

Editorial of JWAL Volume 53, Issue 1

The Editorial Board of the Journal of West African Languages (JWAL) is pleased to present Volume 53, Issue 1. This volume comprises six papers from 11 linguists, covering areas that include dialect variation, syntax, prosody, onomastics, morphotonology, metaphor, and beyond.

The lead paper is co-authored by Chris Collins of New York University, USA, Palalimwe Bidadjou, Ecole Normale de Formation des Professeurs d'Ecole (ENFPE), Notsé, Togo, and Selikem Gotah, New York University, USA. Titled, *Ghanaian versus Togolese Ewe*, this is a compelling piece of work in comparative Ewe dialectology. The authors systematically compare the features of various Ewe dialects spoken in Ghana and Togo, including lexical items, syntactic constructions and pragmatic uses. They come to the conclusion that on the basis of this comparison, one can refer to two distinct categories of Ewe: Ghanaian Ewe and Togolese Ewe.

The second paper is written by Ridwan Akinkunmi Rabiou and Abdulrahman Aminu, both of Kwara State University, Nigeria. Under the title, *A Syntactic Analysis of Yoruba Abbreviated Terms on X Platform*, the authors show various transformations and syntactic derivations involved in abbreviating various words based on about 500 tweets on an online platform.

The third paper is authored by Alleh Owoicho Michael and Rafiu Kamar Adewale, both of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Under the title, *Foot Structure and Prosodic Evidence in Idoma: An Optimality Theory Account*, the authors investigate foot structure in the West Benue - Congo language, Idoma, based on a large collection of words and short phrases. The result of this study indicates that “foot structure is headed and binary footed” in the language.

Titled *Morphotonologie des Tiroirs Verbaux Affirmatifs Non-Motionnels de L'Injonctif et de l'Indicatif en Nuasúe*, Adriel Josias Bebine of Université de Yaounde 1, Cameroon, in the fourth paper, outlines the non-motional affirmative verbal inflections of the imperative and indicative moods in Nuasúe, a Bantu language of the Mbam region spoken in Cameroon, from a morphotonological perspective. The paper shows that the language distinguishes three imperative moods: the singular imperative, the plural imperative, and the subjunctive.

The fifth paper, titled *Cultural Conceptualisations of Edible Crops Among the Igbo of Southeastern Nigeria*, is authored by Chinedu Chidiebere Ezebube of Makerere University, Uganda and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria and Justina Oluchi Eke of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. With insights from Sharifian cultural linguistic theory, the paper, a significant study in ethnocognition and ethnobotany, “...explores how shared cultural knowledge and cognition shape symbolic interpretations attached to edible crops in Igbo discourse”.

The sixth and final paper is by Azibaoguanasi Williams of Federal University Otuoke, Nigeria. In his paper titled *Writing African Names in Opaque Orthographies: Challenges and Strategies for Reclaiming Linguistic Identity* the author raises an important issue about how African personal names are not adequately written when using what he calls “reductionist orthographies” of the former colonial languages, such as English, French, and Portuguese. Basing his analysis on a socio-onomastic theory of names, the author calls for the correct representation of African names using indigenous-centred transparent orthographies.

In addition to these six research articles, this volume also contains tributes for four departed members of WALs. All four have played key roles in the establishment of WALs and/or the promotion of West African linguistics in diverse ways. These are Gilbert Ansre, whose tribute is written by Ayo Bamgboṣe; Lynell Zogbo, whose tribute is written by Firmin Ahoua; and Harrison Adeyemi and Ben Elugbe whose tributes are written by Constantine Yuka. May they all rest in peace!

I wish to thank the reviewers of these six articles, as well as those of articles that did not make it into this volume. Much gratitude to the writers of tributes to our departed colleagues. I also wish to thank our authors, readers, and the general West African linguistic community for their enthusiastic interest in JWAL. We continue to attract a keen readership and quite healthy submission rates. Finally, I thank the editorial board members, especially our able Associate Editors, Assoc Prof Hasiyatu Abubakari and Prof Samuel Issah, and our Assistant Editor, Dr Alexander Angsongna.

Adams Bodomo

Editor, JWAL