruba), obtained through individual interviews;
   - Interviews with church elders regarding comprehension of Yoruba in the church context.

2. Language vitality was investigated through reported:
   - Language use in various domains, both public and private;
   - Language use of children and the youth for evidence of intergenerational shift.

3. Language attitudes were examined regarding:
   - Attitudes toward Nago and its development, with special attention given to language development work already in progress;
   - Attitudes toward the oral and written forms of Yoruba.

Reported data were used to assess the peripheral factors mentioned in Section 3, reported proficiency in and attitudes toward French, and literacy levels:

   - French proficiency and attitudes toward French were summarily investigated by interviewing individuals about their own and their children’s French abilities and their attitudes toward oral proficiency;
   - Literacy levels were investigated through interviews with literacy workers and individuals.

The techniques previously mentioned were carried out by use of the following tools:

1. Community interviews:
   - Community questionnaires investigating: geographical boundaries of Nago, existence of different dialects of Nago, nature of the linguistic differences among these dialects, degree of internal comprehension within the Nago language community, language vitality, and attitudes toward literacy in Yoruba;
   - Interview with the literacy department in Porto-Novo to obtain information regarding the extent of literacy work in the region (number of literacy classes, total class populations, language of instruction, general performance of students), as well as attitudes toward literacy;
− Church questionnaires exploring levels of comprehension and language use in the church context, ownership, use and understanding of written religious materials in Yoruba, and attitudes toward Bible translation.

2. Individual interviews:
− Recorded Text Testing (RTT) assessing comprehension levels of Yoruba. A personal narrative in Yoruba was recorded and a questionnaire was administered alongside the test inquiring into the subjects’ comprehension of the tested text and their general comprehension of Yoruba, as well as the subjects’ reading and writing abilities and attitudes toward literacy;
− Individual Sociolinguistic Questionnaires (ISQs) examining: language proficiency; language use with various interlocutors in different social situations; attitudes toward Nago and its development, as well as toward Yoruba and French; and literacy in these languages.

3. Word and phrase lists:
− Standardized word and phrase lists collected in Nago and Yoruba.\textsuperscript{11}

4.2 Implementation

The survey was conducted in two stages:

2. In October 1997, A. Kluge, M. M. McHenry and J. H. Schmidt (all of SIL Togo-Benin), accompanied by a Beninese research assistant, R. Aguidi,\textsuperscript{12} and a literacy worker from Pobè, J. M. Ogou, conducted the second stage of the survey. During this stage, community and individual interviews (including comprehension testing) were conducted, and data previously gathered were verified.

In the following sections, more specific information regarding the applied methodology for the second stage will be given concerning procedures, survey locations and subject selection.

4.2.1 Procedures

4.2.1.1 General procedures

With regard to the administration of questionnaires during individual interviews, it should be noted that some of the questions were omitted if during the course of the interview they were

\textsuperscript{11} No results from phrase list analysis are included in this report. A complete listing of elicited phrases is presented in Volume 1, Appendix O.

\textsuperscript{12} Aguidi, an L1 Ica speaker, has a master’s degree in linguistics from the Université Nationale du Bénin (Département d’Etudes Linguistiques et de Tradition Orale).
deemed not applicable to a particular subject. This will account for some of the results being based on numbers less than the total number of subjects.

For all interviews, whenever necessary, responses were translated into French by Aguidi, the research assistant, and/or Ogou. Neither Aguidi nor Ogou received any formal interpreter training for the community and individual interviews. However, Aguidi was involved in the design of various RTT tests in the past, and Ogou with the practice test for the current survey, thus acquiring an understanding of the nature of RTT testing.

Before the commencement of the second stage of the survey, the survey team visited the sous-préfets as well as the traditional chiefs in the language area. The purpose of these visits was to inform them of the work before starting the survey.

4.2.1.2 RTT testing

In order to help familiarize the subjects with the RTT testing procedure, the short story taken from Blair’s *Survey on a Shoestring* (1990:78) was translated into Nago, and tape-recorded, with questions interposed in Nago.13

According to the data elicited in both types of questionnaires, Nago was reported to be similar enough to Yoruba and there was such a high degree of contact with Yoruba that it was decided a hometown test was not necessary. For the same reasons, contrary to standard RTT procedure, the comprehension questions were in Yoruba rather than in Nago.

4.2.2 Survey locations

Both for community and individual interviews, an attempt was made to choose a representative sample of the surveyed Nago communities. It was assumed that subjects from more accessible or larger villages/towns might have a higher proficiency in Yoruba due to more contact with L1 Yoruba speakers. Therefore, both more accessible or larger villages, as well as more remote or smaller villages, were selected in order to compare the gathered data across locations. The following locations were chosen for the administration of community and individual interviews:

- Community questionnaires were administered in the towns of Ifangni, Kétou and Pobè.
- Individual interviews were carried out in four Nago locations; Ifangni and Ofia being the smaller and more remote villages and Ilpinlè and Kétou being the larger and more accessible towns. ISQs were administered in Ifangni and Kétou, and both RTTs and ISQs were conducted in Ilpinlè and Ofia.
- An interview was conducted with J. B. Honnouvo, “Chef Division de la Planification et de l’Evaluation” of the Ouémé Literacy Center in Porto-Novo, and C. O. Adjibadé, the literacy coordinator for the sous-préfectures of Adj’a-Ouèrè and Pobè.

13 Blair (1990:78) proposes a simple four sentence story about the purchase of a cow to train people how to take an RTT test.
Church questionnaires were administered to representatives of the Methodist and Roman Catholic churches of Ifangni, and to representatives of the Universal Evangelical and Roman Catholic churches of Pobè.¹⁴

### 4.2.3 Subject selection

Community interviews were taken from the gathered village elders in a group setting, and consensus answers were recorded. For church interviews, individual answers from the different churches represented were recorded. RTTs and ISQs were administered individually, and individual answers were recorded. The wordlists were checked with groups of long-term resident L1 Nago speakers, thus allowing for the discussion of variants, near-synonyms and synonyms. In this manner, group decisions were made about which form to include in the list, thus increasing reliability.

No effort was undertaken to obtain random samples for the RTTs and ISQs, but stratification with respect to location, gender and age was a major aim. Secondarily, inclusion of subjects of various education levels and occupations was endeavored by asking the village elders to provide candidates with different backgrounds in these respects. As a result, sample proportions by location, gender, age, education level and occupation do not necessarily correspond to like ratios of the populations sampled. Other language contact factors were also examined: residence, travel and religious affiliation.

The remainder of this section provides more detailed information as to the composition of the survey samples with regard to gender, age, location, language contact and education.

#### 4.2.3.1 Genders and ages by locations

In total, 22 subjects from four villages were interviewed, with ten of those (five in Ikpinlè¹⁵ and five in Ofia) being tested with the RTT Yoruba narrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SoGrp</th>
<th>Ifangni</th>
<th>Ikpinlè</th>
<th>Kétou</th>
<th>Ofia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISQ</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×3</td>
<td>×2</td>
<td>×7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTT+ISQ</td>
<td>×2</td>
<td>×2</td>
<td>×0</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>×2</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×2</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×1</td>
<td>×5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 6 + 6 + 5 + 5 = 22

[SoGrp = Social Group, M = male, F = female, Y = younger (15–25 years), O = older (30–45 years)]

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¹⁴ All the church representatives interviewed were L1 Nago speakers.

¹⁵ In Ikpinlè, one older female ISQ subject had lived in a Yoruba-speaking area (Porto-Novo) for 15 years and was therefore excluded from Yoruba RTT testing.
4.2.3.2 Language contact factors

Factors considered to influence the level of proficiency in Yoruba are residence in and travel to Yoruba-speaking areas. Therefore, subjects were asked about their residence and travel patterns, partly to acquire insight into the extent of such residence and travel, but mainly to screen out subjects with extensive exposure to Yoruba. A third factor considered to possibly influence proficiency levels is religious affiliation, based on the assumption that through the use of Yoruba in a church context, Christians might show higher levels of proficiency than non-Christians.

1. Residence patterns

Even though an attempt was made to choose subjects who had not lived in the Yoruba-speaking areas (e.g. Nigeria or Porto-Novó) for longer than one year, it was not always possible to exclude those subjects.

However, overall only a minority of subjects (6/22 – 32%) reported temporary residence (at least one year) in a Yoruba language area. Higher percentages for temporary residence were reported for the female (4/10 – 40%) and older subjects (4/10 – 40%) versus the male (2/12 – 25%) and younger subjects (2/12 – 25%).

2. Travel patterns

Half of the surveyed subjects (11/22 – 50%) reported traveling to the Yoruba language area (Nigeria or Porto-Novó). The results of the population sample were divided evenly with no differences across genders (male: 6/12 – 50%; female: 5/10 – 50%) and ages (young: 6/12 – 50%, old: 5/10 – 50%).

Of the subjects (11) reporting travel to a Yoruba-speaking area (Nigeria or Porto-Novó), 6/11 subjects (55%) reported a frequency greater than 12 times per year with three of them traveling there once or twice weekly. Of the remaining subjects, two subjects travel there once per month, one travels twice per year and two subjects reported having visited Nigeria only once in their lives.

3. Religious affiliation

Roughly three-quarters of the subjects reported being Christians (14/19 – 74%) and 5/19 subjects (26%) being Muslims. Three subjects, two older females and one older male, were not asked about their religious affiliation.

4.2.3.3 Education

Half of the subjects (11/22 – 50%) reported some level of formal education, among them a higher percentage of male versus female subjects (8/11 – 36% vs 3/11 – 14%), and of younger versus older subjects (8/11 – 36% vs 3/11 – 14%).

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16 All ISQ subjects reporting temporary residence had lived in a Yoruba-speaking area in Nigeria.
17 Of the subjects professing to be Christian 13/14 (93%) were Catholic and 1/14 (7%) was Protestant.
4.3 Analysis

All data from the RTTs and ISQs were analyzed without any efforts to compensate for the lack of randomness in the samples.

As a measure for the average, the arithmetic mean was used for RTT scores and the mode for questions.

4.4 Terminology

“Social Group:” A social group is a subsample defined by age category and gender, i.e. one of younger men, older men, younger women or older women.

5. Results

In the following sections, the results from community and individual interviews are presented according to the following topics: dialect intercomprehension, language vitality, language attitudes, bilingualism and attitudes regarding French, and literacy.

5.1 Dialect intercomprehension

With regard to dialect intercomprehension, three factors were examined: (1) the degree of internal comprehension within the Nago speech community, (2) the degree of lexical similarity between Nago and Yoruba, and (3) the level of comprehension of Yoruba throughout the Nago communities.

5.1.1 Internal comprehension

Neither Capo (1989) nor the Ethnologue (Grimes 1996:168) list any dialects of Nago, information which was confirmed by interviewed community elders in Ifangni, Kétou and Pobè. They stated that although slight pronunciation variations occur in the greater Southern Nago-speaking area, these variations are easily understood. Therefore, internal comprehension was not investigated further.

5.1.2 Lexical similarity to Yoruba

In order to establish the degree of lexical similarity between Nago and Yoruba, Nago wordlists were elicited in Kétou and Pobè, double-checked against those collected in 1992, and compared with a Yoruba wordlist elicited in Porto-Novo. In addition, Northern Nago wordlists from Kambolé and Manigri (Volume 7) are added to the lexical similarity matrixes given that both Capo (1989:280) and the Ethnologue (Grimes 1996:168) include the Northern Nago
communities in their listing of Nago. The lists were analyzed according to prescribed methodology in order to determine the degree of lexical similarity between these varieties.

The following results show the percent and variance matrixes. The percent matrix reports the number of lexically similar items as a percentage of the basic vocabulary, while the variance matrix shows the range of error for each count (Wimbish 1989:59).

Table 2: Lexical similarity between Ede varieties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yoruba (Porto-Novo)</th>
<th>S. Nago (Kétou)</th>
<th>S. Nago (Pobè)</th>
<th>64.9</th>
<th>64.9</th>
<th>65.0</th>
<th>N. Nago (Kambolé)</th>
<th>64.9</th>
<th>64.9</th>
<th>65.0</th>
<th>N. Nago (Manigri)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Nago</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kétou</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pobè</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the wordlist analysis show that the degree of linguistic similarity between Yoruba and the Nago of Kétou and Pobè is high at the upper confidence level of the calculations. That is, between Kétou-Nago and Yoruba the degree of linguistic similarity is 91.7% while it is lower between Pobè-Nago and Yoruba at 87.4%.

For further interpretation of results, “Language Assessment Criteria” (International Language Assessment Conference 1990:2) gives the following recommendations:

> [When the wordlist analysis results] indicate a lexical similarity between two speech forms of less than about 70% (at the upper confidence limit of the calculation), this generally indicates that these are different languages. … If the similarity is greater than 70%, dialect intelligibility testing is needed to determine how well people can understand the other speech form.

In view of these guidelines, the results of the wordlist analysis do not seem to indicate, from a lexical point of view, that Southern Nago is a different language from Yoruba. Therefore, as pointed out above, dialect intercomprehension testing is needed in order to determine how well the Nago people are able to understand Yoruba.

Regarding the degree of lexical similarity between Southern and Northern Nago, the wordlist results are somewhat ambiguous and do not clearly indicate whether or not both varieties are indeed the same language. However, since that question falls outside the focus of the current

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18 See Volume 1, Section 4.1.3 for details on the procedures.
19 See Volume 1, Appendix L for a complete listing of elicited data sorted by gloss and Appendix M for computed percentage and variance matrixes for lexical similarity between all elicited Ede wordlists.
20 Upper confidence limit = percentage + range of error (variance).
21 For the computations in Tables 2 and 3, morphemes that are apparently affixed to the form used in another variety are ignored if they occur always in the same position. Including all morphemes in the analysis results in an, overall, lower degree of lexical similarity as shown in Table 3 (see Appendix B). (See Volume 1, Appendix K for further details regarding the criteria applied for similarity groupings, Appendix L for a complete listing of elicited data sorted by gloss, and Appendix M for computed percent and variance matrixes for lexical similarity for all elicited Ede wordlists.)
22 These criteria were “approved for general use as administrative guidelines by the Area Directors and Vice Presidents” of SIL based on a statement adopted by participants of the International Language Assessment Conference in Horsleys Green, England in 1989. (International Language Assessment Conference 1990:1)
study, no further investigation was pursued as to whether Southern and Northern Nago are
distinct languages or not.

5.1.3 Comprehension of Yoruba

The level of comprehension of Yoruba throughout the Nago communities is discussed both from
tested and reported data.

5.1.3.1 Tested comprehension

The Nago people’s level of comprehension of Yoruba was tested using a Yoruba narrative.

The test score for all ten subjects tested with the RTT Yoruba narrative is 100% indicating high
levels of comprehension. (See Appendix C for a complete listing of raw scores and percentages
of correct scores.)

Following the RTT, subjects were asked to identify the origin of the narrator of the story. The
majority (8/10 – 80%) identified the narrator as a Yoruba speaker and the remaining two subjects
reported that he spoke Nago. More than half (6/10 – 60%) identified the narrator as coming
either from Nigeria\textsuperscript{23} or Porto-Novo.\textsuperscript{24} Two subjects cited the narrator’s origin as being from
different towns within the Ouémé and the remaining two subjects did not know. When asked
whether the narrator spoke Yoruba well, all subjects answered affirmatively.

Concerning the comprehension of the narrative, subjects were asked if they understood “le tout”
(all), “la plupart” (most), “un peu” (a little), “très peu” (very little), or “rien” (nothing) of the
narrative. All ten subjects responded that they understood “le tout.”

When asked if the various social groups in the village would understand the recorded test
narrative, all but one subject (9/10 – 90%) replied that the story would be understood. The one
subject, a young woman, stated that the older women of the village would not understand.

5.1.3.2 Reported proficiency

With regard to reported proficiency of Yoruba, subjects were asked if they understand and speak
Yoruba, and more specifically about their higher-level language functions.

All subjects (22/22) reported comprehension abilities in Yoruba. More specifically, subjects
were asked if they listen to radio broadcasts in Yoruba, and if so, whether they understand
everything they hear. All subjects who reported listening to radio broadcasts in Yoruba (22/22)
stated that they understand everything.

General speaking ability was reported by 15/22 subjects (68%), and 14/20 (70%) reported ability
to always say everything they want to say in Yoruba.

\textsuperscript{23} Two subjects identified the speaker as being from Nigeria; however, the third stated “Yoruba land,” an ambiguous
answer which the researcher interpreted as a reference to Nigeria.

\textsuperscript{24} One subject could not specify whether the narrator was from Nigeria or from Porto-Novo.
Compared across locations, the data do not indicate any link between geographical location and reported proficiency in Yoruba. Subjects who remain in Nago areas have as much proficiency in Yoruba as those who frequent Yoruba-speaking areas in Nigeria. Across social groups, overall, there is no considerable difference among subjects in regard to passive abilities. A higher percentage of male versus female subjects and of older versus younger subjects reported higher productive abilities in Yoruba. Concerning language contact due to residence in a Yoruba-speaking area, those who had not traveled or resided in such an area report a slightly higher proficiency in Yoruba. In regard to religious affiliation the data do not indicate a clear link between religious affiliation and proficiency of Yoruba. Subjects with formal education reported higher proficiency than those without formal education. (See Appendix D for details.)

Subjects were also asked about the Yoruba proficiency of children. When asked from which age onwards children are able to understand Yoruba, three-quarters of the subjects (14/19 – 74%) stated that children of five years or younger are able to understand Yoruba (four years or younger: 10/19 – 53%; five years: 4/19: 21%), while 5/19 subjects (26%) stated that children have to be at least six years or older. Productive abilities of their own children were only reported by 5/16 subjects (31%).

With regards to comprehension of Yoruba in the church context, church representatives reported that when the Bible is read from the pulpit the congregation’s comprehension tends to vary across a wide spectrum. Some members have their personal Bibles (1960 Yoruba translation; Bible Society of Nigeria 1960) and they are able to follow the readings; the rest of the congregation must depend on the accuracy of the reader’s pronunciation.

5.1.4 Summary for dialect intercomprehension

In regard to dialect intercomprehension three factors were examined: (1) the degree of internal comprehension within the Nago speech community, (2) the degree of lexical similarity between Nago and Yoruba, and (3) the level of comprehension of Yoruba throughout the Nago communities.

With regard to internal comprehension, community elders did not report the existence of any dialects of Nago.

As far as the lexical similarity to Yoruba is concerned, the results show a high lexical similarity (>87% at the upper confidence limit) between Nago and Yoruba, indicating that Nago is not very different lexically from Yoruba. However, it was necessary to do further investigation with comprehension testing.

Concerning levels of comprehension of Yoruba, the tested data show high scores for the Yoruba narrative (100%) indicating that the general level of comprehension of Yoruba among the Nago people is extremely high if the subjects are representative. This high comprehension could result from inherent plus acquired intelligibility of Yoruba by Nago speakers.

The high RTT results appear to be paralleled by reported data with all subjects reporting passive language abilities in Yoruba while fewer reported productive abilities.

In regard to the Yoruba comprehension of children, three-quarters of the subjects stated that children of five years or younger are able to understand Yoruba.
Concerning comprehension of Yoruba in the religious context, opinions varied on how well the congregations understand the 1960 Yoruba Bible translation.

5.2 Language vitality

Language vitality of Nago was investigated through reported data with regard to language use patterns in various social domains, both public and private, as well as to intergenerational shift.

5.2.1 Language use in private domains

During the administration of ISQs, subjects were asked which language(s) they use with various interlocutors in private domains.

All subjects reported use of Nago with their parents (22/22), spouses (17/17) and children (16/16).

In regard to language use outside the home domain, subjects reported exclusive use of Nago with Nago friends and neighbors (22/22) and with Nago elders (22/22). At work or on the farm the majority (19/20) use Nago, with three subjects using Yoruba, two subjects using French and one subject using Fon in addition to or instead of Nago.

Regarding language use by children, all subjects (22/22) reported that in their villages the children use Nago while playing with other children.

Concerning language use by the youth, interviewed subjects were asked how well, in their opinion, the youth speak Nago. All but one subject (21/22 – 95%) thought that today’s young people speak Nago “comme il faut” (as they should). The young male subject who replied negatively said that the youth mix Nago with Yoruba which he regarded as a positive development explaining that proficiency in Yoruba is advantageous for communication outside the Nago language area.

5.2.2 Language use in public domains

Interviewed subjects were also asked which language(s) they use with various interlocutors in more public domains.

With regard to language use in the markets, all subjects but one (21/22) reported use of Nago in the local and regional markets while 1/22 subjects reported exclusive use of Yoruba in the local market and 5/22 subjects (23%) use of Yoruba in addition to or instead of Nago in the regional market.

In offices of the sous-préfecture, a minority (7/15 – 47%) reportedly use Nago, while 3/15 (20%) use Yoruba, and 6/15 (40%) use French in addition to or instead of Nago.
5.2.3 Language use with Non-Nago speakers

Subjects were also asked which language(s) they use in their interactions with non-Nago speakers.

With Yoruba speakers, half of the subjects (11/22 – 50%) reportedly use Nago, while 12/22 subjects (55%) use Yoruba in addition to or instead of Nago. Across social groups, a higher percentage of male versus female subjects (7/12 – 58% vs 5/10 – 50%) and of older versus younger subjects (6/10 – 60% vs 6/12 – 50%) reported use of Yoruba.

5.2.4 Language use in the religious context

5.2.4.1 Church

Representatives of four different churches were interviewed with regard to language use in the church context.

During the service/mass, Bible readings are done in Yoruba in the Catholic churches of Ifangni and Pobè as well as in the Universal Evangelical church of Pobè, while the French, as well as the Yoruba, Bibles are used in the Methodist church of Ifangni. The Catholics reported that sometimes translations are made into either Fon, French and/or Gun when non-Nago speakers visit their churches. For preaching, all churches reported the use of Nago and Yoruba. The representatives of the Catholic church of Pobè reported the additional use of French.

The representatives reported that for Communion/Eucharist, for announcements, songs, prayers from the pulpit, and funeral services/masses, both the Catholic and the Methodist churches prefer using Yoruba. Language use varies widely for baptisms, marriages and graveside services in the region. These activities are commonly held using the language(s) of the member(s) involved, which in the communities of the Ouémé is Nago. It was reported that the non-Nago residents are similarly accommodated in their own language(s). For women and youth meetings, prayer meetings and testimonies during the service/mass, both the Catholic and the Methodist churches reported predominant use of Nago. Here again, the reported language use for these activities, though generally held in Nago, are subject to variation.25 Nago is used for youth meetings in the churches except for the Catholic church of Pobè where French was reportedly in use. In regard to children’s Sunday classes, representatives of the Methodist and the Catholic churches of Ifangni reported use of Nago, while for the Universal Evangelical church use of Yoruba and French was reported.

When asked if their congregations would prefer using Nago or Yoruba in the church, the Catholic representatives in Ifangni stated that their congregation is content with the usage of Yoruba within the church. A similar sentiment was expressed by the interviewed members of the Universal Evangelical church who noted that teaching and reading materials in Yoruba are preferred by their congregation because they are so numerous. This statement is presumed to

25 Bible studies may be conducted in Yoruba but a switch to Nago was reported for the discussions following the lesson. It should be noted that the communities where the church elders were interviewed are not pure Nago thus it stands to reason that their congregations are similarly mixed. In light of this, apart from the main service/mass, language choice will vary depending on the ethnic mix of those attending a particular function. Based on the interviews the churches seem willing to accommodate non-Nago visitors.
refer to the wider selection and availability of materials in Yoruba relative to the dearth of such materials in Nago.

Regarding different Yoruba Bible translations, the Methodist and Catholic representatives reported that the 1960 Yoruba Bible translation is used in their churches. Regarding the newer 1987 Yoruba New Testament translation (Bible Society of Nigeria 1987), the representatives of three of the four surveyed churches stated that they were aware of its existence while the representatives of the Methodist church of Ifangni were not aware of the newer translation. When shown the 1987 translation, the Methodist representatives observed that it was easier to read due to the added tone markings in the text.

When asked how many of their church members own a Bible, the representatives of the Methodist churches said that the majority of their church members own Bibles. In the Catholic church of Ifangni only a few members have their own Bibles.

The representatives also reported that they are aware of other religious Yoruba materials, such as song books, prayer books and booklets of Bible stories; however, the representatives were not asked to what extent these materials are used in their churches. When asked the location of the nearest place to buy such materials and Yoruba Bibles, the representatives of the Catholic church of Pobè mentioned Porto-Novo, while the others named Nigeria.

5.2.4.2 **Mosque**

According to the interviewed community elders, it was reported that in the mosques the readings from the Koran are translated from the Arabic into Yoruba. All expositions on the Koran are given in Yoruba.

5.2.5 **Summary for language vitality**

Nago is the dominant language of the Nago people and is being used in all domains. There are no indications of occurring or impending language shift.

With regard to private domains, Nago is used exclusively within and without the home domain. Nago is also widely used in more public domains and in interactions with Yoruba speakers; however, Yoruba is also spoken in addition to Nago. Fon and French are rarely spoken.

In the church context, Nago, as well as Yoruba and French, are used to varying degrees by the churches. In the surveyed Methodist and Catholic churches, Yoruba seems to be the preferred language for most activities during the service/mass while use of Nago appears to be predominant for meetings outside the service/mass. In contrast, the Universal Evangelical church uses French, with spontaneous translations into Nago. All churches reported that the Bible readings are done in Yoruba. Regarding available Bible translations, all representatives except for those from Ifangni stated that they were aware of the existence of the 1987 Yoruba New Testament translation.

The interviewed members of the mosque reported that preaching and reading from Arabic are translated to Yoruba.
5.3 Language attitudes

Both during community and individual interviews language attitudes toward Nago and its potential development were investigated, as well as attitudes toward the oral and written forms of Yoruba.

5.3.1 Attitudes toward Nago and its development

The subjects were asked if they thought it would be a “good thing” for the Nago people to be literate in Nago. Most subjects (18/21 – 86%) responded affirmatively stating that Nago is their first language and that literacy in Nago would provide better opportunities in life. The three subjects responding negatively explained either that literacy in Yoruba already exists or that the Nago people understand Yoruba.

To probe more indirectly with regard to the choice of a reference dialect, that is, an accepted standard dialect of Nago, subjects were asked where the best place was to learn Nago. All subjects (16/16) named the village where they were born.

5.3.2 Attitudes toward Yoruba

During individual interviews, subjects were asked to express their attitudes toward spoken Yoruba. All subjects (22/22) professed positive attitudes regarding the ability to speak and understand Yoruba. In addition, two subjects stated that the Nago and Yoruba understand each other and that the languages are the same. However, subjects also pointed out that the Nago and Yoruba people belong to ethnically distinct groups and that their speech forms differ (with regard to intonation and some vowels), but not significantly enough to pose any communication problems.

When the subjects were asked if they would like to be literate in Yoruba, the majority replied affirmatively (14/15 – 93%). When the subject who answered negatively was asked to explain he stated that he is already literate.

5.3.3 Attitudes in the church context

In the following sections, attitudes toward Nago, as well as toward Yoruba, in the church context are examined.

5.3.3.1 Nago

During interviews with church representatives, several questions were asked to explore attitudes toward Nago and its development.

When asked which language they thought their congregations would prefer, representatives of the Catholic churches stated Yoruba, as that is what is currently spoken and the people are content with this arrangement.
Concerning Nago language development, all interviewed representatives did not envision Nago as being especially useful to their congregations. The representative of the Universal Evangelical church of Pobè did state, however, that certain members of his congregation had expressed interest with regard to the development of a Bible translation in Nago. However, none of the churches had ever undertaken any efforts neither regarding a Nago Bible translation nor a Nago literacy program.

In the production of religious materials on a local level, nothing was reported. The Catholic representatives reported that the Catholic church has undertaken no official efforts in regard to Nago language development.

5.3.3.2 Yoruba

The church representatives were also interviewed with regard to their attitudes toward Yoruba, more specifically its written form, in the church context.

Overall, attitudes toward written Yoruba appear to be positive with all interviewed representatives reporting that their congregations had generally expressed that they are content with the use of Yoruba. The representative of the Universal Evangelical church of Pobè also thought that Yoruba is preferred since there are many printed materials presently available in Yoruba.

The church representatives were also interviewed with regard to the newer 1987 Yoruba New Testament translation. As already mentioned, most of the representatives stated that they were aware of the existence of this newer translation. When copies of passages from the books of Acts and Luke were distributed during the church interview in Ifangni, the representatives expressed interest in using the 1987 Yoruba New Testament in their church, assuming it would be better understood than the 1960 Bible translation because of the attention given to tonal marking in the text.

The representatives of the Catholic church of Ifangni reported that members of their congregation had expressed interest in obtaining Yoruba Bibles after other members had obtained them on their own initiative; however, when people tried to get the 1987 translation they were informed that there were not any more available.

5.3.4 Summary for language attitudes

Overall, attitudes toward Nago and its development, as well as toward oral and written Yoruba appear to be positive.

As far as the choice of a potential reference dialect for language development is concerned, community elders stated that Nago is spoken equally well throughout the Ouémé and no region is considered to have superior pronunciation over the others.

Attitudes toward both oral and written Yoruba appear to be positive with subjects stating that the Nago and Yoruba languages are the same. At the same time, subjects pointed out that the Nago and Yoruba people belong to ethnically distinct groups and that their speech forms differ slightly.
With regard to the church context, expressed attitudes toward Nago language development and Bible translation appear overall to be neutral with representatives stating that their congregations are content with the use of Yoruba in church and that none of the congregations had undertaken any efforts towards a Nago Bible translation.

Also within the church context, attitudes toward written Yoruba appear to be positive. However efforts with regard to Yoruba literacy classes within the church appear to be very limited. Concerning the 1987 Yoruba New Testament translation, all representatives expressed interest in its use assuming it would be better understood by their congregations than the 1960 Bible translation currently in use.

### 5.4 Bilingualism and attitudes regarding French

As previously stated, the investigation of bilingualism and attitudes regarding French was not a primary concern of this survey, and questions concerning French appeared only on the individual sociolinguistic questionnaire.

About one-third of the subjects reported ability to speak French (8/22 – 36%) while more than half reported they could understand French (12/22 – 55%) with a higher percentage of educated versus uneducated subjects. All subjects (19/19) professed positive attitudes regarding the ability to speak and understand French, explaining that French, because it is an international language and the language of formal education in Benin, is important for communication, work, travel and self-development.

Subjects with children were also asked about the French abilities of their children. Of those subjects who reported having children, only 2/15 (13%) reported that their children speak French, explaining that they started learning it when they enrolled in school.

### 5.5 Literacy in French and Yoruba

Subjects were asked if they are able to read and write in Yoruba and in French.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yoruba</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>12/22 (55%)</td>
<td>9/22 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>9/21 (43%)</td>
<td>8/22 (36%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, roughly half of the subjects reported being literate. A slightly higher percentage of male versus female subjects are literate in Yoruba or in French. With regard to the effect of formal education on literacy, it should be noted that among the subjects who have no formal education,

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20 Educated versus uneducated subjects:
- Ability to understand French: 8/11 – 73% vs 4/11 – 36%
- Ability to speak French: 5/11 – 45% vs 3/11 – 27%

27 Male versus female subjects:
- Yoruba: Reading: 8/12 – 67% vs 4/10 – 40%
- Writing: 7/12 – 58% vs 2/9 – 22%
- French: Reading and writing: 6/12 – 50% vs 2/10 – 20%
a larger than expected number reported being literate in Yoruba (reading: 6/17 – 35%; writing: 3/17 – 18%) or French (2/6 – 33%).

Subjects were also asked whether they had ever tried to write Nago. Less than one-quarter of the subjects (4/19 – 21%) answered affirmatively, all of them male subjects.

6. Conclusions

The purpose of this survey was to assess whether and to what extent existing literature and literacy efforts in Yoruba could extend to the Southern Nago communities, or whether an additional language-based development program in Southern Nago would be beneficial, and to gather data that would help determine the nature and extent of SIL’s possible involvement among these communities. The following areas were investigated:

1. Level of dialect intercomprehension;
2. Language vitality of Nago;
3. Language attitudes toward Nago and Yoruba.

In addition, there are the peripheral factors for which data were gathered during the survey: reported proficiency and attitudes regarding French, as well as education and literacy levels. Results for these latter factors have been previously presented and will not be discussed in further detail.

6.1 Dialect intercomprehension

With regard to dialect intercomprehension, three factors were examined: (1) the degree of internal comprehension within the Nago speech community, (2) the degree of lexical similarity between Nago and Yoruba, and (3) the level of comprehension of Yoruba throughout the Nago communities.

First, with regard to the degree of internal comprehension among the surveyed Nago communities, community elders reported that in all areas, Nago is spoken in the same manner with no distinct varieties.

The second factor to be considered is the degree of lexical similarity between Nago and Yoruba. The results show a high degree of lexical similarity (>87% at the upper confidence limit) between Nago and Yoruba, indicating that they are not necessarily different languages on a lexical basis.

The third factor concerns comprehension of Yoruba. Applying Marmor’s (1997:2f) previously mentioned guidelines by which to draw conclusions from comprehension testing results, the average scores of 100% for the tested Yoruba narrative can be defined as “high” dialect comprehension. Marmor (1997) specifies further that this classification refers to all segments

28 For more details, see Footnote 9 in Section 3.
29 As far as the lower average score of 74% (STD of 13.20) for the Bible passage from the 1960 translation is concerned, it is assumed that this rather low average score is due to the antiquated language of this translation. For the Bible passage from Luke 19, the higher average score of male versus that of female subjects is marginally significant.
of the population. In the current analysis there are no differences across either location, gender or age.

Given these findings and assuming that the ten subjects are representative of the Nago speech community, it appears that the Southern Nago communities could benefit from existing literature and literacy efforts in Yoruba, and there is no need\textsuperscript{30} for SIL to be involved in a language development effort for Southern Nago.

6.2 Language vitality

Based on reported data gathered during community, as well as individual, interviews, it is deduced that Nago continues to be used in all public and private domains across social groups, and there are no indications of occurring or impending language shift.

In the church context, Nago, Yoruba and French are used in varying degrees by the various churches. Depending on the underlying language policy of the denomination, either Yoruba or French is used for most activities during the service/mass, including Bible readings; for activities outside of the service/mass, use of Nago appears to be predominate. Concerning the two Yoruba Bible translations, it is reported that the 1960 Bible translation is being used while the 1987 New Testament translation is known about but difficult to obtain.

6.3 Language attitudes

Overall, the attitudes of the Nago community toward their language and its development appear to be positive. Concerning the choice of a reference dialect, no particular town’s variant in the Nago-speaking area is considered superior to the others; all are homogenous. Positive attitudes toward Nago language development were also expressed; however with the strength of Yoruba literacy in the region and the commonality shared by the two groups, Nago language development is non-existent and deigned to be unnecessary in light of the current Yoruba programs.

Attitudes toward Yoruba also appear to be positive with subjects stating that the Nago and Yoruba languages are practically the same. However, other subjects stressed the fact that the Nago and the Yoruba peoples belong to ethnically distinct groups and that their languages, however slightly, do differ.

Also within the church domain, attitudes toward Yoruba appear to be positive. However, Yoruba literacy efforts seem to be rather limited. As far as the 1987 Yoruba New Testament translation is concerned, most representatives expressed interest in its use assuming it would be more easily read and better understood by their congregations than the 1960 Bible translation.

\footnote{“Need refers here to the point of view of SIL \textit{vis-a-vis} the allocation of its resources.” (Marmor 1997:2)}
6.4 Summary

The results regarding dialect intercomprehension, as well as language attitudes, indicate that the Southern Nago communities can utilize Yoruba written materials as, indeed, they are already doing. Therefore, it appears that there is no need for SIL to be involved in a language development program in Southern Nago.
Appendices

Appendix A. Map of the Southern Nago language area

The following maps are based on the information given by chiefs and elders in the Southern Nago language area:

- **unmarked:** 100% Southern Nago
- **underlined:** Southern Nago + L2
- **underline:** Other (A = Aja, I = Ije, F = Fon, G = Gun, M = Maxi, Y = Yoruba)

A.1. Sous-Préfectures of Adja-Ouèrè, Kétou and Pobè
A.2. Sous-Préfectures of Ifangni and Sakété
Appendix B. Lexical similarity

For this computation, morphemes that are apparently affixed to the form used in another variety are included in the analysis.\textsuperscript{31}

Table 3: Lexical similarity between Ede varieties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yoruba (Porto-Novo)</th>
<th>Yoruba (Porto-Novo)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Nago (Kétou)</td>
<td>S. Nago (Kétou)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Nago (Pobè)</td>
<td>S. Nago (Pobè)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 62 56 57 80</td>
<td>6.8 7.5 7.6 6.9 7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Nago (Kambolé)</td>
<td>N. Nago (Kambolé)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Nago (Manigri)</td>
<td>N. Nago (Manigri)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{31} See Volume 1, Appendix K for further details regarding the criteria applied for similarity groupings, Appendix L for a complete listing of elicited data sorted by gloss and Appendix M for computed percent and variance matrices for lexical similarity for all elicited Ede wordlists.
Appendix C. Yoruba narrative RTT results: Raw scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJ#</th>
<th>#CORR</th>
<th>#TOT</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ikpinlè: MY</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofia: MY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations:

SUBJ# = Subject Number, #CORR = Number of correct answers, #TOT = Number of total possible correct answers.

Appendix D. Proficiency in Yoruba: Reported data in detail

D.1. Comparison across locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GenCmp: 32</th>
<th>HghCmp: 33</th>
<th>RBrCmp: 34</th>
<th>GenPrf: 35</th>
<th>HghPrf: 36</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ifangni:</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>3/6 – 50%</td>
<td>4/6 – 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikpinlè:</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>5/6 – 83%</td>
<td>3/5 – 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kétou:</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>4/5 – 80%</td>
<td>3/4 – 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofia:</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>3/5 – 60%</td>
<td>4/5 – 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D.2. Comparison across social groups

1. Gender: Male versus female subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GenCmp: 32</th>
<th>HghCmp: 33</th>
<th>RBrCmp: 34</th>
<th>GenPrf: 35</th>
<th>HghPrf: 36</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GenCmp:</td>
<td>12/12 – 100% vs 10/10 – 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HghCmp:</td>
<td>12/12 – 100% vs 10/10 – 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBrCmp:</td>
<td>12/12 – 100% vs 10/10 – 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenPrf:</td>
<td>9/12 – 75% vs 6/10 – 60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HghPrf:</td>
<td>10/12 – 83% vs 4/8 – 50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32 General understanding ability.
33 Ability to always understand everything when the subject hears Yoruba people speaking.
34 Ability to fully understand Yoruba broadcasting on the radio.
35 General speaking ability.
36 Ability to always say everything the subject wants to say in Yoruba.
2. Age: Younger versus older subjects

   GenCmp: 12/12 – 100% vs 10/10 – 100%
   HghCmp: 12/12 – 100% vs 10/10 – 100%
   RBrCmp: 12/12 – 100% vs 10/10 – 100%
   GenPrf: 7/12 – 58% vs 8/10 – 80%
   HghPrf: 7/11 – 64% vs 7/9 – 78%

D.3. Comparison across language contact

1. Residence patterns: Subjects reporting temporary residence versus those with no residence in the Yoruba language area

   GenCmp: 6/6 – 100% vs 16/16 – 100%
   HghCmp: 6/6 – 100% vs 16/16 – 100%
   RBrCmp: 6/6 – 100% vs 16/16 – 100%
   GenPrf: 3/6 – 50% vs 12/16 – 75%
   HghPrf: 3/5 – 60% vs 11/15 – 73%

2. Travel patterns: Subjects who travel to the Yoruba language area versus subjects who never travel there

   GenCmp: 11/11 – 100% vs 11/11 – 100%
   HghCmp: 11/11 – 100% vs 11/11 – 100%
   RBrCmp: 11/11 – 100% vs 11/11 – 100%
   GenPrf: 8/11 – 73% vs 7/11 – 64%
   HghPrf: 6/9 – 67% vs 8/11 – 73%

3. Religious Affiliation: Christians versus non-Christians

   GenCmp: 14/14 – 100% vs 5/5 – 100%
   HghCmp: 14/14 – 100% vs 5/5 – 100%
   RBrCmp: 14/14 – 100% vs 5/5 – 100%
   GenPrf: 10/14 – 71% vs 3/5 – 60%
   HghPrf: 9/13 – 69% vs 4/5 – 80%

D.4. Comparison across education

1. Educated versus non-educated subjects

   GenCmp: 11/11 – 100% vs 11/11 – 100%
   HghCmp: 11/11 – 100% vs 11/11 – 100%
   RBrCmp: 11/11 – 100% vs 11/11 – 100%
   GenPrf: 9/11 – 82% vs 6/11 – 55%
   HghPrf: 8/10 – 80% vs 6/10 – 60%
References


