

THE VERB-INFINITIVE PHRASE IN YORUBA

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In the structure of the verb phrase in Yoruba, verbal combinations involving a certain group of verbs are marked by the occurrence of a high tone junction after these verbs. This high tone junction may be exemplified in

mo fẹ́ fẹ́ sọ̀rọ̀
 'I want to speak'

where the combination of fẹ́ 'want' and sọ̀rọ̀ 'speak' is marked by the lengthening of the verb fẹ́, and

ó mọ̀ dùrùú tẹ̀
 'He knows how to play the organ'

where the combination of mọ̀ dùrùú 'know the organ' and tẹ̀ 'play' is also marked by a lengthening of the final vowel of the noun following the verb mọ̀, the lengthening in both cases being on a high tone. The two verbs fẹ́ 'want' and mọ̀ 'know' belong to the group of verbs which induce a high tone junction immediately before a following verb.

It has long been recognized that this high tone junction is not merely a lengthening of the verb, or that of the nominal following the verb. Its origin has been traced to two sources:

- (a) the assimilation of the prefix of an infinitive, i.e.

mo fẹ́ ísọ̀rọ̀
 'I want to speak'
 > mo fẹ́ fẹ́ sọ̀rọ̀
 'I want to speak'

- (b) the assimilation of the initial syllable of a reduplicated verbal noun, i.e.

mo fẹ́ sí sọ̀rọ̀
 'I want speaking'
 > mo fẹ́ fẹ́ sọ̀rọ̀
 'I want to speak'

The view that the junction is derived from a prefix was first put forward by Crowther: 'Nouns derived from verbs by the prefix *i* are then employed for the infinitive, when two verbs follow each other; as *Mo wa íwò nyin* "I come to see (or, a seeing) you" . . . When the language is spoken very rapidly, contraction takes place, and the sound of the prefix becomes quite imperceptible, but the last vowels of the verbs become very long . . .'¹ The second view (i.e. that the high tone junction is derived from a reduplicated verbal noun) is implicit in the examples given by Bowen for this type of verb phrase. One such example is: *Yorùbá ẹ̀sòrò fífọ̀* 'Yoruba is difficult to speak or be spoken'.² But Bowen also shares

¹ S. Crowther, *A GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY OF THE YORUBA LANGUAGE* (London, Seeleys, 1852), p. 19.

² J. T. Bowen, *GRAMMAR AND DICTIONARY OF THE YORUBA LANGUAGE* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1858), p. 38.

the first view, for he recognizes an infinitive form as in *kò ɕe íká* 'It cannot be folded', where *íká* is described as an 'infinitive after *ɕe*, the preformative *i* being very slightly sounded'.³ Subsequent writers on Yoruba have accepted either one of the two views⁴ or both views.⁵

As a historical explanation of the origin of the high tone junction, both views are plausible. The junction could easily have been derived from the reduplicated syllable of the verbal noun by the elision of the initial consonant and the assimilation of the vowel *i* to the preceding vowel, i.e. *mo fẹ́ sísòrò* 'I want speaking' > *mo fẹ́fẹ́ sòrò* 'I want to speak' just as it could have been derived from a prefix *i* of the infinitive form of the verb, i.e. *mo fẹ́ ísòrò* 'I want to speak' > *mo fẹ́fẹ́ sòrò* 'I want to speak'. Indeed, it may even be argued that the so-called infinitive form is simply a reduced form of the reduplicated verbal noun which has resulted from the elision of its initial consonant (i.e. *sísòrò* 'speaking' > *ísòrò* 'to speak'). Evidence from Yoruba dialects shows the occurrence of the infinitive form to be widespread in the type of verb phrase in question;⁶ but there are also a few dialects which have the reduplicated verbal-noun form.⁷

The pertinent question, however, is whether in a synchronic description of Standard Yoruba the type of verb phrase under discussion can be traced to a verb + noun combination in which the noun is a reduplicated verbal noun, or a verb + verb combination in which the second verb is an infinitive. The position taken in this paper is that the derivation from a verbal noun cannot be supported in a synchronic description of Standard Yoruba. The author's reasons for coming to this conclusion are:

³ Ibid., p. 56.

⁴ Note in particular the acceptance of the derivation from the reduplicated verbal noun by Abraham in what he calls 'the internal verbal noun' (R. C. Abraham, *DICTIONARY OF MODERN YORUBA* (University of London Press, 1958), p. xxvi) and Awobuluyi's nominalization of an embedded or conjoined sentence (A. O. Awobuluyi, *STUDIES IN THE SYNTAX OF THE STANDARD YORUBA VERB*, Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University (1967), pp. 129, 136).

⁵ Note in particular (i) Ida Ward, *AN INTRODUCTION TO THE YORUBA LANGUAGE* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1952): 'It is probable that this lengthening of the vowel takes the place of a prefix of the second verb. . . In every case the lengthening is on a high tone, and would therefore correspond to the reduplicated form which is the verbal noun' (p. 116). Ward also correctly notes that the prefix *í* is often represented in the orthography. (ii) E. C. Rowlands, *TEACH YOURSELF YORUBA* (London: English Universities Press, 1969): 'The extra length given to the vowel in these cases is best regarded as really a prefix of the following verb, which we can think of as an infinitive form. . . ' (p. 67). This is practically a repetition of an earlier statement made by the author in 'Types of word junction in Yoruba', *BULLETIN OF THE SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES*, vol. XVI (1964), p. 386. Cf. page 191 of *TEACH YOURSELF YORUBA*, where Rowlands also accepts the possibility of 'an earlier form' which might have been a reduplicated verbal noun, although he insists that in all the cases 'it is simplest to explain the lengthened vowel as containing what is actually a prefix to the following verb'.

⁶ Examples have been reported in *Ìjẹ̀bú*, *Ìjẹ̀sà*, *Kétu*, *Òndó*, *Ìkálẹ̀* *Ìlàjẹ̀*. In E. M. Fresco, 'A folk tale in the Ketu Dialect of Yoruba' (*African Notes*, *BULLETIN OF THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES*, University of Ibadan), vol. v, no. 1 (1968), pp. 38-60, there are quite a few examples, such as *Òwu fẹ́ ígbà á* 'He wanted to get it' (p. 53), *kò ɕe ígù* 'it cannot be mounted' (p. 50).

⁷ Cf. examples such as *ulẹ́ ɕòrò kíkọ́* 'It is difficult to build a house', *ọ́ pẹ́ dídíé* 'He was late in coming', in the Ekiti dialect. Note, however, that in this dialect the reduplicated verbal noun cannot occur directly after *fẹ́* 'want', *ní* 'have', *bẹ̀rẹ̀sí* 'start to' and *fẹ́rẹ́*, i.e. a sentence such as **ọ́ fẹ́ lílọ́* for *ọ́ fẹ́fẹ́ lọ́* 'he wants to go' is not possible. Similar examples have been reported in the *Ijẹ̀sà* dialect where the infinitive form also occurs.

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(i) In many cases, the suggested verb-nominal form is one that cannot occur in the language. Take, for instance, the following examples:

- *Òjò fẹ̀rẹ̀ dídé
'Ojo will arrive presently'
- *Dàdà sàbà dídé ibẹ̀
'Dada is fond of going there'
- *Dàdà bèrẹ̀sí mi bíbú
'Dada began insulting me'⁸

These are non-existent forms which are best considered hypothetical base forms set up solely for the purpose of derivation.

(ii) Even when the suggested verb-nominal form can occur in the language, there is a contrast in meaning between the form, and the verb phrase with the high tone junction supposed to be derived from it. For example, *kò ní jìjẹ* is supposed to be the form from which *kò ní jẹ* is derived. The former has the meaning 'He hasn't got the type that can be eaten' and the latter 'He hasn't to eat' (i.e. 'He won't eat'). Similarly, from *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* 'He knows lorry driving' (i.e. the activity so called), one is expected to derive *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ ọ̀ wà* which has the meaning 'He knows lorry to drive' (i.e. 'He knows how to drive a lorry').⁹

(iii) The meaning difference in (ii) above is paralleled by a formal difference. Where the object is a verbal noun, a third person singular pronoun object can be substituted for it, e.g. for *ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* 'lorry driving' in *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* 'He knows lorry driving', one can have a pronoun object as in *ó mọ̀ ọ̀* 'He knows it'. In the case of the verb phrase supposed to be derived from the clause with a verbal-noun object, the third person pronoun object can only be substituted for the inverted noun object *ọ̀kọ̀* 'lorry', i.e. from *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* 'He knows lorry driving' the form derivable is not *ó mọ̀ ọ̀* 'He knows it' but *ó mọ̀ ọ̀ ọ̀ wà* 'He knows it to drive' (i.e. 'He knows how to drive it'). It seems clear from these examples that we are dealing with two different structures: a verb-nominal structure as in *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* 'He knows lorry driving', where the verbal noun *ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* 'lorry driving' is an object which can be replaced by a pronoun as in *ó mọ̀ ọ̀* 'He knows it', and a verb-infinitive structure as in *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ íwà* 'He knows lorry to drive' (i.e. 'He knows how to drive a lorry') from which *ó mọ̀ ọ̀ íwà* 'He knows how to drive it' is derived by the substitution of a pronoun for the inverted object, and ultimately *ó mọ̀ ọ̀ ọ̀ wà* by the assimilation of the infinitive prefix. In other words, the difference in meaning between *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* and *ó mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ íwà* is also reflected in a difference of structure.¹⁰

⁸ These examples are taken from Awobuluyi, op. cit., p. 128.

⁹ Even if it is accepted that the infinitive form is derived from the reduplicated verbal noun, the fact that the two no longer have the same meaning calls for a difference in their analysis. Such cases are not uncommon in Yoruba. For example, although *.yí* 'this' is derived from *èyí* 'this one', there is a difference in meaning between *owó .yí* 'this money' and *owó èyí* 'the money belonging to this one'. Hence the former is treated as a deictic qualifier, and the latter as a nominal qualifier in a genitival structure.

¹⁰ In a written comment on this paper when it was read at the 9th West African Languages Congress, Awobuluyi claims that the *ọ̀kọ̀ wíwà* which may be substituted by a pronoun object is derived from *wíwà ọ̀kọ̀* 'the driving of a lorry'. The implication of this claim is that the former is a transposition of a noun head and its nominal qualifier. If this were so, one would expect (i) the usual nominal junction between the two nouns, i.e. *wíwà ọ̀kọ̀* > **ọ̀kọ̀ ọ̀ wíwà*, (ii) the possibility of a genitival pronoun *rẹ̀* 'its' substituting for one of the nouns in both cases, (iii) the possibility of transposing nouns in other genitival structures.

(iv) If the underlying form were a verbal noun, one would expect the assimilation of the reduplicated syllable in *ó mọ wíwa ọkọ* 'He knows driving a lorry' as much as in *ó mọ ọkọ wíwà* 'He knows lorry driving', since both forms can occur; i.e. just as one is supposed to get *ó mọ ọkọf wà* 'He knows how to drive a lorry' from *ó mọ ọkọ wíwà*, one would also expect to get **ó mọf wà ọkọ* from *ó mọ wíwa ọkọ*. In fact, the starred form above is not possible, and this makes the derivation from the reduplicated verbal noun suspicious. In contrast to this, if *ó mọ ọkọf wà* were derived from *ó mọ ọkọ íwà*, the question of deriving the starred form would not arise since, unlike *ó mọ wíwa ọkọ*, the corresponding form **ó mọ íwa ọkọ* does not occur at all.

(v) If the high tone junction is derived from the reduplicated syllable of a verbal noun, it would be necessary to say that the assimilation of this syllable takes place after some verbs and not after others. Such a statement is arbitrary, especially as there is no plausible phonological or grammatical reason for it. For example, although the reduplicated verbal noun *ọkọ wíwà* 'lorry driving' can occur as object to *mọ* 'know' or *dù* 'scramble for' as in *wọn mọ ọkọ wíwà* 'They know lorry driving' and *wọn dú ọkọ wíwà* 'They scrambled for lorry driving', we would have to say quite arbitrarily that the assimilation of the reduplicated syllable can take place only in the former case but not in the latter (i.e. we could have *wọn mọ ọkọf wà* but NOT **wọn dú ọkọf wà*). In contrast to this, the non-occurrence of the high tone junction after most verbs can simply be explained by the fact that such verbs cannot occur before the infinitive. Where verbs can occur before the infinitive, the assimilation of the infinitive prefix admits of no exception, i.e. *wọn mọ ọkọ íwà* automatically yields *wọn mọ ọkọf wà* 'They know how to drive a lorry'; but since **wọn dú ọkọ íwà* is not possible, there is no question of having **wọn dú ọkọf wà*.¹¹

(vi) The acceptance of the verbal-noun derivation will mean the acceptance of some impossible nominalizations. For example, *wọn lè bẹrẹsí ímáa sọrọ* 'They may start (to be) talking' will have to be derived from **wọn lè bẹrẹsí mímáa sọrọ* a non-existent form, since the reduplicated verbal noun formation **mímáa sọrọ* from *máa sọrọ* 'be talking' is not possible. Again, the verb-infinitive derivation avoids this difficulty, for the infinitive prefix can precede *máa*. In fact, the sentence *wọn lè bẹrẹsí ímáa sọrọ* 'They may start (to be) talking' shows clearly the infinitive prefix *í* in the verb-infinitive phrase.

(vii) Some of the verbs to which the reduplicated verbal noun is supposed to be an object are in fact intransitive. Two such verbs are *fẹrẹ* 'almost'¹² and *yé* 'stop'. If *fẹrẹ*

The fact that the proposed transposition is only possible whenever the noun is in the relationship of object to the verb in the verbal noun (for example, *ọbẹ dídùn* cannot be derived from *dídùn ọbẹ* 'the sweetness of the stew') is strong proof that a form such as *ọkọ wíwà* is not really a genitival structure, but an alternative nominalization to *wíwa ọkọ*. In any case, since the latter can be substituted by a pronoun object (e.g. *ó mọ wíwa ọkọ* 'He knows lorry driving' > *ó mọ ọ* 'He knows it'), there is no reason why such a substitution should be considered impossible for its variant (i.e. *ó mọ ọkọ wíwà* 'He knows lorry driving' > *ó mọ ọ* 'He knows it').

¹¹ Although it is true to say that in both analyses subclasses of verbs will have to be set up, the essential difference is that in the case of the verbal-noun derivation the verbs *dù* 'scramble for' and *mọ* 'know' will constitute two subclasses within a verb-nominal structure, whereas in the other analysis there will be two separate structures: a verb-nominal structure in which the two verbs occur, and a verb-infinitive structure in which only one of the two verbs (i.e. *mọ* 'know') occurs.

¹² *fẹrẹ* 'almost' is a preverb. It cannot occur as the only verb in a clause. This shows that the high tone junction is not limited to the junction between free verbs. Cf. Bamgboşe, A GRAMMAR OF YORUBA (Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 76.

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were a transitive verb, and the form *Òjó fẹ̀rẹ̀ dídé* 'Ojo will soon arrive' were possible, then one would expect: (a) a tone change before the object i.e. **Òjó fẹ̀rẹ̀ dídé* (or **Òjó fẹ̀rẹ̀ dídé*); (b) the possibility of substituting a pronoun for its noun object, i.e. **Òjó fẹ̀rẹ̀ é* (or **Òjó fẹ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀*); (c) the possibility of having a noun object other than the reduplicated verbal noun, e.g. **Òjó fẹ̀rẹ̀ iwé*. The fact that none of these three is possible (and these are characteristics associated with transitive verbs) shows that *fẹ̀rẹ̀* is not really a verb that can take an object, and the supposed underlying form is merely fictitious. The same conclusion is true of *yé* 'stop' which does not satisfy the relevant conditions for a transitive verb.

(viii) Even if it is argued that the reduplicated verbal noun is not really an object but an inverted part of a subject, this will still leave some questions unanswered. It is possible to argue that in a verb phrase such as *ilé Ẹ̀roó kọ́* 'It is difficult to build a house', the underlying form is *ilé kíkọ́ Ẹ̀ro* 'Building a house is difficult'. The derivation is effected by shifting the verbal noun *kíkọ́* to the position after the verb, i.e.

ilé kíkọ́ Ẹ̀ro
 > **ilé Ẹ̀ro kíkọ́*
 > *ilé Ẹ̀roó kọ́*

The questions that arise in connection with this derivation are as follows. (a) The difference in meaning between the derived sentence and the original sentence. The original sentence means 'Building a house is difficult' (i.e. building a house is an activity, and this activity is difficult), whereas the sentence supposed to be derived from it means 'It is difficult to build a house' (i.e. to build a house, one needs a lot of money or energy). This shows that the verb phrase could not really have been derived from the verbal noun in the manner shown. In fact, the real derivation is from *ilé Ẹ̀ro lá.ti kọ́* 'It is difficult to build a house' with which the derived sentence has an identical meaning. (b) The fact that the intermediate form of the derivation (the starred form in the example above) is non-existent in the language. (c) The fact that the postulated underlying sentence is only possible with some verbs and not with others. For example, although one can say that *Olú pẹ́ dé* 'Olu is late to arrive' is derived from *dídé Olú pẹ́* 'Olu's arrival is late', one cannot say that *Olú fẹ̀rẹ̀ dé* 'Olu will soon arrive' is derived from **dídé Olú fẹ̀rẹ̀* 'Olu's arrival will soon', a form which is non-existent in the language.¹³

There is a restriction on the type of verb that can precede the infinitive in the verb-infinitive phrase. Slightly different lists of such verbs are to be found in most Grammars of the language.¹⁴ The list presented here is a combination of these previous lists, with the addition of one or two new items and the exclusion of a few items. The verbs that are excluded are of three types:

(a) Those that do not exhibit a high tone junction, e.g. *dù* 'scramble for'¹⁵ in a *du ọ̀kọ̀ rà* (not *ọ̀kọ̀ ọ̀*) 'We strove to buy a boat'.

¹³ In a written comment on this paper when it was read at the 9th W.A.L. Congress, Mr Bunkowske was kind enough to draw my attention to some examples from Ogoja Yala which show that the forms in that language which appear to be analogous to the verb-infinitive phrase of Yoruba cannot be traced to an underlying reduplicated verbal noun. For example, *má* 'see' > *òmómá* 'seeing' BUT *ó gá gé má òdè* 'he went in order to see Odey'.

¹⁴ See Ward, op. cit., p. 116; Abraham, op. cit., pp. xxvi-xxvii; Bamgboṣe, op. cit., p. 76; Awobuluyi, op. cit., pp. 129-30, 139; Rowlands, TEACH YOURSELF YORUBA, pp. 66-7. Also Rowlands, 'Review of Ayo Bamgboṣe, A GRAMMAR OF YORUBA', BULLETIN OF THE SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES, vol. XXX, no. 3 (1967), p. 737.

¹⁵ Abraham, op. cit., p. xxvi.

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(b) Those that exhibit a high tone junction which cannot be traced to the infinitive, e.g. *dide* 'stand up'¹⁶ and *sábà* 'usually'¹⁷ as in *ó Ẹ̀Ẹ̀Ẹ̀ ñdìdèé bọ* 'He is just beginning to stand up' *kì í sàbàá wálé* 'He doesn't come home often', where the junction should be attributed to the preceding verbal particle *ń* (>í) because it (the junction) does not occur unless this particle is present.

(c) Those that are dialectal or where the occurrence of the high tone junction is dialectal. For example, the verb *rè* 'go'¹⁸ *ó rèé fọ aṣọ* 'He went to wash clothes' is excluded because the usual form in Standard Yoruba is *lọ* as in *ó lọ fọ aṣọ* 'He went to wash clothes'. Similarly, the verbs *lọ* 'go' and *wá* 'come'¹⁹ are excluded because in Standard Yoruba they do not exhibit a high tone junction. The dialectal forms *ọ́ ọ́ọ́ fọ aṣọ* OR *ọ́ ọ́ọ́ fọ aṣọ* 'He went to wash clothes' and *ọ́ wáá fọ aṣọ*²⁰ 'He came to wash clothes' have as their corresponding forms in Standard Yoruba: *ó lọ fọ aṣọ* 'he went to wash clothes' and *ó wá fọ aṣọ* 'He came to wash clothes' respectively.

The verbs that can be followed by the infinitive (from now on referred to as 'pre-infinitive verbs') are:

<i>şòro</i>	'to be difficult'	<i>yé</i>	'stop'
<i>sú</i>	'tire'	<i>mọ</i>	'know'
<i>wù</i>	'please'	<i>şíwọ</i>	'stop'
<i>tó</i>	'reach'	<i>kú</i>	(verb in greetings)
<i>dùn</i>	'be sweet'	<i>dẹ.kun</i>	'cease'
<i>yá</i>	'be quick'	<i>wá</i>	'want' ²¹
<i>şe</i>	'be possible'	<i>gbádùn</i>	'enjoy'
<i>rọ̀rùn</i>	'be easy'	<i>pẹ</i>	'be late'
<i>fẹ</i>	'want'	<i>fẹ̀rẹ</i>	'almost'
<i>ní</i>	'have'	<i>kọ</i>	'learn' ²²
<i>bẹ̀rẹ̀sí</i>	'start'		

The only attempt so far to classify sentences or clauses having verb-infinitive phrases is that by Awobuluyi.²³ He classifies these sentences into two types:

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Awobuluyi, op. cit., p. 130.

¹⁸ Ward, op. cit., p. 116.

¹⁹ Ward, op. cit., p. 116; Rowlands, *TEACH YOURSELF YORUBA*, p. 66.

²⁰ Another variant of this in the Oyo dialect is *ọ́ wáá fọ aṣọ* 'he came for the purpose of washing clothes', but this does not exhibit a high tone junction.

²¹ This verb is used as a variant of *fẹ* 'want' and the infinitive occurs after it only if the clause is negative, e.g. *kò wá mi íkí* 'He doesn't want to greet me'.

²² The occurrence of a high tone junction after this verb does not appear to be uniform for all speakers. Many informants accept *şé ó fẹ́ kọ ọ̀rọ́ sọ?* 'Does he want to learn to speak?', yet some maintain that *şé ó fẹ́ kọ ọ̀rọ́ sọ?* is the only form they can accept.

²³ Since writing this paper I have had a chance to read D. A. Oke's Ph.D. thesis, 'A GRAMMATICAL STUDY OF THE YORUBA VERB SYSTEM (York, 1968), in which verbal phrases containing the infinitive are treated as a 'Single Verb' followed by the nominalization of a 'Full Verb' ('Catenative Pattern 1', pp. 188-216). Oke's analysis is even less satisfactory than Awobuluyi's for the following reasons. (i) The so-called nominalizations (reduplicated verbal noun, *àti* + verb, *lá.ti* + verb) together with the preceding verbs are treated as separate structures even when they have identical meanings. (ii) No attempt is made to derive the infinitive form from *lá.ti*. (iii) the underlying structures are uneconomical, and they ignore the vital distinctions made in this paper in the subject (i.e. 'subject replacement', 'subject as goal', etc.). (iv) The distinction between instrumental/non-instrumental is unnecessary, as the two forms can be derived from the same underlying sentence postulated in this paper, e.g. *ó dùn lá.ti wọ bàtà > bàtà dùn íwọ*

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(a) Those involving sentences with nominalized objects (where the nominalization is derived from 'deep structure sentences introduced by NML [the nominalizer] and... from sentences introduced by àti').²⁴

(b) Those involving sentences with purpose nominalization (where the nominalization is 'obtained from a deep structure sentence conjoined to some preceding sentence by the conjunction lá.ti "in order to"').²⁵

The two types may be exemplified by Òjó mọ ọkọ wíwà 'Ojo knows driving' and Dàdà fẹ ọkọ wíwà 'Dada wants lorry driving' respectively. Three reasons are given for making the distinction between the types:

- (i) type (a) has a nominalized object whereas type (b) does not;
- (ii) type (a) has variants with àti whereas type (b) only has variants with lá.ti;
- (iii) type (b) expresses purpose or goal whereas type (a) does not.²⁶

The first point is already adequately dealt with above in the discussion of the verbal-noun hypothesis. There cannot be a nominalized object in type (a) because what is said to be the nominalized object cannot be replaced by a pronoun. On the contrary, both types have an inverted object which can be replaced by a pronoun, i.e. ó mọ ọkọ íwà 'He knows how to drive a lorry', which is of type (a), yields ó mọ ọ́ọ wà 'He knows how to drive it', just as ó tó ọkọ íwà 'He is old enough to drive a lorry', which is of type (b), yields ó tó ọ́ọ wà 'He is old enough to drive it'.

The second point can hardly be accepted as valid. Firstly, because most of the sentences of type (a) CANNOT in fact have variants with àti.²⁷ Secondly, not all type (b) can have variants with lá.ti (for instance, one cannot have *ó ẹe lá.ti ẹe, which is the underlying form of ó ẹeé ẹe 'It's possible to do'). Thirdly, and most important, variants with lá.ti and variants with àti are sometimes possible with the same type:²⁸ for example, wọn ńwọ àti máa gun kẹkẹ OR wọn ńwọ lá.ti máa gun kẹkẹ 'They stopped riding bicycles' in type (a) and ọkùnrin nááá tó àti dá ịẹ ẹe OR ọkùnrin nááá tó lá.ti dá ịẹ ẹe 'The man is old enough to work on his own' in type (b). This is not surprising, for lá.ti and àti often occur as variants after many verbs. For example, ó ńmúra àti lọ has the same meaning as ó ńmúra lá.ti lọ 'he is preparing to go'.²⁹

'It is pleasant to wear shoes', ó dùn lá.ti fi bàtà rìn > bàtá dùn ífi rìn 'It is pleasant to walk with shoes'. (The optional deletion of fi which is possible in some cases in the latter of the second pair of structures is not confined to this structure, but is a more general feature. Cf. wọn wọ bàtà lá.ti fi gbá bọ̀lù > wọn wọ bàtà fi gbá bọ̀lù > wọn wọ bàtà gbá bọ̀lù 'They wore boots to play football').

²⁴ Awobuluyi, op. cit., p. 129. The nominalizer is a 'dummy introductory element' nominalizing an embedded sentence, p. 119. The pre-infinitive verbs associated with type (a) are: ńwọ, mọ, yé, kọ, kú, fẹrẹ, sáábà, ní, bèrẹsí.

²⁵ Awobuluyi, op. cit., p. 136. The pre-infinitive verbs associated with type (b) are: sú, ẹe, wù, pé, fẹ, ẹ̀rò, dùn, yá, tó, ní.

²⁶ See Awobuluyi, op. cit., pp. 143-5.

²⁷ Of the nine verbs associated with this type, only four can have a variant with àti

²⁸ Awobuluyi himself admits this at least in the case of the pre-infinitive verb kọ (see p. 155, note 58).

²⁹ Cf. Crowther, op. cit., p. 19: 'Àti, lá.ti, "to", "in order that", "to the effect that", is also very much used to express the infinitive, when an intention or object is had in view'.

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The third point is related to the second one. Does lá.ti always indicate 'purpose or goal'? One can think of several examples where it does not. In ó pẹ lá.ti dé, which is the underlying form of ó pẹ́ dé 'He is late to arrive', to make lá.ti express purpose would be to give the sentence the nonsensical meaning 'He was late in order to arrive', whereas what the sentence really means is 'He was late in arriving' or 'It was late before he arrived'. Similarly, no 'purpose' is intended in ó tó ị́ lá.ti ẹ and ị́ sù mí lá.ti ẹ, which are the underlying forms of ó tó ị́ẹ ẹ 'He is (old) enough to work' and ị́ sù mí ẹ 'I am tired of working' respectively. Furthermore, purpose can be expressed by la.ti alternating with àti, e.g. ó ñmúra àti lọ or ó ñmúra lá.ti lọ 'He is preparing to go (or for the purpose of going)'. The division of the two types on grounds of meaning into 'purpose'/'non-purpose' is of little validity because while it is true that sentences of type (a) do not express purpose, it is also true that many sentences of type (b) do not express purpose.

The infinitive verb form is no doubt related to lá.ti and àti. The nominalization with àti and the compound formed from it by prefixing ní (i.e. ní àti > lá.ti) have practically the same meaning as the infinitive. For example,

ó fẹ lá.ti lọ	}	'He wants to go'
ó fẹ ị́		
ilé náàà ẹ̀ro lá.ti kọ	}	'The house is difficult to build'
ilé náàà ẹ̀ro ị́kọ		
ilé náàà ẹ̀ro ní ị́kọ ³⁰		

In fact, so close is the correspondence that the clauses with lá.ti may be considered to be the underlying forms from which the clauses with the infinitive are derived. A stronger evidence for such a derivation is, however, to be found in the variant ilé náàà ẹ̀ro ní ị́kọ, where the ní in lá.ti is retained before the infinitive.

As far as the pre-infinitive verbs are concerned, there are two patterns of derivation:

- (a) lá.ti replaced by ị́;
- (b) lá.ti or àti replaced by ị́.³¹

The first pattern is subject to two conditions:

- (i) The verb following lá.ti should not govern any preceding nominal.
- (ii) The verb before lá.ti should be one of the following: fẹ 'want', ní 'have', pẹ 'be late', tó 'reach', yé 'stop', fẹ̀rẹ 'almost', bẹ̀rẹ́sì 'start to'.³²

³⁰ Another possible variant is ilé náàà ẹ̀ro ní kíkọ 'The house is difficult in building', but the derivation of the infinitive from the reduplicated verbal noun is ruled out on the grounds that (a) the underlying clause can only have lá.ti (see later under 'subject replacement'), (b) the occurrence of the infinitive before máa 'continue to' cannot be related to a nominalization, i.e. ilé náàà ẹ̀ro ní ímáa kọ 'The house is difficult to be building' cannot be related to a non-existent nominalization in *ilé náàà ẹ̀ro ní míímáa kọ, and (c) ní kíkọ can be made a theme, e.g. ní kíkọ ní ilé náàà ẹ̀ro 'It is in building that the house is difficult'. This cannot be done with ní ị́kọ, nor with lá.ti kọ from which ní ị́kọ is derived.

³¹ The replacement of àti by ị́ can also take place when lá.ti is preceded by verbs other than pre-infinitive verbs, e.g. ilé .yí dára lá.ti wò > ilé .yí dára ní íwò 'This house is good to look at'; ị́ ẹ náà yẹ lá.ti ẹ > ị́ ẹ náà yẹ ní ị́ ẹ 'It is necessary to do the work'. The major difference, however, is that in these cases, the alternative replacement of lá.ti by ị́ is not possible. These verbs are probably on their way to becoming pre-infinitive verbs. They are, however, excluded from the discussion of verb-infinitive phrases in this paper.

³² The last three verbs will be discussed later.

For example, in

bàbá pẹ́ ídẹ́ (<bàbá pẹ́ lá.ti dẹ́)

'Father is late in arriving'

bàbá tó ìlọ́ (<bàbá tó lá.ti lọ́)

'Father is (old) enough to go'

the verbs *dẹ́* 'arrive' and *lọ́* 'go' do not govern the preceding nominal *bàbá* 'father'. These examples may be contrasted with *ìşẹ́ tó lá.ti şé* 'The work is enough to do', where the verb *şé* 'do' takes the preceding nominal *ìşẹ́* 'work' as its goal (i.e. what is done is the work), and where the second pattern of substitution applies. If the first condition is satisfied, and the verb is not one of those in the given list, the substitution will still not be possible. For example, in *ó şòro lá.ti wá* 'It is difficult to come', although the verb *wá* 'come' does not govern any preceding noun, the substitution of *í* for *lá.ti* is still not possible.

The second pattern of substitution is possible only if the verb following *lá.ti* governs a preceding nominal in the clause (i.e. if the nominal stands in the relation of a goal to the verb).³³ For example, from *ìşẹ́ şòro lá.ti şé* 'It is difficult to (do) work', where the verb *şé* 'do' does govern a preceding noun *ìşẹ́* 'work', one can derive both *ìşẹ́ şòro íşe* and *ìşẹ́ şòro ní íşe* 'It is difficult to (do) work'. Similarly from *wọ́n fẹ́ ìşẹ́ lá.ti şé* 'They want work to do' where the noun *ìşẹ́* is the object of the verb *şé* 'do', it is possible to derive *wọ́n fẹ́ ìşẹ́ íşe* and *wọ́n fẹ́ ìşẹ́ ní íşe* 'They want work to do'. The clauses with *lá.ti* in the second pattern of derivation contrast with those in the first where *àti > í* is not possible; e.g. from *ó fẹ́ lá.ti lọ́*, one can only derive *ó fẹ́ ìlọ́* 'He wants to go' and not **ó fẹ́ ní ìlọ́*.

There are six verbs in the group of pre-infinitive verbs which cannot precede *lá.ti*. These verbs are: *bẹ̀rẹ̀sí* 'start to', *mọ́* 'know', *şé* 'be possible', *yé* 'stop', *fẹ̀rẹ̀* 'almost' and *kú* (verb in greetings). It is not possible to have, for example,

*ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sí lá.ti sọ̀rọ́ 'He started to talk'

*ó mọ́ lá.ti şé ìşẹ́ 'He knows how to work'

*ó şé lá.ti şé 'It is possible to do'

In spite of this, these hypothetical forms will be set up for the derivation of the infinitive. The justification for this is that the *ní* form in *lá.ti* is preserved in one of the variants in the second pattern of derivation, i.e. it is possible to have *ó mọ́ ìşẹ́ íşe* 'He knows how to work' as well as *ó mọ́ ìşẹ́ ní íşe* 'He knows how to work'.³⁴ The parallel with the other pre-infinitive verbs can be shown in the following examples:

(i) *fẹ́* 'want'

wọ́n fẹ́ lá.ti máa şé ìşẹ́

wọ́n fẹ́ ìşẹ́ lá.ti máa şé

wọ́n fẹ́ ìşẹ́ ímáa şé

wọ́n fẹ́ ìşẹ́ ní ímáa şé

'They want to be working'

³³ The only exception to this is *bẹ̀rẹ̀sí*, e.g. in *ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sí ní íké* 'He started to cry' where the verb *ké* does not govern a preceding noun. Also in this second pattern, *àti > í* is not possible with the verb *şé*, i.e. one can only have *ó şé ìjẹ́* 'It can be eaten' but not **ó şé ní ìjẹ́*.

³⁴ If the underlying clause does not contain *lá.ti*, a non-existent form such as **ó mọ́ íşe ìşẹ́* would still have to be set up as the base form, and this will still fail to account for the occurrence of *ní* which will have to be inserted in one of the variants by a special device.

(ii) *şíwọ* 'stop'

wọ́n şíwọ lá.ti máa şe işe
wọ́n şíwọ işe lá.ti máa şe
wọ́n şíwọ işe ímáa şe
wọ́n şíwọ işe ní ímáa şe
 'They stopped (to be) working'

(iii) *mọ* 'know'

**wọ́n mọ lá.ti máa şe işe*
 **wọ́n mọ işe lá.ti máa şe*
wọ́n mọ işe ímáa şe
wọ́n mọ işe ní ímáa şe
 (lit. They know to be working)
 'They know how to be working')

By analogy with the first two verbs, hypothetical forms with *lá.ti* are set up for the third verb. Such forms will be set up for the other verbs as well. The first pattern of derivation (see above) is possible with *bẹ̀rẹ́sí*, *yé*, and *fẹ̀rẹ̀* and the second pattern with all the six verbs except *fẹ̀rẹ̀*.

The close correspondence between *lá.ti* and the infinitive goes further to confirm that the former is not tied to a particular meaning such as 'purpose'. The infinitive does, in fact, cover a wide range of meanings, as illustrated by the following:

<i>ó mọ işe işe</i>	(lit. he knows work to do) = 'He knows how to work'
<i>yé íşòrọ</i>	(lit. stop to talk) = 'Stop talking'
<i>ó ní işe işe</i>	(lit. he has work to do) = 'He has work to do'
<i>kò ní işe işe</i>	(lit. he has no work to do) = 'He won't work' or 'He doesn't want to work'
<i>ó pẹ́ ídé</i>	(lit. he is late to come) = 'He was late in arriving'
<i>ó fẹ́ ilọ</i>	(lit. he wants to go) = 'He wants to go'
<i>ilẹ́ .yí fẹ́ íwó</i>	(lit. this house wants to collapse) = 'This house is about to collapse'
<i>ó şòro işe</i>	(lit. it is difficult to do) = 'It is difficult to do'
<i>ó şe işe</i>	(lit. it is possible to do) = 'It can be done'

A new classification of sentences or clauses having verbal phrases of the verb-infinitive type is presented below. This classification is based on differences of structure which in turn reflect underlying systemic choices in the complex network of systems in the deep grammar.³⁵

The first major division of the clauses is into two types: (i) clauses with subject as goal, and (ii) clauses with subject as actor. These may be exemplified as follows:

(i) Subject as goal

ọ̀bẹ́ náàá şòro íjẹ
 'It is difficult to eat the stew'

³⁵ For a detailed exposition of the systemic theory of grammar from which this concept is taken, see M. A. K. Halliday 'Notes on transitivity and theme in English', JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS, vol. III, no. 1 (1967); vol. III, no. 2 (1967); and vol. IV, no. 2 (1968). 'Some notes on "deep" grammar', JOURNAL OF LINGUISTICS, vol. II, no. 1 (1966). See also R. A. Huddleston, 'Rank and depth', LANGUAGE, vol. XLI, no. 4 (1965), and R. A. Hudson, 'Constituency in a systemic description of the English clause', LINGUA, vol. XVIII, no. 3 (1968).

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ìṣẹ́ náàà dùn íṣe

'The work is pleasant to do'

ilé wù mí íkọ́

(lit. 'It pleases me to build a house')

'I would love to build a house'

(ii) Subject as actor

ọ̀kùnrin .yí fẹ́ ilọ́

'This man wants to go'

ọ̀kùnrin náàà mọ́ ìṣẹ́ íṣe

'The man knows how to work'

Olú pé ídẹ́

'Olú was late in arriving'

The difference between the two sets of clauses is the role of the subject in relation to the infinitive. In clauses having the subject as goal, the subject stands in the relationship of 'goal' to the infinitive, i.e. the action of the verb is directed to the subject. In ọ̀bẹ́ náàà ẹ̀ro íṣe 'The stew is difficult to eat', what is to be eaten is ọ̀bẹ́ náà 'the stew', which is the subject of the clause. The goal of the action is therefore the subject. The same is true of the relationship of ẹ́ 'do' to ìṣẹ́ náà 'the work' in ìṣẹ́ náàà dùn íṣe 'The work is pleasant to do', and kọ́ 'build' to ilé 'house' in ilé wù mí íkọ́ 'I would love to build a house'. In contrast to this set of examples, the subject in the other set of examples is not the goal but the actor. The action of the verb lọ́ 'go' in ọ̀kùnrin .yí fẹ́ ilọ́ 'This man wants to go' is performed by ọ̀kùnrin .yí 'this man'; and the same is true of the verbs of the infinitive and the subjects in the other two clauses. The verbs ẹ̀ro 'be difficult', sù 'tire', wù 'please', dùn 'be sweet', yá 'be quick', ẹ́ 'be possible', rọ̀rùn 'be easy' occur as the pre-infinitive verbs in clauses with subject as goal. All the other verbs except tó 'reach' occur in clauses with subject as actor. The verb tó occurs in both types of clauses.

The second major division of the clauses is into (i) clauses with subject replacement and (ii) clauses without subject replacement. The two types may be exemplified as follows:

(i) Subject replacement

ọ̀bẹ́ náàà ẹ̀ro íṣe

'It is difficult to eat the stew'

ọ̀bẹ́ náàà rọ̀rùn ísẹ́

'It is easy to cook the stew'

ẹ̀mu náàà tó ímu

'It is time to drink the palm-wine'

(ii) Non-subject replacement

ilé náàà bèrẹ̀sí írùn

'The house began to smell'

àwọ̀n ọ̀lọ̀tẹ̀ẹ́ dẹ́.kun ìjà ìjà

'The rebels stopped fighting'

ẹ̀mu náàà tó ímu

'The palm-wine is enough to drink'

The difference between the two types of clauses is that in the case of a clause with subject replacement, the overt subject can be traced to an underlying subject, whereas there is no such underlying subject in the case of a clause without subject replacement. In ọ̀bẹ́ náàà ẹ̀ro íṣe 'The stew is difficult to eat', the overt subject is ọ̀bẹ́ náà 'the soup'. It

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is clear that this is not the original subject, because **ɔ̀bẹ̀ náàá ʃòro* 'The stew is difficult' is not an acceptable clause in the language. In other words, *ɔ̀bẹ̀ náà* is not really the subject of *ʃòro*, but is just a substitute subject. The clause *ɔ̀bẹ̀ náàá ʃòro íjẹ* can be traced back to *ó ʃòro lá.ti jẹ ɔ̀bẹ̀ náà* 'It is difficult to eat the stew' where there is a provisional pronoun subject *ó* 'it'. The object of the verb *jẹ* 'eat' replaces this provisional subject, thus becoming the overt subject and giving *ɔ̀bẹ̀ náàá ʃòro lá.ti jẹ > ɔ̀bẹ̀ náàá ʃòro íjẹ* 'It is difficult to eat the stew'.³⁶ In the case of the clauses listed under non-subject replacement, there is no such replacement. Perhaps the distinction becomes clearer if an ambiguous clause is considered; for example, *ẹmu náàá tó ímu* is ambiguous. When a subject replacement is involved, the clause can be traced back to:

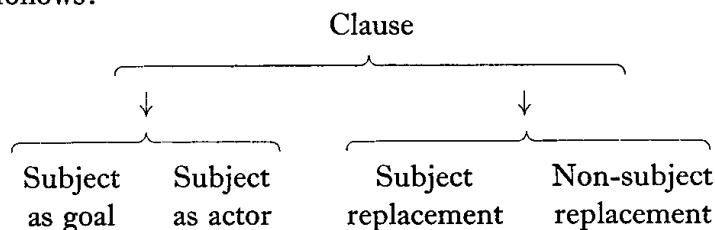
ó tó (àko.kò) lá.ti mu ẹmu náà
(lit. 'it reaches (time) to drink the palm-wine')
'It is time to drink the palm-wine'

When no subject replacement is involved, the clause is simply

ẹmu náàá tó ímu
(lit. the palm-wine reaches to drink)
'The palm-wine is enough to drink'

with *ẹmu náà* 'the palm-wine' as the real subject of *tó* 'reach'. This kind of ambiguity is possible whenever the pre-infinitive verb is one of the group of verbs that can occur in clauses with subject as goal (see above). Wherever a subject can occur with any of these verbs in a clause having only one verb, the clause is potentially ambiguous. For example, because *ɔ̀bẹ̀ náàá dùn* 'The stew is delicious' is possible, *ɔ̀bẹ̀ náàá dùn íjẹ* 'The stew is delicious to eat' can either be a clause without subject replacement, with the meaning 'The stew is delicious when eaten', or a clause with subject replacement meaning 'It is pleasant to eat the stew'. Where the subject cannot occur in a one-verb clause, then it definitely belongs to a clause with subject replacement. For example, *ọ̀kùnrin náàá dùn íwò* 'The man is pleasant to look at' can only be a clause with subject replacement because the verb *dùn* 'be sweet' only takes a non-human subject, i.e. **ọ̀kùnrin náàá dùn* 'The man is delicious' is not an acceptable clause in the language.

The two major divisions of the clauses can be represented in terms of two systems, each consisting of a choice between two terms: subject as goal or subject as actor in one system, and subject replacement or non-subject replacement in the other. This may be represented as follows:



Since the two systems are independent of each other, and therefore freely combinable, there are four possible combinations:

³⁶ The subject of this clause can further be replaced by a 3rd person singular pronoun giving *ó ʃòro íjẹ* 'It is difficult to eat'. Note that this pronoun is different from the provisional pronoun subject. It refers to a definite noun phrase, whereas the other one does not.

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- (a) Subject as goal + subject replacement
E.g. ọbẹ náàá ọ̀ro íjẹ 'It is difficult to eat the stew'
ẹmu náàá tó ímu 'It is time to drink the palm-wine'
- (b) Subject as goal + non-subject replacement
E.g. ọbẹ náàá tó íjẹ 'The stew is enough to eat'
ọbẹ náàá dùn íjẹ 'The stew is delicious to eat'³⁷
- (c) Subject as actor + subject replacement
E.g. ọkùnrin náàá tó ílọ³⁸ 'It is time for the man to go'
- (d) Subject as actor + non-subject replacement
E.g. ọkùnrin náàá fẹ ílọ 'The man wants to go'
ọkùnrin náàá tó ílọ 'The man is (old) enough to go'

When the clause with subject as actor is selected, further options are possible. The infinitive may or may not have an object. The two types may be exemplified as follows:

- (i) With object
ó fẹ íra aṣọ 'He wants to buy cloth'
ó pẹ íṣe íṣẹ 'He was late to (do) work'
- (ii) Without object
ó fẹ ílọ 'He wants to go'
ó pẹ ídẹ 'He was late in arriving'
wọ́n bẹ̀rẹ̀sí íjọ́ 'They started to dance'

The distinction between the two types is based on actual occurrence of an object with the infinitive. Obviously, only verbs that can take an object (traditional 'transitive verbs') will occur in the infinitive in (i); but it does not follow that the verbs in the infinitive in (ii) must be intransitive. For example, the verb jọ 'dance' in one of the examples given under (ii) above is a transitive verb with the goal unexpressed.

If an object occurs with the infinitive, there is a further choice between a clause with an invertible object and one without. Examples of the two types are:

- (i) Invertible object
ó fẹ ígẹ́ ígì
ó fẹ́ ígì ígẹ́
'He wants to cut a tree'
ẹ yé iwò mí
ẹ yé mí iwò
'Stop looking at me'
wọ́n mọ ọ̀rọ́ ísọ
'They know how to talk'
- (ii) Non-invertible Object
ó pẹ́ íṣe íṣẹ́ 'He was late to (do) work'
ó fẹ̀rẹ́ ígbà owó 'He almost took money'

The difference between the two types is that in the non-invertible object, the original position of the object after the infinitive must be maintained. For example, in ó pẹ́ íṣe íṣẹ́ 'He was late to (do) work', the object íṣẹ́ stands after the verb ẹ. This position is the

³⁷ This clause is ambiguous. It could also come under (a) with the meaning 'It is pleasant to eat the stew'.

³⁸ This is derived from: ó tó àkò.kò fún ọkùnrin náà lá.ti lọ 'It is time for the man to go'.

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same as its original one in the underlying form *ó pẹ lá.ti ẹ ịẹ* 'He was late to (do) work'. In the case of the invertible object however, this original position may be changed. For example, in *ó ẹ lá.ti gẹ igi* 'He wants to cut a tree' the object follows the verb; but this sequence may be reversed as in *ó ẹ igi ige* 'He wants to cut a tree'. Similarly, the object-verb sequence in *wọn mọ ọrọ ísọ* 'They know how to talk' can be traced back to the verb-object sequence in **wọn mọ lá.ti sọ ọrọ*.

The clause with an invertible object must have one of the following pre-infinitive verbs: *tó* 'reach', *ẹ* 'want', *ní* 'have', *bẹrẹsí* 'start', *yé* 'stop', *mọ* 'know', *kọ* 'teach', *kú* (verb in greetings), *dẹ.kun* 'cease', *wá* (alternative to *ẹ*) 'want', *gbá.dùn* 'enjoy'. The clause with a non-invertible object has one of the following pre-infinitive verbs: *pẹ* 'be late', *tó* 'reach', *fẹrẹ* 'almost'. The pre-infinitive verb *tó* 'reach' occurs in both types and this overlap is reflected in a difference of meaning. For example, *ó tó ífọ aṣọ* is ambiguous. It could either mean 'He is (old) enough to wash clothes' or 'It is time for him to wash clothes'. The former is a case of invertible object, for the alternative *ó tó aṣọ ífọ* is also possible with the same meaning. The latter is, however, a case of non-invertible object.

In the clauses with an invertible object, there is a further choice between optional and obligatory inversion of the object. In the former, the object may either follow or precede the infinitive; in the latter, the object must precede the infinitive. Optional inversion is possible when the preinfinitive verb is one of the following: *tó* 'reach', *ní* 'have', *bẹrẹsí* 'start' and *yé* 'stop'. Obligatory inversion is required when the pre-infinitive verb is one of the following: *mọ* 'know', *kọ* 'teach', *kú* (verb in greetings), *dẹ.kun* 'cease', *ní* 'have', *wá* 'want', and *gbádùn* 'enjoy'. Examples of the two types are:

(i) Optional Inversion

ó ẹ ịẹ ịẹ
ó ẹ ịẹ ịẹ
 'He wants to (do) work'
ó bẹrẹsí íwò mí
ó bẹrẹsí mí íwò
 'He started to look at me'
bàbá kò ní íra mọ̀tò
bàbá kò ní mọ̀tò írà
 'Father won't buy a car'

(ii) Obligatory Inversion

wọn ẹ́wọ ọ̀rọ ísọ
 'They stopped talking'
ẹ kú ọ̀rọ ísọ
 'You talkatives, greetings'
wọn dẹ.kun ìjà ìjà
 'They ceased fighting'
ó ní ìwé ìkà
 'He has to/wants to read'

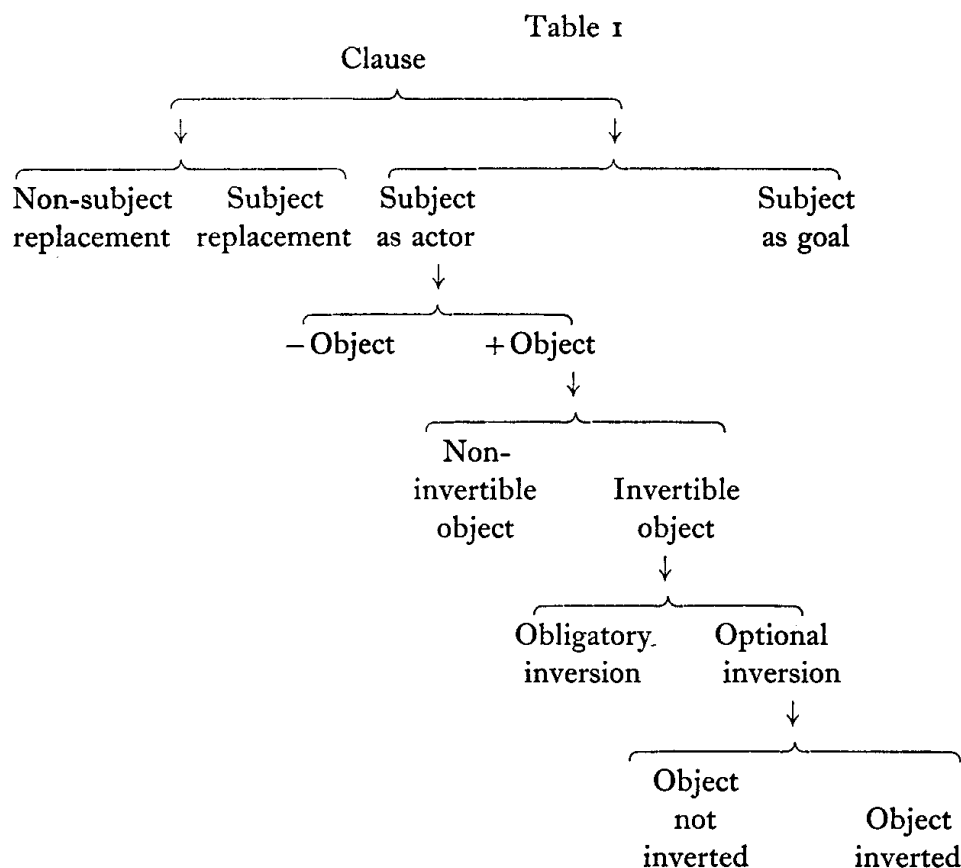
The list of pre-infinitive verbs given for each of the two types shows that the verb *ní* 'have' occurs in both types. A positive clause such as *ó ní ìwé ìkà* 'He has to/wants to read' can only be of type (ii) with obligatory inversion; but a negative clause such as *kò ní ìwé ìkà* is ambiguous. It could either be one of the two possibilities in an optional inversion

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with the meaning: 'He won't read' or a case of obligatory inversion with the meaning: 'He doesn't have to/want to read'.

In a clause with optional inversion of the object there is still a choice between inverting the object and not inverting it (object inverted/object not inverted). For example, one can either say *wọ̀n ò yé íbú mí* or *wọ̀n ò yé mí íbú* for 'They didn't stop abusing me'. The meaning is practically the same, but there is a stylistic difference and probably a difference of emphasis. The latter variant tends to emphasize the object whereas the former does not. (All the examples under optional inversion above also illustrate this choice.)

The network of systems may be summarized as in Table 1.



When all the possible options are combined, there are nine different types of clause: one under subject as goal + subject replacement, one under subject as goal + non-subject replacement, two under subject as goal + subject replacement, and five under subject as actor + non-subject replacement. These may be exemplified as follows:

- (a) Subject as goal + subject replacement
ọ́tí ẹ̀ro ímu 'It is difficult to drink wine'
- (b) Subject as goal + non-subject replacement
ẹ̀mú dùn ímu 'Palm-wine is sweet to drink'
- (c) Subject as actor + subject replacement
 - (i) + object, non-invertible object
Olú tó ífọ aṣọ 'It is time for Olu to wash clothes'
 - (ii) - object
Olú tó ílọ 'It is time for Olú to go'

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(d) Subject as actor + non-subject replacement

- (i) + object, non-invertible object
ó pẹ íşe íşé 'He was late to (do) work'
- (ii) + object, invertible object, obligatory inversion
wọ̀n şíwọ̀ ọ̀rọ̀ íşọ 'They stopped talking'
- (iii) + object, invertible object, optional inversion, object inverted
ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sí mí íwò 'He started to look at me'
- (iv) + object, invertible object, optional inversion, object not inverted
ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sí íwò mí 'He started to look at me'
- (v) – object
ó bẹ̀rẹ̀sí íké 'He started to cry'

The pre-infinitive verbs that operate in the nine types of clauses are as follows:

- (a) şòro 'be difficult', sú 'tire', wù 'please', tó 'reach' dùn 'sweet', yá 'be quick', şe 'be possible', rọ̀rùn 'be easy'
- (b) As for (a)
- (c) (i) and (ii) tó 'reach'
- (d) (i) pẹ 'be late', fẹ̀rẹ̀ 'almost'
- (ii) mọ̀ 'know', kú (verb in greetings), dẹ.kun 'cease', ní 'have', wá 'want', gbádùn 'enjoy', şíwọ̀ 'stop', kọ̀ 'teach'
- (iii) fẹ̀ 'like', tó 'reach', ní 'have', bẹ̀rẹ̀sí 'start', yé 'stop'
- (iv) As for (iii)
- (v) As for (i) and (iii)

The pre-infinitive verb tó 'reach' is found in seven of the nine types of clauses. This makes ambiguities possible, as may be shown in the pairs (a) and (b), (c)(i) and (d)(iv), (c)(ii) and (d)(v) below:

- (a) Olú tó ínà 'It is time to flog Olu'
- (b) Olú tó ínà 'Olu is (old) enough to be flogged'
- (c) (i) Olú tó ífọ̀ aşọ 'It is time for Olu to wash clothes'
- (ii) Olú tó ílọ 'It is time for Olu to go'
- (d) (i) Nil
- (ii) Nil
- (iii) Olú tó aşọ ífọ̀ 'Olu is (old) enough to wash clothes'
- (iv) Olú tó ífọ̀ aşọ 'Olu is (old) enough to wash clothes'
- (v) Olú tó ílọ 'Olu is (old) enough to go'

The foregoing discussion shows that the high tone junction occurring after certain verbs in the surface grammar of Standard Yoruba is more than a mere morphophonemic phenomenon. Its immediate derivation is the prefix í of the infinitive which is assimilated to the final vowel of the preceding verb, or of the inverted object of the infinitive following this verb. The verb-infinitive phrase consisting of a pre-infinitive verb + an infinitive is closely associated with, and derivable from, a stylistic variant with lá.ti. The clauses in which the verb-infinitive phrase occurs are also shown to involve structural as well as semantic distinctions which may be stated in terms of options in a network of systems.