

AN X-BAR ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND OKUN PHRASE STRUCTURES

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
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AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) DEGREE IN ENGLISH**

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation “An X-Bar Analysis of English and Okun Phrase Structures” is a record of my own original work. To my knowledge, it has never been presented partially or wholly anywhere before for the award of any M.A. degree or its equivalent. All sources cited and consulted are appropriately acknowledged.

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Signature & Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled “An X-Bar Analysis of English and Okun Phrase Structures” by OLORUNMADE, Johnson E.F. meets the regulations governing the award of Master of Arts (M.A) Degree in English Language in the Department of English and Literary Studies, Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memories of my father- late Mr Joshua Olorunmade Osamika; my mentor- late Prof. Aderemi Bamikunle and my spiritual role model- late Pastor Emmanuel Kehinde Oluleye. In death, the efficacy of their life-transforming impact is still strongly felt in every facet of my life including the courage that fascinated the successful accomplishment of this academic task. May your souls rest in perfect peace.

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to contrast the phrase structures of English and Okun languages. The main objectives of this research are to: identify areas of similarities and differences and account for the difficulties the structural differences are liable to pose to Okun learners of English and vice-versa. The data used in this research are mainly based on the utterances collected from fifty-three (53) indigenous speakers of Okun at different communicative contexts at a wedding ceremony. Three of the informants reside in Zaria while others reside in Iffè, Kabba and Egbè in Kogi state. However, in this study, the researcher adopts the Ìjùmú dialect for data transcription. This is as a result of the structural similarities that characterize all Okun dialects. So, any of the dialects of Okun can be used to represent others. Data were also collected from written materials that have relevance to this study. The data collected reflect the contents of the scope (NP, VP, AdjP, PP, and AdvP) that constitute the principal focus of this study. The version of x-bar developed by Chomsky is the model of analysis adopted in this research because: it has been established that the theory captures the structural analysis of English and most languages across the globe; it presupposes that all languages share certain structural similarities which are not adequately captured in the analysis of the phrase structure rules for English and most natural languages – Okun inclusive and it also probes into the correctness and applicability of right branching linguistic tenet to Okun phrase structure. This study reveals that there are structural similarities in the phrase structures of the languages contrasted as: NPs have the capacity to serve as subjects, objects, complements and appositions in sentences; compound linguistic entities possess structural alignment; the verbal conjugation in both languages (English and Okun) have structural plausibility; the prepositional phrases contain both maginary and imaginary specifiers; specifier of a phrase in both languages contrasted has a linguistic designated head which signals its grammaticality, correctness and acceptability; it confirms that while functional heads legislate on the structure of an expression, lexical heads regulate the meaning of the phrase structures of the contrasted languages as a result of their influence over elements within their respective scopes. These overtly represent a few instances where the right branching principle is not structurally adhered to in Okun phrases. This research also portrays that there are structural differences in the phrase structures of the two languages analysed as specifiers majorly adhere to left branching linguistic tenet in English while they (specifiers) maintain the right branching tenet in Okun and the differences are liable to pose difficulties to Okun learners of English. This difficulty is reflected in some ‘unstructural’ sequences that may be produced by Okun learners of English before they are thoroughly exposed to the syntactic principles governing the use of English. The study recommends that: there should be more creation of awareness among the native speakers of Okun about the need to promote more studies on the language using English as a model; the environmental atmosphere should be made conducive for the study of Okun language in every facet; there should be a forum that would bring the elites of Okun land together as to deliberate on how the language could be standardized; authors should be encouraged to write books as well as other relevant materials that would enhance the survival of Okun; linguists should be motivated to embark on contrastive analysis of English and Okun languages at all levels of linguistic description in order to unveil some of the unique linguistic virtues that distinguish between the two languages.

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Adj	-	Adjective-	-	-	-	-	-	61	
AdjP	-	Adjective Phrase	-	-	-	-	-	57	
AdjPs	-	Adjectival Phrases-	-	-	-	-	-	109	
AdjP ¹	-	Adjectival Phrase Prime	-	-	-	-	-	94	
Adv	-	Adverb	-	-	-	-	-	66	
AdvP	-	Adverbial Phrase-	-	-	-	-	-	57	
AdvPs	-	Adverbial Phrases-	-	-	-	-	-	109	
AdvP ¹	-	Adverbial Phrase Prime-	-	-	-	-	-	99	
AG	-	Adverbial Group-	-	-	-	-	-	60	
AGR	-	Agreement	-	-	-	-	-	74	
AP	-	Adjective Phrase	-	-	-	-	-	75	
Asp	-	Aspect	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Aux	-	Auxiliary-	-	-	-	-	-	86	
C	-	amount of lexical words preserved in two languages with the same parent-	-	-	-	-	-	20	
C/comp.	-	Complementizer	-	-	-	-	-	75	
C.A	-	Contrastive Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	9	
CET	-	Council of Europe Team	-	-	-	-	-	12	
CLA	-	Contrastive Linguistic Analysis-	-	-	-	-	-	6	
CF	-	Compare	-	-	-	-	-	72	
CLS	-	Contrastive Linguistic Studies	-	-	-	-	-	7	
Cont.	-	Continuous	-	-	-	-	-	86	
Conj.	-	Conjunction-	-	-	-	-	-	90	
CP	-	Complementizer Phrase-	-	-	-	-	-	75	
Deg	-	Degree-	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Det	-	Determiner-	-	-	-	-	-	61	
DP	-	Determiner Phrase	-	-	-	-	-	68	
ESP	-	English for Specific Purpose	-	-	-	-	-	13	
ibid	-	The one that has just been mentioned	-	-	-	-	-	54	
I/ Infl	-	Inflections	-	-	-	-	-	70	
IP	-	Inflectional Phrase	-	-	-	-	-	75	
Int	-	Intensifier	-	-	-	-	-	107	
i.e.	-	that is	-	-	-	-	-	60	

EA	-	Error Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
e.g.	-	For Example	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
et al	-	and other people-	-	-	-	-	-	-	58
etc.	-	et ce tera (and so on)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-F	-	Lexical Heads	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
+F	-	Functional Heads-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
GB	-	Government and Binding	-	-	-	-	-	-	71
h	-	head	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
L.G.A	-	Local Government Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
L1	-	First Language-	-	-	-	-	-	9	
L2	-	Second Language	-	-	-	-	-	8	
M	-	Modifier-	-	-	-	-	-	60	
MP	-	Minimalist Programme	-	-	-	-	-	52	
N	-	Noun	-	-	-	-	-	61	
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Neg	-	Negative	-	-	-	-	-	65	
NG	-	Nominal Group-	-	-	-	-	-	60	
NP	-	Noun Phrase-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
NP ¹	-	Noun Phrase Prime	-	-	-	-	-	74	
No	-	Number	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Op cit	-	Cited above	-	-	-	-	-	7	
PA	-	Performance Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	11	
Pers No-	-	Person number	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Perf	-	Perfective-	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Pres	-	Present	-	-	-	-	-	74	
P/Prep	-	preposition-	-	-	-	-	-	62	
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PP	-	Prepositional Phrase	-	-	-	-	-	1	
PPs	-	Prepositional Phrases-	-	-	-	-	-	98	
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P& P	-	Principle and Parameter	-	-	-	-	-	62	
PSG	-	Phrase Structure Grammar	-	-	-	-	-	73	
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Q	- Qualifier	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
R	- constant linguistic items retained in two languages with common origin	-							20
RHR	- Right-hand Headed Rule	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69
S	- Sentence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61
SVO	- Subject Verb Object-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	68
Spec	- Specifier	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	74
T	- degree of difference between two languages with common source	-							20
TG	- Traditional Grammar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
TGG	- Transformative Generative Grammar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
Tns	- Tense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	74
UG	- Universal Grammar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
V	- Verb	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
VP	- Verb Phrase	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
VP ¹	- Verb Phrase Prime	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90
X	- Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
...X	- Premodified Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69
X...	- Postmodified Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69
XP	- Maximal Projection-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63
X ¹	- Intermediate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
&	- And	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
α	- Alpha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63
β	- Beta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63
%	- Percentage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
/	- or	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Phrase is a crucial aspect that cannot be undermined in syntactic analysis. It is a combination of two or more words that does not signal a lucid and comprehensive meaning in all languages across the globe (Chomsky, 1995; Katamba, 1996; Omoniwa, 2003; Crystal, 2008; Mansur, 2015). This notwithstanding, there is a convention governing the structural sequence of every phrase (NP, VP, PP, etc.). The linguistic study of conventional structure of words, phrases, etc. is called syntax which is derived from Greek words ‘syn’-together and ‘tax’-arrangement. This is to say that the words are not strung together in a random order; they follow rules allowed by human language (Yusuf, 1997:2; Arokoyo, 2013:49). So, it should be noted that a sentence is made up of words, phrases and clauses. At the level of syntax, the word is the smallest unit, which graduates into a phrase, clause and sentence. Syntax is the study of the arrangement of words to form sentence. In speech, the knowledge of syntax assists the native speakers of a language put to bear on the discourse his total knowledge of the language and his competence. Syntax is a branch of linguistics; it is a level of language analysis. Yule (1996:100) defines syntax as a specific method of describing the structure of phrases and sentences. Tallerman (2005) defines syntax as the study of syntactic properties of language.

Akmanian et al (2004) see syntax as sub-field of linguistics that study internal structure of sentence and relationship among the internal words. Radford (1997) submits that, syntax is concerned with the ways in which words are to form sentences. A sentence has structures. When we are talking about syntax, we are referring to arrangement or ordering of words to make grammatical meaning. Syntax is a subfield of linguistics that explains the combinational possibilities of

words that are permissible in a given language i.e. the regular co-occurrence, combination, arrangement, ordering or better still structural arrangement of words to form meaningful sentence. It studies the internal arrangement of structure of a sentence and how these structures agree with each other.

The phrase structures of the concerned languages (English and Okun) are contrasted using an x-bar theory. The x-bar theory (as it functions within the government and binding theory) is adopted as a model for analysis because it deals with the nature and constraints associated with the phrase structure. It attempts to identify syntactic features presumably common to all human languages of the world that fit in a presupposed framework. X-bar presupposes that, all languages share certain structural similarities which are not captured in the analysis of the phrase structure rules for English and other natural languages. The x-bar theory is designed to capture the inadequacies of the Phrase Structure Grammar (PSG).

English, being one of the leading globalized languages which has been studied or analysed in all aspects of linguistic description, provides the pattern for the analysis in this research. On the other hand, Okun, one of the minor Nigerian indigenous languages that is majorly used in six Local Government Areas- Ìjùmú, Kabba-Bùnú, Yàgbà -West, Yàgbà -East, Mopa-Muro and Lokoja of the Western Senatorial District of Kogi state is yet to receive this serious linguistic description. The fact remains that every language is unique at each level of formal linguistic description; the uniqueness has implications on the linguistic concept of language universal. In the light of this, this study will analyse the phrase structures of English and Okun in order to bring into limelight areas of similarities and dissimilarities in both languages and to account for the difficulties that the differences may likely pose to Okun learners of English and vice versa.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

It is true that there are a lot of researches in linguistics which beam their academic searchlight on the analysis of English and other languages across the globe. Some Nigerian linguists (Adetugbo, 1982; Williams, 1986; Bamgbose, 1986; Emenanjo, 1996; Awoboluyi, 1998; Fabunmi, 1998; Amfani, 1995, etc.) have given series of descriptions either comparatively or contrastively of selected Nigerian languages based on existing theoretical knowledge. This has shed considerable light on the internal structures of the languages, yet more needs to be done with regards to the development of many African languages that have not been scientifically studied.

Existing literatures show that the linguistics of Nigerian languages has been concentrated more on the three major Nigerian languages- Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. In spite of this, many of the ‘minor’ Nigerian languages are yet to receive this kind of linguistic attention. However, there are a few available literature on Okun which is one of the aforementioned minority indigenous languages in Nigeria. For instance, works by Baiyere (1999); Otitoju (2003); Arokoyo, (2010, 2013); etc. have shed some considerable light on the phonological, morphological and syntactic aspects of Okun. Despite the efforts of these scholars, Okun syntax has not received sufficient attention at every level of linguistic descriptions. Precisely, the phrase structures of both English and Okun have not been contrastively analysed using an x-bar theory as a model to show the differences and similarities. Therefore, this research sets out to fill in this gap by adopting the x-bar theory to analyse the phrase structures of the duo languages.

1.3 Research Questions

This study targets the following:

- a. What are the structural similarities between English and Okun languages?

- b. What are the structural differences between the two languages?
- c. What are the difficulties that Okun users of English may face due to the structural differences between the two languages?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to carry out an x-bar analysis of English and Okun phrase structures.

The objectives however, are to:

- i. identify the similarities and differences that exist in the phrase structures of English and Okun languages.
- ii. analyse the English and Okun phrase structures using x-bar theory.
- iii. account for the difficulty that the structural difference poses to Okun users of English.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study constitutes another academic dimension to the study of linguistics most especially in Nigeria. The researcher discovers that most of the available literature in linguistics reflects that there is no absolute structural universal between two languages morphosyntactically. This analysis provides linguistic insights into Okun phrase structure.

In addition, this research enlightens the language educator on the linguistic workings of Okun phrase structure which will arouse the interest of other linguists to study some other minor Nigerian languages. Finally, the study is hoped to produce additional linguistic or academic tool that will tremendously review the structural divergence and convergence that exist among languages across the globe.

1.6 Justification for the Study

In general, this study seeks to contribute to the linguistics of Nigerian languages some of which are fast dying or losing relevance. This work also constitutes a positive response to the appeals made by linguists in journals, research works and at conferences, that more research is needed in the area of contrastive analysis of English and other Nigerian languages. This will prevent most of the Nigeria's indigenous languages from decay, death or extinction.

Many scholars have made efforts to develop some Nigerian languages as earlier stated. But, many of the indigenous languages are yet to attract the attention of researchers while a few that have received such attention have not been adequately studied. Specifically, the phonology of Okun language has been studied by Arokoyo (2010). She has also conducted a research on the linguistics of Owé (one of the major dialects of Okun) but much has not been done on the syntax of the language.

The study enhances the linguistic dignity that is embedded in Okun language when contrasted with a global language (English). The researcher also believes that this analysis will create an avenue for other researchers across the globe to conduct quantitative and qualitative researches on Okun language which will bring the language into limelight.

1.7 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study investigates the noun phrase (as a subject, as an object, as a complement and as an apposition), verb phrase (pre and post verbal), adjectival phrase, adverbial phrase and prepositional phrase structures of English and Okun. This consolidates the fact that analysis does not emphasize participial phrase, gerundive phrase and infinitival phrase because each of them does not possess overt structural representation in Okun. Rather, it focuses on the earlier specified phrase structures as they occur in the larger structures-

clauses or sentences. Among the five traditional Okun dialects (Ìjùmú, Owé, Ìyàgbà, Bùnú and Ọwọ̀rọ̀), the Ìjùmú dialect is adopted for the analysis of Okun phrase structure. This is as a result of the structural similarities that characterize the Okun phrase pattern. So, any of the dialects of Okun can be used to represent others.

1.8 Basic Assumptions

In order to be able to properly probe into the above identified problems successfully, this study is premised on the following assumptions:

- i. Contrastive linguistics analysis (CLA) is a scientific study of language which involves a systematic description of any two languages, and an analysis of the differences and similarities from the contrast.
- ii. All human languages share a number of essential features (linguistic universals) e.g. occurrence of certain structural types in words, phrases, clauses and sentences.
- iii. The two languages- English and Okun are capable of structural description provided by the x-bar theory.
- iv. CLA seeks to delineate those features which are similar and those that are different; it is the differences that have always been emphasised.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Preamble

This chapter comprises two major segments- review of literature and theoretical framework. The former is divided into two parts: topical and authorial review. The topical review comprises concepts such as: contrastive linguistic study, Okun language, phonemes/alphabet, morphemes, words and phrases, phrase structure and phrasal categories which are related to the current study as described linguistically by different scholars. The authorial review captures a few previous studies by different scholars which are related to the current study.

2.1 Contrastive Linguistic Study

The emergence of linguistics has greatly enhanced the study on history of language, that is, the changes language manifest. It is lucid that language change was present in the thought of the ancient Greeks and Hindus but it was in eighteenth century that one of the most important aspects of historical linguistics developed in Europe. Prior to this period, several scholars made efforts to compare languages taking into cognizance their origins. As time rolled by, researchers in this regard (Reed, Lado, Yao, Shen, 1948-1957) in America, and the Prague School of Linguistics (1928-1960) in the Eastern Europe gained prominence. Anderson (1973) observes that during this period, language was viewed as a historical line of development in which constant modification occurred resulting in different and more recent stages. The primary objective of such studies was to establish historical and genetic connections that exist between languages on the basis of their manifest similarities, particularly between the forms. It was from such studies that the notion of language families was developed. In consonance with this, Corder (1985) poses an insight to the

approach of language as organism and is prominently concerned to explain the nature of linguistic change. This is further consolidated in Armstrong (1967):

I present comparisons between a selection of some eight words or word-roots which seem to have cognate reflexes of each other in various languages and which can therefore be taken as evidence that these languages genetically related to each other at varying degrees of distance.

The above assertion proves the existence of ‘pure’ contrastive study as opposed to ‘applied’ contrastive study that possesses a pedagogical implication. In the same vein, James (1980) aptly identifies contrastive and error analysis as tools in Applied Linguistics. Udegbumam (2004) avers that they are called tools in Applied Linguistics because of the solutions they proffer to the problems encountered in the teaching and learning of a target language. She notes that contrastive and error analyses are tools developed by the structural grammarians for identifying problems encountered when learning the target language by the second language (L2) learner.

Contrastive Linguistic Analysis (CLA) was central to linguistic studies, notably in the 19th and 20th century Europe under the title comparative philology. CLA is primarily structured to determine the formal similarities and differences between languages for purely theoretical purposes (Olaofe, 1982). To buttress this assertion, Ringborn (1994) reveals that contrastive studies, which is also called ‘Contrastive linguistics’ means, a systematic comparison of the linguistic systems of two or more languages. Similarly, James (1980) opines that it is a linguistic enterprise aimed at producing inverted two-valued typologies. This assertion apparently portrays that contrastive study cannot be effective or efficient without a focus and a process. James (op cit) states that CLA is always concerned with a pair of languages, and founded on the assumption that languages can be compared. Richards (1992) sums up the concern of CLA as comparison of the linguistic systems of two languages, for example, their sound

system or grammatical system in order to compare their structures and show whether they are similar or different. Lado (1957), the chief proponent of CLA, sees it as a scientific outlook into describing a language. He notes that it should be done carefully and in line with the native language of the learner with the aim of predicting possible problems and proffering solutions to the problems. In his view, contrastive analysis implies more differences than similarities existing between the source and the target languages.

Contrastive analysis according to Oluikpe (1981:21), is “the one in which the similarities and differences between two (or more) languages at particular levels are explicated in the context of a chosen theoretical framework.” This means that CA studies the differences and similarities existing between two or more languages that may border around different levels of formal or theoretical linguistic study: Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax and Semantics. Odlin (1989) also notes that CA is a technical term generated to account for the differences in the grammatical system of two languages. Smith (1969) sees the differences existing amongst languages as constituting the learning problems of non-native learner who often transfers structures acquired in speaking his/her mother tongue into the target language. It is on this platform that Anidobe (2004) notes that the hypothesis of Contrastive Analysis is said to be based on first language (L1) interference with the second language. Okorji and Okeke (2009:6) agree with this view by noting that CA “derives its importance from the belief that L1 influences the learning of another language.” They are of the opinion that CA should take place before teaching begins and that it incorporates error analysis. Bamgbose (1971:47) also emphasizes that “interference of the L1 poses the greatest difficulty for learners of the second language.” Anidobe (op cit) observes that the difficulties brought about by the transfer of structures from the source to the target language can best be determined by contrasting structures which has to do with contrastive analysis.

This, she notes, is based on the fact that similar features are not tampered with in language learning but differences in structures could make for exportation of structures from L1 to L2. She adds that the similar ones are simpler to handle while differences bring about difficulties. She however, portends that CA functions basically to predict the likely errors of the second language learner. This is in the bid to providing the linguistic input to language teaching materials and aiding easy learning of the target language.

Based on the aim of CA, Fries (1945) avers that the act of carefully comparing with a parallel description of the native language of the learner and the target language is the most effective teaching material that is based on scientific descriptions of both languages. Ferguson (1965) in Udegbumam (2004) adds that a careful comparison carried out on two languages, the source and the target offers the most excellent basis for preparing a worthwhile instrument or material for planning a syllabus or course for second language learning and the teaching. In Kelly's (1969) view, the features of languages to be contrasted are exposed in the light of contrastive analysis. Hence, this study seeks to discover the differences and similarities between English and Okun languages phrase structures.

2.1.1 The Strength of CLA

From the various views advanced by scholars cited above, CLA has provided a clue for comparing languages for the purpose of determining the similarities and differences that occur in the structures of the languages under consideration. It is carried out for the encouragement of positive measures or strategies of developing syllabus that can make it easier for the L2 learner to acquire the language in a short time and for the purpose of having a good knowledge of the structures of the languages in question. It can also be applauded for predicting

possible areas of difficulties that can be tackled by error analysts as well as point to some areas of need of the L2 learner.

2.1.2 The Limitation of CLA

As always, there is no theory or view without flaws. There are divergent views about CLA ranging from outright cynicism to animated uncritical acceptance (Adeyanju, 1978; Olaofe, 1982; etc.). These views according to the aforementioned scholars were brought together at the Round Table Conference on “Contrastive Linguistics and its pedagogical implications”. Their arguments reflect that, CA has been questioned on the premise that not all differences bring about error or negative transfer in the target language. The same thing goes for the similarities. It is noted that some similar structures could pose difficulties in second language learning.

Johansson (1975) contends that CA should be concerned with explaining the difficulties already identified and trying to tackle the difficulties rather than pitch its tent with predicting possible difficulties that may impede the speed of the second language learner. There is the inability to account for the occurrence of errors that take place as a result of mother tongue interference such errors as developmental errors and strategies of the likes of overgeneralization (overinclusiveness), incomplete application of rules and so on. This invariably leads to Anasiudu's (1978) assertion that CA cannot solve all the problems encountered by the second language learners. It is also discovered that CLA predicts errors that are never observed in actual classroom performance; the dubious quality of its statements, its relevance on an out-dated behaviourist model, and its lack of unified theory; while others expressed doubts as to the validity of contrast at the sentence level and the hierarchy of difficulty established by Stockwell and others (Lado, 1968; Wardhaugh, 1970; etc.).

It is crucial to note that in language learning and teaching, three tools have been identified to be operational and effective: Contrastive Analysis (CA), Error Analysis (EA), Need Analysis (NA) and Performance Analysis (PA). It is these deficiencies that are associated with CA paved way for the emergence of Error Analysis which will be briefly examined.

2.1.3 Error Analysis (EA)

Error Analysis is a careful study of a large corpus of errors committed by speakers of the source language while attempting to express themselves in the target language. According to Olofe (1982), it is popular in the field of EA to set up a three way classification of errors: interference, intralingual and developmental errors.

Error analysis focuses on the negative aspect of the language learner. It is crucial, however, to scrutinize the positive side of the learner's performance. In addition, it should be noted that a more sophisticated and systematic theory of L2 acquisition can only be established if attention is not only focused on learner's errors but also non-error (avoidance error) latent in the flow of their ordinary conversation. EA strongly adheres to subjective point of view, and the term is always shadowed by the nuance of something to analyse only errors. It is this deficiency noticed in EA that led to the emergence of 'Interlanguage Analysis' or 'Need Analysis', as a comprehensive approach that aims at uncovering the process of L2 acquisition.

2.1.4 Need Analysis (NA)

The above identified inadequacies that are associated with EA facilitated the consideration and development of NA which is framed to address some of the learners' challenges that could not be handled by the tenets of EA.

Need analysis was first introduced and used by Michael West in 1920, then re-emerged in 1970 as a result of intensive studies conducted by the Council of Europe Team (CET). It was developed and emphasized in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and it was argued that it is not possible to specify the needs of general English learners. Hutchinson & Walters (1987) describe NA as the most characteristic feature of ESP course design. Thus, NA has the capacity to provide applicable information that can be used to define the programme goals or sometimes to select the most relevant material for the language syllabus. On this note, Johnson (2008) points out that: “in order to plan a foreign language teaching, we need to find a way of analyzing learners’ needs. What is going to tell us just how much, and for what purpose our learners will need which foreign languages, it is the process of needs analysis.”

NA in language teaching and programme design can be viewed as a systematic process which helps teachers to collect information and get an accurate and complete picture of their students’ needs and preferences. Then they interpret the information collected and they make decisions about what to include in their programme, based on the interpretations in order to meet the students’ needs. This process can be used in response to the academic needs of all the students, for improving their achievements and meeting challenged academic standard. However, this process sometimes does not involve looking at the requirements and expectations of other members involved, such as employees, parents, teachers, and financial supporters. Generally, NA tries to get information on the situations in which a language is going to be used (school, bank, farm court, etc.), the purposes for which that language is needed (greeting, asserting, questioning suggesting, interacting, etc.), the types of communication that are going to be used in the course (formal, tepid or informal) and the level of proficiency that is required to develop a syllabus. This is affirmed in Casper (2003) “The information gleaned from a need analysis can be used to help you

define programme goals. These goals can be stated as specific teaching objectives, which will function as the foundation on which a teacher will develop a lesson plan, materials, tests, assignments and activities.” In consonance with this claim, Richards & Rogers (1986:156) argue that “need analysis is concerned with identifying general and specific language needs that can be addressed in developing goals, objectives and content in a language programme.” NA thus includes the study of perceived and present needs as well as potential and, unrecognized ones.

From the foregoing, it is deduced that NA is designed to make each learner acquire every necessary attention from both curriculum developers and implementers that will enhance his/her (learner’s) proficiency in the use of the target language. However, it should be noted that NA constitutes a subset of the Applied Linguistics which has no holistic approach that is capable of tackling every language learner’s challenges. Therefore, the deficiencies that are linked with NA led to the emergence of Performance Analysis which should be more learner-centred in approach.

2.1.5 Performance Analysis (PA)

The term linguistic performance (externalized observable output) was used by Chomsky (1960) to describe “the actual use of language in concrete situation”. It refers to both the production (parole) as well as the comprehension of language. Performance is defined in opposition to “competence”. The latter describes the mental knowledge that a speaker or listener has of his/her language.

Part of the motivation for the distinction between performance and competence comes from speech errors; despite having a perfect understanding of the correct forms. This is because, performance occurs in real situations and so, is subjected to many non-linguistic influences. For instance, distractions or memory

limitations can affect lexical retrieval and give rise to errors in both production and perception (Chomsky,1965:3).

Performance as viewed from the generative grammar perspective by Crystal (2003) refers to language seen as a set of specific utterances produced by native speakers. The utterances of performance will contain features irrelevant to the abstract rule system, such as hesitations and unfinished structures, arising from various psychological and social difficulties acting upon the speaker (e.g. lapses of memory), or from biological limitations (e.g. pauses being introduced through the need to breathe). These features must be discounted in a grammar of the language, which deals with the systematic process of sentence construction. To generative grammarians, performance is a person's actual use of language which is different from competence that refers to a person's knowledge of language. The latter reveals the totality of knowledge that a given speaker has about the language while the former signals how a speaker of a language uses his/ her knowledge in producing and understanding sentences. Therefore, in second or foreign language learning, a learner's performance in a language is often taken as an indirect indication of his/ her competence (Richard, 2002).

In PA, attention is no longer focused on deviations from the L2 norm (errors) at a given point in time, but on the process of L2 learning as a whole. Rather, the use of language by L2 learners in each stage of the learning process should be seen as an attempt to apply the structural principles of the target language in a systematic and coherent way. Therefore, PA approach examines the performance of L2 learners from different perspectives. First, L2 learners basic idea assist him/ her in constructing an internal grammar on the basis of the L2 input (s)he receives; a grammar which in subsequent stages or 'varieties' keeps being reconstructed and will approximate a certain target variety of native speakers of that language more and more, although, it will rarely be identical to it. There is no terminal point in the L2 learning (especially, lexical development

never stops) and there is no single target variety (the learner has to gain control over various registers).

The quality of L2 use is not only determined by time, but also by circumstances. There are no single style speaker shift linguistic (phonological, morphological, lexical, pragmatic) variables, if the following factors change:

- social status of addresser – addressee;
- language medium (spoken versus written);
- topic of discourse (education, politics, religion, economy, culture, etc.);
- linguistic task (natural versus experimental);
- physical surroundings (e.g. classroom, office, home);
- amount of attention paid to speech (monitored versus unmonitored speech).

From the foregoing, it is crystal clear that PA has no absolute disregard for EA. The adherents claim that inadequate mastery of L1 and L2 by learners may make them (learners) commit errors on the process of using language.

However, it should be noted that this study adopts contrastive analysis approach for the description of the structural patterns of both English and Okun. CA is applied in this study because it does not provide an indepth analysis of the totality of mastery that a learner has which should make him/her produce ‘error-full’ or ‘error-free’ expressions. To this end, the various versions of CLA will be discussed.

2.1.6 The Weak Hypothesis

It was in the context of these criticisms that error analysis and the weak hypothesis of CLA emerged (Olaofe, 1982). Error Analysis (EA) is purely based on purported similarity between the L1 acquisition and L2 learning. The learner is looked upon, not as a producer of malformed, imperfect language replete with mistakes but as an intelligent creative being preceding through logical, systematic stages of acquisition, creatively acting upon his linguistic environment as he encounters its forms and functions in meaningful contexts.

Scholars (Corder, 1967; Selinker, 1975; etc.) observe that via a gradual process of trial and error and hypothesis testing, the learner slowly and tediously succeeds in establishing closer and closer approximations to the system used by native speakers of the language. In the process of doing this, the learner makes mistakes, misjudgements, miscalculations, and erroneous assumptions about the language he is learning (Olaofe, 1982:14).

The weak hypothesis of CLA emerged as an offshoot of EA. Wardhaugh (1970) cited in Olaofe (1982) states that CLA has intuitive appeal and that teachers and linguists have successfully used “the best linguistic knowledge available ... in order to account for observed difficulties in second language learning”. He termed such observational use of CLA the weak hypothesis or weak version of contrastive analysis hypothesis. The weak version, unlike the apriori prediction of certain fine degrees of difficulty, purports- observed errors that is, the linguistic difficulties are profitably explained aposteriori- “after the fact”. Both error analysis and the weak version of CLA hypothesis are not faultless. While EA may ultimately make some useful contributions to a theory of L2 learning, doubts are raised in respect to its assumption, its methodology, and its findings (Bell,1974:35-49; Adeyanju, 1979:6-7). In consonance with this view, Brown (1980:166) overtly states that there is danger in paying too much attention to learner’s errors. Relating to this assertion, it is believed that a comparative study of CLA and EA have raised serious doubts about the sophistication and reliability of the methods of EA. Chau (1975) cited in Olaofe (1982) observes that EA purportedly contains a methodology that is partly unattainable in principle, partly impossible in practice and does not capture the strategy of avoidance. A second language learner who for one reason or another avoids (or paraphrases) a particular sound, may be assumed incorrectly to have no difficulty therewith. In fact, the absence of error does not reflect native-like

competence since a learner can avoid the structures that are problematic to him or her.

2.1.7The Strong Hypothesis

There are countless criticisms advanced against the strong hypothesis of CLA but it is evidenced from research works that its validity in linguistics cannot be underrated. Brown (1980:149) observes that it is possible to detect the linguistic background of a L2 user based on his/her accent, structural pattern and semantic perception. Lado (1957) cited in Brown (1980:149) asserts that, this version of CLA rests on the assumption that can be used to predict and describe the pattern that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not pose difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and the culture of the student. He further claims that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him/her and those elements that are different will be difficult (Lado, 1957:2 cited in Fisiak, 1981:4). In connection with this assertion, Banjo (1969) cited in Olaofe (1982) states that, the hierarchy of difficulties, phonological rules (not discussed) is the most difficult, followed by lexical-semantic rules and then the syntactic rules.

2.1.8The Moderate Version

As a reaction of criticism of the strong version of the CLA, the weak version was proposed. However, Oller & Ziahosseiny (1970) cited in Olaofe (1982:19) tries to strike a balance between the strong and weak versions of CLA hypotheses by proposing a moderate form. According to them, the strong form is too strong and the weak form too weak but a moderate version dwells on the nature of human learning, and not just on the contrast between the languages; it provides vivid and convincing explanation to justify its claim. The moderate version of CLA hypothesis is based on the notion that wherever patterns are

minimally distinct in form or meaning in one or more systems, confusion may result (Olaofe, 1982:20). To this end, it is common to overgeneralize to the extent that minimal differences are overlooked. At the same time, gross differences, because of their ‘silency’ are often more easily perceived and stored in memory. Greater differences do not always result in greater learning difficulty (Banathy, 1969 cited in Olaofe, 1982:20).

In spite of the above claimed mediation by the moderate hypothesis proponents, it has not been very easy to make clear-cut distinction between errors attributed to overgeneralization (intralingual factors) and those emanating from mother tongue interference (interlingual factors).

2.1.9 The Hypothesis Adopted in this Study

This study recognizes the predictive power of CLA but while holding on to this, the following are observed:

- i. the degree of difference in the phrase structures of the languages being contrasted is not a measure of difficulty then prediction cannot hold;
- ii. the analysis of the phrase structures of the two languages contrasted captures the surface level only;
- iii. CA, EA and PA are not contradictory choices. They are complementary to one another. They (CA, EA and PA) are required for effective and efficient second language teaching and learning.

2.2 Okun Language

Genetically, Okun belongs to the Yoruboid language family group. According to Pulleyblank (1987: 971), it is ‘a group belonging to the Kwa branch of the Niger- Congo’. The Kwa languages are spoken in parts of Nigeria and Liberia and these include among others, Binin, Igbo, Ebira, Igala, Ewe, Akan, Ishan, Itsekiri, etc. In the same vein, Williamson & Blench (2000) state that, the

Yoruboid languages belong to the West Benue-Congo of the Niger-Congo phylum of African languages.

Okun language shares a lot of phonological, morphological and syntactic features with other Yoruboid languages. Nonetheless, the shared attributes do not pave way for absolute mutual intelligibility for users of Okun and other Yoruboid languages. The position of this research, therefore, contradicts the views of some scholars (Baiyere, 1999; Arokoyo, 2010 and others) who describe Okun as a dialect of Yoruba. This is traceable to the linguistic tenet that states that when two dialects are in close contact with each other, they will often remain mutually intelligible. That notwithstanding, if there is separation as a result of time and space, two dialects can turn into two separate languages, if there is less (below 70%) or no mutual intelligibility. To give credence to this assertion, Swadesh (1959) propounds glotto chronological criterion used for the analysis of languages. He adopts this linguistic phenomenon as a statistical instrument to show the relationship between languages as well as to determine when a particular language family broke away from the common source (parent) language. Swadesh states the standard formulae for glotto chronological calculations:

$$T = \frac{\log C}{\log R}$$

$$2 \log R$$

T represents the initial minimal glotto chronological depth of divergence in millinia (i.e. period of one thousand years). That is “T” is used here to reflect the degree of difference that may have existed between the two languages that must have broken from each other and it is estimated that before such separation occurs, it will take at least a period of one thousand years. C points to the amount of lexical items (words) preserved in the two languages compared. This is traceable to the fact that linguists assume that no matter how long one

language has broken away from another, there could still be some linguistic similarities that the two languages have in common. R, the constant retention, is universally worked out at 0.91 which is subjected to two interpretations:

- i. It is certain that there are new linguistic developments that are daily experienced in every speech community regardless of its cultural conservation. A living language should be ready to embrace coinages, borrowing/ loaning and other linguistic features in order to maintain communicative relevance in modern society.
- ii. It lucidly portrays that the passage of time makes some vocabulary items discarded for the emergence of new ones. It should be noted that this linguistic transformation affects the grammatical, phonological, syntactic and semantic features. As this happens, differences are bound to occur between two or more languages, which may have the same genetic origin.

In consonance with the discovery of early linguists like Greenberg (1993) who popularizes the classification and description of African languages by considering every aspect of language, the researcher observes some phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic disparities between Okun and Yoruba languages.

Phonologically, from the research of Arokoyo (2013), there is correspondence between Okun and Yoruba which comprise 30 sounds each. It is /ʃ/ that is not contained in Okun sound system while /gh/ and /p/ have no relevance in the Yoruba sounds (Owolabi, Olunlade, Aderanti, Olabimtan, 2003). At the supra segmental level, there are few words with the same form and meaning but pronounced with different tone as exemplified in *ìjoko* and *íjoko* (chair), *ini* and *ìni* (property), etc. This pitch variation that affects the meaning of a word is called tone. The meaning of a word depends on its tone in tonal languages. Pike (1947:3) describes a tone language as ‘a language in which pitch is used to

contrast individual lexical items or words. The relevance of this is reflected in Famola (1986):

One can count hundreds of words of this obsolete language in use within the ‘Okun’ dialect in the recent past. Only gradually they are being replaced by the Yoruba substitutes. This substitution of Yoruba words for words in earlier language indigenous to this area, One speculates that, that has been going on for centuries. The sum of this is that it is widely thought among intellectuals from this area that the Yoruba culture was imposed on an earlier culture in this area. All of these have implications for the study of the culture of this area, especially for the study of verbal arts. Not only the dialect very different from all other Yoruba dialects calling into question the possibility of talking about different languages rather than a dialect...

From the above extract, it is deduced that the proto Okun language possesses its unique lexical items that could not be comprehended by the Yoruba except they learn it. However, the Yoruba language has tremendously influenced Okun language via the instrumentality of migration that was religiously, commercially, economically, politically and educationally motivated. At present, no matter the prevalence of lexical plausibility of words in the two languages, there are few words in both (Okun and Yoruba) that possess different forms but share the same referent. This is vividly illustrated in the following table:

Table 1: Words of Different Forms with the Same Referent in Okun and Yoruba

Okun	Yoruba	Gloss
ughin	ọbẹ	Knife
agha	àwa	we
Otíta/akporo	àpoti	Stood
ẹhin	ẹsẹ	leg
aká	apá	Arm
ọfọn	ọrun	Neck
ọhọn	ọsan	Afternoon
àsikpé	ọrẹ	cane
udi	Ijàkadì	wrestling

èdègbè	ewúre	goat
àrigha	àáyá	monkey
àgèré	àtá	Pepper
afere	afefe	Breeze
Òkùrú	oyà	grasscutter
Èghe	ẹkẹẹ	cheeks
Okùlè	ìgbẹ	faeces/excreta
Òmùsú	Ìdì	bottom
aíro	alágẹmọ	chameleon

Field data (2015)

At the semantic level, there is significant difference in the meaning of strings of linguistic values in Okun and Yoruba. This assertion is reflected in the following sentences:

Table 2: Sentences Showing Differences in Lexico-Semantic Aspect of both Okun and Yoruba

Okun	Yoruba	Gloss
Mé rè ìkpàdè lánọn	Mi ò lọ si ìpádé lánàn	I did not attend the meeting yesterday.
Ẹ bà mi wá ghọn.	Ẹ bá mi ki wọn.	Extend my greeting to them.
Mú ìhìn kòmì.	Fún mi lọbẹ.	Give me a knife.
Ẹhin ẹ mọ̀tù falúya lèté.	Ẹsẹ rẹ ti fẹ jù.	Your leg is too big.
Lò sú híbì?	Ta ló yàgbẹ síbì?	Who defecated here?
Wọ ti ọ hobó lèté.	O ti lè parọ jù.	You tell lies a lot.
Mà ghá awá wọ lọla.	Màà wá kí ẹ lọla.	I will come and greet you tomorrow.

Field data (2015)

From the above sentences, it is quite glaring that there is no significant structural difference in the above sentences in both Okun and Yoruba. Yet, it is difficult for the Yoruba to comprehend the Okun in some communicative milieu. It should also be noted that the exposure of some Okun to Yoruba has tremendously influenced the majority of Okun to decode the meaning of the

conventional strings of linguistic codes in more than 50% communicative contexts.

Some researches in linguistics reflect that the distinction between a language and a dialect is a matter of perception. There are some separate languages that seem to be more closely related than some different dialects originating from the same language. For instance, Dutch and Afrikaans are generally considered to be different languages. Afrikaans actually takes 90% of its vocabulary from Dutch. Conversely, Cockney and Glaswegian are considered to be dialects of English, yet speakers can struggle to understand one another. In Italy someone living in Milan will find it difficult, if not impossible, to understand someone from Naples or Sardinia speaking their local dialect; here the regional dialects are so distinct from the standard Italian that they merit the title of languages in their own right and even have separate dictionaries (see URL: www/Indiana.edu/~h/w/introduction/dialects.Html, 2013). It is quite pertinent to know that two or more languages may resemble each other in one way or another as a function of language contact/ relationship. It is a linguistic tenable fact that when communities or languages are in close cultural contact, their languages often influence one another. This is perfectly explicated in modern Japanese vocabulary that borrowed thousands of words from Chinese and in addition adopted the Chinese writing system. Another example is reflected in Turkish and Persian that borrowed extensively from Arabic words with the adoption of the Arabic system of writing. On the contrary, Mandarin and Cantonese are on political ground viewed as dialects of Chinese despite their mutual unintelligibility (URL: www/Indiana.edu/~h/w/introduction/dialects.Html, 2013). However, this argument is bigger than what can be fully resolved in this work. This is traceable to the fact that this research dwells on the analysis of English and Okun phrase structures.

2.2.1 Okun People's Origin

The Okun people are presently spread across six Local Government Areas of Kogi State. These are Ìjùmú, Kabba-Bùnú, Yàgbà -West, Yàgbà-East, Mopa-Muro and Lokoja Local Government Areas. The Okun people have kiths and kins in Kwara, Ondo and Ekiti States. Put in another form, Okun is dominantly used by Ìjùmú, Owé, Ìyàgbà, Bùnú and Ọwọ̀rọ people who reside in the West Senatorial District of Kogi State, Nigeria as a form of greeting which has become their common identity as a result of shared historical and linguistic affinity.

However, there are divergent views about the origin of these people. The most popular of the views states that the Okun people migrated from Ile-Ife (Baiyere, 1999). On the contrary, Otitoju (2003) reflects that 'Okun confederation has always been referred to as a collection of different units who lived independent of each other with its own social organisation though with bonding similarities'. This portrays that, each of these people has peculiar experiences and different history of origin. From the above claims this study reflects that the linguistic, political, religious, social and cultural bonding similarities are principally orchestrated by their common origin. The distinction that exists among these people is hinged on their exposure to the slave masters' activities and the influence of other people from different linguistic or cultural backgrounds they share geographical boundaries with.

It should be noted that there are major dialects of Okun and each of the dialects possesses a variety of lects. As a matter of fact, there is no absolute mutual intelligibility between Ìyàgbà and Ọwọ̀rọ and other dialects. This is linked to their phonological, lexical and semantic differences. In this study, the researcher adopts the Ìjùmú dialect to transcribe all the utterances collected from Okun speakers. This is as a result of the structural similarities that characterize the

Okun phrase pattern. So, any of the dialects of Okun can be used to represent other dialects of the language.

2.2.2 Okun Dialects

The dialects of Okun are: Ìjùmú, Owé, Ìyàgbà, Bùnú and Ọwọ̀rọ̀. It should be noted that each of the dialects possesses a variety of lects which is in accordance with settlement of the people as indicated below.

2.2.2.1 The Ìjùmú People and Dialect

The term Ìjùmú is an ancient name chosen for a modern administrative unit referred to as Ìjùmú Native Authority which was founded in 1937. Today, that same administrative unit is called Ìjùmú Local Government Area (L.G.A).

About twenty-four towns and villages speak Ìjùmú dialect and some of these towns and villages include: Ighàrà (Iyàrà), Oké- Ìjùmú, Ikoyi, Iffè, Iffè -Tẹ̀dò, Ekinrin-Addè, Iyamoyè, Ogidi, Ègbẹ̀da-Ega, Aduge, Ayèré, Ọgalè, Ọgalè-Idióró, Arima, Aiyetórò- Gbẹ̀de, Iyah-Gbẹ̀de, Ayegunle-Gbẹ̀de, Okórò-Gbẹ̀de, odòkòrò-Gbẹ̀de, Aye-Gbẹ̀de and Iluhagba.

2.2.2.2 The Owé People and Dialect

Owé refers to both the people and their dialect. According to oral tradition, it is believed that the progenitors of the Owe people namely: Aro, Reka, and Balaja had separate settlements. According to Baiyere (1999:3), the three separate settlements grew until they merged into one single town, Kabba, comprising three clans called Katu, Odolu and Okabba. The Owé people are also found in neighbouring villages like Otu-Egunbe, Gbólékò, Kakun, Ègbẹ̀da, Okédayọ̀, Apangá, etc. The Owe speaking communities are linguistically homogeneous and are surrounded by the Bùnú, Ìjùmú and Ebira peoples of Kogi State.

2.2.2.3 The Ìyàgbà People and Dialect

The most widely held belief is that the Iyàgbà people descended from a certain princess known as Iya-agba (old woman) who settled in Akata-Ere. The Yàgbà are today found in three L.G.As- Yàgbà-East, Yàgbà-West and Mopa-Muro in

Kogi state. Towns and villages in Yàgbà land include: Ègbẹ, Isanlu, Mọpa, Efo-Amuro, Odo-Ere, Odo-Eri, Pọnyọn, Ejiba, Ọrọnre, Ejuku, etc.

2.2.2.4 The Bùnú People and Dialect

Oral tradition reflects that Olle Bùnúwho is the first settler in Bùnúland is a descendant of Oduduwa (Otitoju, 2002: 54). The Abinu people are made up of Kiri, Akumerindinlogun, Okemẹta, and Okemẹson groups. They are the second group that makes up Kabba-Bùnú Local Government Area. Some of the villages in Bùnúland are: Ọlẹ, Ayede-Ọpa, Ilogun, Akutukpa, Ilukẹ, Aghara, Ilai, Idoyi, Okebukun, Odo-Apẹ, Agbẹdẹ, Apaa, etc.

2.2.2.5 The Ọwọọ People and Dialect

History holds that ‘ọwọ mi rọ’, coined ọwọọ. It constitutes the communicative medium of the North-West of Lokoja in Kogi state, Nigeria. Ọwọọ is located on a mountainous terrain above thirty-six (36) kilometers to the North-West of Lokoja the Kogi state capital. The ọwọọ people spread across sixteen (16) communities in Lokoja Local Government Area of Kogi State. These communities include the following towns and villages: Agbaja, Emu, Tajimu, Jakura, Otube, Owara, Igbo-nla, Filele, Ijiho, Akpomo-ba, Ọbajana, Akpata, Osokosoko, Banda, Karara and Ogbagbon. Agbaja is the largest ọwọọ speaking community, hence, it may be reckoned with as the representative of ọwọọ. The ọwọọ are identified with farming and hunting. Notwithstanding, villages like Filele, Owara, and Banda are surrounded with rivers and as such they do a lot of fishing.

2.3The Okun Orthography

The Okun orthography is derived from the 1966 report of the Yoruba Orthography Committee, along with Bamgbose’s (1965) Yoruba Orthography, a study of the earlier orthographies that attempts to bring Yoruba Orthography in line with actual speech as much as possible. However, the Yoruba Orthography developed by Benin Republic National Language Commission

(1975) and later revised by the National Centre for Applied Linguistics in 1990 portrays that ‘kp’ and ‘p’ are separate alphabetical letters. Arokoyo (2013) observes that in addition to the identified alphabets of Yoruba Orthography, the Okun’s Orthography contains ‘gh’. In the present study, the researcher discovers that ‘kp’, ‘p’, and ‘gh’ are vividly accounted for in the Okun Orthography. Therefore, using the submission of the above mentioned scholars, the following is proposed by the researcher to constitute a comprehensive representation of the Okun alphabet:

a, b, d, e, ẹ, f, g, gb, gh, h, i, j, k, kp

l, m, n, o, ọ, p, r, t, s, ş, u w, y

2.4 Aspects of Okun Phonology

Phonology refers to one of the levels of linguistic studies that focuses on the study of sounds. It is defined as the scientific study of the organization of speech sounds in languages. It also refers to both the linguistic knowledge that speakers have about the sound patterns of their language and the description of that knowledge that linguists try to produce (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2011:227). Phonology is also viewed as the systems and patterns of sounds that occur in a language. It involves studying a language to determine its distinctive sounds that is those sounds that convey a difference in meaning (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011:33). From the views of these scholars and others, it is deduced that phonology provides a scientific means via which the description, classification, arrangement and utilization of the sounds of a language can be carried out as to ease every form of communicative turbulence by language users in any speech community. The two major areas that constitute the focus of phonology are: the segmental (primary) and supra- segmental (secondary) aspects. The former examines the sounds (vowels and consonants) of a language in isolation. The segmental aspect of phonology has the capacity to describe each sound based on its manner and place of articulation and position of the

glottis (for consonantal sounds); part of the tongue-front, centre or back that is actively involved in the articulation of any sound; the shape of the lips- spread, round or neutral; the position of the mouth- close, half close, half open or open (for vowel sounds). The latter examines the combination of sounds with the ultimate aim of forming larger components-syllable, stress, intonation, etc. It is worth noting that the literature review in this segment captures the segmental aspects in order to show the ‘unignoreable’ efforts of a few scholars who had worked on the comparison of the English and Okun languages.

2.4.1 Okun Vowel System

Vowels are sounds produced with very little or no obstruction to the air in the buccal cavity. Sounds in this category are described based on the part of the tongue (front, centre or back) that is actively involved in its articulation; the height of the tongue (high, mid or low) and the shape of the lips (round, spread or neutral). Baiyere (1999:12) observes that “there are nasal vowels in the dialects of Okun, some of the vowels become nasalized when they are preceded by nasal sounds. She further notes that Okun language has seven oral vowels and five nasal vowels.

The vowels Okun are: (i, ã, e, ε, ẽ, a, ã, ɔ, ɔ, o, u, ã)

Table 3: Okun Vowels’ Chart

Front	Central	Back
	close	i ã ã u
	Half close	e o
	Half open	ε ẽ ɔ ɔ
Open		a ã

Arokoyo (2013)

It is pertinent to know that the nasal vowels [ẽ, ã] are not accounted for in Ìjùmú and Owe dialects of Okun (Baiyere, 1999).

2.4.2 Okun Consonantal System

Consonants are sounds produced with obstruction to the air at strategic spots on the oral tract. Sounds in this category are described based on three parameters- manner of articulation, position of glottis (voiceless and voiced/ sound quality) and place of articulation. This is shown in the table below.

Table 4: Okun Consonantal Chart

MANNER OF ARTICULATION	POSITION OF GLOTTIS		PLACE OF ARTICULATION
	VOICELESS	VOICED	
Plosives (stops)	P	b	Bilabial
	t	d	Alveolar
	k	g	Velar
	kp	gb	Labio-velar
Fricatives	f		Labio-dental
	s		Alveolar
		ɣ	Velar
	h		Glottal
Affricate		ɖʒ	Palato-alveolar
Lateral		l	Alveolar
Rolled		r	Alveolar
Glides (semi-vowels)		w	Bilabial
		j	Palatal
Nasal		m	Bilabial
		n	Alveolar
		ŋ	Velar
		ɲ	Palatal

Arokoyo (2013)

From the above chart, the Okun consonant sounds are twenty-one. However, none of the dialects contain all of the consonantal sounds. For instance, /p/ is

present in Okun dialects as exemplified in “pa” (indent, quiet, or choked up) while /ŋ/ is only found in Iyagba dialect.

2.5 Phoneme as a Linguistic Property

A phoneme is described as the smallest linguistic unit which may bring about a change of meaning (Gimson, 1978; Roach, 2009). A phoneme can also refer to as an abstract linguistic unit that possesses the capacity to influence the meaning of any word. A phoneme constitutes a linguistic tool that enhances the semantic significance which distinguishes a word from others that share similar sounds. For instance, in [pet], [pat], [pot], [put], [pit], the vowels constitute the phonemes that account for the difference or unique meaning that each of the words attracts.

2.5.1 Distinctive Features of Okun Phonemes

Distinctive feature are the smallest elements in phonological analysis. Trubetzkoy (1969) submits that distinctive features are “specifications of the networks of relationships along which phonemes are structured.” Halle and Clements (1983:6) describe distinctive features as “a set of articulatory and acoustic features sufficient to define and distinguish, one from the other; the great majority of the speech sounds used in the languages of the world”.

Distinctive features make it possible to refer to natural classes of sounds rather than to combinations of seemingly unrelated segments. It makes it possible to account for why some sounds change in certain linguistic milieu. Finally, distinctive features are based on binary principle that effectively distinguishes two sounds that contrast in a language.

Table 5: Distinctive Features Matrix for Okun Vowels

Sounds	i	e	ɛ	a	ɔ	o	u	ĩ	ɛ̃	ǎ	ɔ̃	u
High	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+
Low	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Round	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+
ATR	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	+
Nasal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Syllabic	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Baiyere (1999)**Table 6: Distinctive Features Matrix for Okun Consonants**

Sounds	p	b	t	d	k	g	kp	gb	f	s	ɣ	h	dʒ	l	r	w	j	m	n	ɲ	ɲ
Consonant	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Sonorant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Anterior	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
Coronal	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
Nasal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+
Lateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
Labial	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
Strident	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Approx.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
Voiced	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+

Baiyere (1999)

2.5.2 Phoneme Identification

The principle of minimal pairs is employed for phonemic identification of Okun language. Minimal pairs clearly show how words differ as a result of the substitution of only one sound. The differing sound could be in initial, medial or terminal position of the concerned words. The following examples are drawn from the data elicited with the “Ibadan 400 Wordslist of Basic Items”.

Table7: Minimal Pairs of Consonant at Initial Position

ho “tie”	ro “hoe”
dĩ “fry”	kpĩ “divide”
gbɔ “hear”	bɔ “train”
dà “pour”	tà “sell”
yũ “weave”	rũ “quench”

Arokoyo (2013)**Table 8:Minimal Pairs of Consonants at Medial Position**

itɔ “saliva”	ikɔ “cough”
imũ “nose”	ikũ “mucus”
itɔ “thigh”	ikɔ “garden egg”
ibɔ “gun”	ijɔ “pounded yam”
ɔmũ “breast”	ɔrũ “neck”

Arokoyo (2013)**Table 9: Minimal Pairs of Vowels at Terminal Position**

ikɔ “cough”	iku “death”
bá “meet”	bɔ “train”
ri “see”	rĩ “laugh”
ɔkpè “tree”	ɔkpɔ “cheap”

Arokoyo (2013)

2.6 Phonological Processes

Sounds and words are not produced in isolation; hence both influence each other. This accounts for the constraints on the sequential production due to the limitation and configuration of our vocal organs. There are language-specific constraints on permissible sound sequences and the quest for a hitch-free speech production. All the foregoing attracts the need for phonological processes (Schane, 1973:49). The modifications that are brought about as a result of those

factors are referred to as phonological processes. Assimilation, deletion and insertion are examples of phonological processes attested in Okun language.

2.6.1 Assimilation

Katamba (1989:80) sees assimilation as “the modification of a sound in order to make it similar to other sounds in its neighbourhood”. This implies that the contiguous segments influence each other by becoming alike. Assimilation result in smoother and more economical transition from one sound to another. This is reflected in five vowels [i, ε, a, ɔ, u] in Okun, which become nasalized in the environment of a nasal consonant. Examples:

Underlying (Phonemic)	Surfaces (Phonetics)
/orókún/ ‘knee’	/orókũ/ ‘knee’
/rarín/ ‘laugh’	/rarĩ/ ‘laugh’
/agbɔ́n/ ‘coconut’	/agbɔ̃/ ‘coconut’
/éhin/ ‘leg’	/éhĩ/ ‘leg’
/kpɔ́n/ ‘fetch’	/kpɔ̃/ ‘fetch’

2.6.2 Deletion

Deletion deals with the disappearance or loss of a sound segment which could occur at any position in a word and also across word boundaries. Consonant deletion in Okun occurs within a word while loss of vowels occurs majorly across morpheme boundary. The process of vowels deletion is referred to as vowel elision. Either vowel or its contiguous segments could be dropped in vowel elision as exemplified in following words:

i. Consonant Deletion

ɔlɔrun → ɔlɔun ‘God’

òbukɔ → òukɔ ‘he-goat’

kórikó → kókó ‘grass’

ii. Elision

Oyebade (1998:63) observes that “vowels are usually deleted when two or more vowels occur across morpheme boundary.” In Okun language, a vowel is deleted whenever two or more of them occur across word boundary. A typical example is the focus marker morpheme, /ki/, and the resumptive pronoun, /o/, which is left behind as a trace when the subject is focused. Examples:

Ra + ile = rale

Buy house ‘bought a house’

Hun + akun = hunkun
Cry cry ‘weep’

Họ + obo = hobo

Say lie ‘tell lies’

Oli + obo = olobo

Owner lie ‘liar’

2.6.3 Insertion

This refers to the addition of a sound to a word whether at the medial or terminal position. Arokoyo (op cit) observes that vowel insertion is commonly found in loan words in Okun language. She further adds that the reason for this insertion is to break up un-allowed patterns of the loan words. Examples are reflected in:

English	Okun
Milk	mílíkí
Bread	búṛẹ̀dì
Class	kílàsì
Block	búlọ̀kù
Bed	bẹ̀dì

2.7 The Morpheme as a Linguistic Concept

Yule (2006:23) describes a morpheme as a minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function. Oxford Concise English Dictionary (OED, 1999:926) explains that the morpheme is “a meaningful morphological unit of a language that cannot be further divided into smaller constituent, which function together as the basis of the word’s meaning”. To further consolidate this morphological assertion, Bloomfield (1987:81) echoes C.F. Hockett by acknowledging that words can be separated into smaller constituents, which function together as the basis of the word’s meaning. A morpheme is the smallest unit that makes up a sentence, and marks as such in writing (OED, 1997:404). Adeosun (2014) similarly submits that a morpheme is the smallest, separable element of a word that has a definite meaning.

Yule (op. cit) illustrates this concept of morpheme with “reopened” which comprises three morphemes. In the morphemic analysis, he reveals that ‘open’ is a free morpheme while (meaning again) and ‘ed’ (indicating past or participle) constitute the bound morphemes of the same word. This buttresses the unified claim of linguists who stress that a morpheme signals or influences meaning of a word regardless of position of occurrence.

It is quite lucid from the foregoing that a free morpheme possesses the grammatical capability to signal meaning in isolation. Yule (op cit) further explains that a free morpheme is categorized into two-lexical (full) and functional (empty) morphemes. The former is described by linguists as ‘content’ carrier morpheme because of its ability to signal meaning whether in isolation or in the company of other linguistic codes. On the other hand, the latter does not signal meaning in isolation neither does it create room for inflection but displays its grammatical significance as functional morphemes.

Bound morphemes constantly lean on any relevant free morpheme or root word to function. Morphemes in this category are sub-divided into two types – inflectional morphemes and derivative morphemes. The former do not culminate in a change of the grammatical class of the root word to which it is attached. Inflectional morphemes are singular, progressive, past, participle (regular verbs), plural (regular nouns), possessive nouns (singular and plural), and comparative and superlative (regular adjectives). Examples are found in walk (root and plural verb), walks (singular verb), walking (present progressive verb), walked (past and past participle verb); boy (singular regular noun) and boys (plural regular noun), boy's (singular possessive) and boys' (plural possessive); tall (positive regular adjective), taller (comparative regular adjective) and tallest (superlative regular adjective). So, the inflectional markers are: '-s, -ing, -ed, -s, -'s, -s', -er, -est' respectively. On the other hand, derivational morphemes fascinate a change in the grammatical category of its host (root word). This is reflected in teach (verb), and teacher (noun). The 'derivatibility' of the bound morpheme 'er' is noticed in the morphological transformation that enhances a change in the grammatical class of the root word (verb) into another (noun). Moore (2000) observes that the smallest units of meaning might be whole simple words such as 'man, run, big' or parts of complex words such as 'un' '-faith-' and '-ful' are called morphemes. According to Akerele (2001), morphemes consist of the smallest meaningful units for morphological formation and grammatical analysis.

The point of unity in the divergent morphemic descriptions is that, a morpheme is the smallest unit (whether free or bound) of a word which cannot be further broken into smaller parts without altering or destroying the intended meaning of the concerned unit.

Therefore, morphological processes, otherwise known as word formation processes are the major processes by which words are formed in language (see

Quirk, etal, 1972; Odebunmi, 2001). There are morphemes in the Okun language as represented in its English counterpart. However, Okun has no conspicuous grammatical accommodation for inflections but derivational morpheme. For instance, [i, u, ẹ, oli, ala, oló, elé, ẹlẹ] constitute bound morphemes in Okun. The examples of morphemes in Okun include:

2.7.1 Free Morphemes

Table 10: Lexical and Functional Morphemes

Lexical	Functional
Ẹhin ‘leg’ Aká ‘arm’	àti ‘and’
kpukpa ‘red’	inú ‘in / inside/ stomach’
erukutu ‘dust’	hí ‘to’
àyìn ‘back’	lati ‘from’
ẹgba ‘cane’	abẹ ‘under’
arun ‘mouth’	órí ‘on/ on top’
were ‘quick’	kí ‘is/was/are/were’
ùhìn ‘knife’	àghá ‘we’
gba ‘take’	ọghọn ‘they, these’

Field data (2015)

2.7.1 Bound Morphemes

fẹ	‘to love’	i-fẹ	→	ifẹ	‘love’
ku	‘to die’	i-kú	→	íkú	‘death’
gọ	‘foolish’	a-gọ	→	àgọ	‘a fool’
sẹ	‘to sin’	ẹ-sẹ	→	ẹsẹ	‘sin’
igi	‘wood’	ol-igi	→	oligi	‘wood owner’
ékuro	‘palm kernel’	el- ékuro	→	élékuro	‘palm kernel owner’
éjá	‘fish’	ẹl- ejá	→	ẹlejá	‘fish owner’

2.8 Word Formation Processes

The dynamic and creative nature of language has paved way for various means by which newer words could be created in order to satisfy the communicative needs of its users. This according to Arokoyo (op cit), “means that a speaker of a language knows infinite number of words; knows how the words are constructed and how they can be divided”. This linguistic knowledge boosts the language user’s communicative competence.

Word formation processes refer to the totality of avenues through which words could be created or derived in a language. Howard & Etienne (2007:81) view morphological processes as “the different devices which are used in language to build new words from the existing ones”. The word formation processes attested in Okun language include: compounding, reduplication, interfixation, calquing, clipping, and borrowing.

2.8.1 Compounding

Morphologically, compounding is a process in which two or more independent words are combined to form a word. Arokoyo (op cit) states that “the meaning of the new word is not entirely predictable on the components that make up the word”. In Yoruba, Okun and some other languages used across the globe, the first word in the compound serves as the head and determines the lexical category of the new compound word. The following examples are found in Okun language:

- i) $\text{odo} + \text{otun} \rightarrow \text{odo\dot{o}tun}$
down right ‘name of a street’
- ii) $\text{úká} + \text{égun} \rightarrow \text{úkáégun}$
shrine masquerade ‘masquerade’s shrine’
- iii) $\text{De} + \text{lami} \rightarrow \text{Delami}$

- Arrive enrich me ‘arrive to enrich me’
 iv) Omi + kọngá → omikọngá
 Water well ‘well water’
 v) Usà + dùdú → ùsàdùdú
 Pot black ‘black pot’

2.8.2 Reduplication

Reduplication occurs when a part or a whole word or phrase is repeated to form new words (Arokoyo2013:44). According to Spencer (1991:13), reduplication involves adding material whose identity is partially or wholly determined by the base. The repetition of the base could either be right or left sided. The repetition of the entire base culminates in total reduplication but when part of the base is repeated, it result in partial reduplication. The two types of reduplication are found in Okun lexical items as illustrated in:

i. Partial Reduplication in Okun

Base		Reduplicated	
tà	→	t + í + tà	títà
to sell		Act of selling	
lò	→	l + í + lò	lílò
to use		Act of using	
rà	→	r + í + rà	rírà
to sell		Act of buying	
họ	→	h + í + họ	híhọ
to say		Act of saying	

ii. Total Reduplication in Okun

Ratu	→	ratù+ ratù	→	ratùratù
confused		confused confused		Act of confusion
gbọmọ	→	gbọmọ + gbọmọ	→	gbọmọgbọmọ

carry child		carry child	carry child	‘kidnapper’
kíá	→	kíá + kíá	→	kíákíá
quick		quick quick		quickly
ọmọ	→	ọmọ + ọmọ	→	ọmọmọ
child		child child		‘grandchild(ren)’
síḽe	→	síḽe + síḽe	→	síḽesíḽe
wet	wet wet		absolutely wet	
kọngí	→	kọngí + kọngì	→	kọngíkọngì
Strong	strong strong		very strong	

2.8.3 Interfixation

This refers to the occurrence of a derivational morpheme between two independent morphemes. Arokoyo (2013:32) indicates that “the root morphemes may be identical or non-identical”. She adds that the interfix links or joins two root words together. English does not have interfixes but it is contained in Yoruba, Okun and some other languages around the world. Examples are reflected in the occurrence of ‘-kí’-, ‘-bí’-, ‘-mọ-’ in the medial positions of the following words:

- a. ọmọ+ki+ọmọ → ọmọkọmọ ‘useless child’
- b. use+ki+use → usekúse ‘any job’
- c. ilé+ki+ilé → ilékílé ‘any/useless house’
- d. ọní+ki+ọní → ọníkọní ‘any body/person’
- e. uwà+ki+uwà → uwàkuwà ‘bad behaviour’
- f. ewó+bi+ewó → ewóbéwó ‘large amount of money’
- g. ẹyá+mọ+ẹyá → ẹyámẹyá ‘different tribe/ being tribalistic’

Arokoyo (2013)

2.8.4 Calquing

Calquing refers to a linguistic scenario whereby a whole sentence or a noun phrase is compressed to one word to derive names (Arokoyo, 2013). The

occurrence of this is commonly found in agglutinating languages – Okun inclusive. Examples are:

Ọloun ghun mí ádé	→	Ọlounghunmádé
God give me crown		‘God has given me a crown’
Dé mọ ádé	→	Démádé
Arrive with crown		‘arrived crowned’
Jésù tò mí	→	Jésùtómí
Jesus enough me		‘Jesus is enough for me’

2.8.5 Clipping

In the scholarly view of Arokoyo (op cit), clipping reduces the form of a word and still shares the meaning and the grammatical class of the full form. It could also be seen as a morphological phenomenon in which part of a word represents the whole and both still maintain sameness in grammatical and semantic classification. The clipping occurs at the initial or terminal part of a word. Examples abound in Okun as shown below:

ọlounmádé	→	mádé
ádékúnlé	→	kúnlé
olúkẹmí	→	kẹmí
bábáfẹmí	→	fẹmí
ádégóké	→	góké
tèmítópe	→	tópe

2.8.6 Borrowing

Borrowing involves taking words from other languages in order to cope with new ideas and concepts that are foreign to the language (Arokoyo, op cit). It could also be viewed as a situation whereby a language embraces some lexical items from other languages it has contact with in order to attain the height of

communicative satisfaction in the current era of globalization. The borrowed words are accommodated in conformity to the existing phonological and morphological phenomena of the host language.

Arokoyo (op cit) observes that borrowing exists in two categories- direct and indirect borrowing. The former involves words that are not subjected to significant phonological or morphological modifications while the latter creates a linguistic allowance for both phonological and morphological adaptation of the borrowed word to suit the target language. Examples are reflected in the following words in Okun:

i. Direct Borrowing

Source	Word	Okun	Gloss
English	Peter	Pítà	‘Peter’
Motor	mọ̀tò		‘motor’
Barber	bábà		‘barber’
Tyre	táyà		‘tyre’
Lawyer	lọ̀yà		‘lawyer’
Radio	rédíò		‘radio’
Hausa	súya	súyà	‘barbeque’
Lèmú	lémù		‘orange’
Aluabarika	àlùbáriká		‘blessing’
Yoruba	màálù	málù	‘cow’
	Kòkò	kòkò	‘pot’
	ọ̀wọ	ọ̀wọ	‘broom’

ii. Indirect Borrowing

Source	Word	Okun	Gloss
English	shirt	sẹ̀tì	‘shirt’

	Bag	báǵì	‘bag’
	Rice	rẹ̀sì	‘rice’
	Phone	fónù	‘phone’
	Chair	síà	‘chair’
Grease	gírísì	‘grease’	
Arabic	Albaswal	àlùbọ́sá	‘onion’
	Alaafiyah	àlààfíà	‘doing fine’

2.9 Word: A Linguistic Perspective

In linguistics, a word is the smallest element that may be uttered or written in isolation with semantic or pragmatic content (with literal or practical meaning). Adeosun (op cit) states that a word is the smallest meaningful unit of a language beyond which a word cannot be further divided. Arokoyo (op cit) supports this view by stating that “a word is unit of expression which is minimally free and may have different sense realizations”. The minimalist school of theoretical syntax sees words as “bundles” of linguistic features that are united into a structure with form and meaning (Adger, 2003). According to Palmer (1984), a word is defined from three principal points: the first sees ‘word’ as a semantic unit, a unit of meaning; the second views it as a phonetic or phonological unit, one that is marked, if not by ‘spaces’ or ‘pauses’ at least by some features of the sound, of the language; the third viewpoint describes the word by a variety of linguistic procedure that are related with the idea that the word in some ways is an isolable and undividable unit. This attracts the notion that a word is independent and meaningful; it has form, shape and internal structure; it can either be inflected or derived as earlier stated. Palmer (op cit) opines that ‘word’ is said to be a linguistic unit that has a single meaning. He clarifies the problem of identifying the word by suggesting that a word is the smallest unit in a language and which can be used alone as a sentence. He further explicates his views via these utterances:

We can say: 'Go'. 'Here'. 'Men'.

However, it should be noted that the above bits of words cannot be used as a sentence with 'un-', '-ise', '-ing'. Consequently, Palmer (op cit) notes that the problematic still persists. He stresses that function words- 'the', 'my', or 'of' cannot be used in isolation as a sentence. He further suggests that another criterion for identifying a word is 'minimal unit of positional mobility which is simply a precise way of saying that the word is the smallest unit which can be moved from one position to another in a sentence- bits of words cannot be moved'.

A more reliable way of defining 'word' is to view it as a unit, which possesses a fixed internal structure. This is illustrated in 'The policeman coughed politely', - then each of the units of the sentence is viewed as a word because it contains a fixed structure, in the sense that the bits which constitute them cannot be rearranged in any way; that is, we cannot have 'manpolice', 'edcough', etc. nor can they be separated by other units. It is ungrammatical to have 'police the man'; 'policeman the'; etc. (Crystal, 1995). In Okun language, any attempt to tamper with the fixed internal structure of words will result into semantic adulteration, alteration or bastardization. This is exemplified in *oḡon* 'neck', *ẹkẹdọ* 'chest', *pọnon* 'road', *jíjẹ* 'food', *ùhìn/ ìhìn/àké* 'knife', *ìghé* 'mulching', *ghunwa/ sunwọn* 'good/beautiful'; that is, none of these words can be restructured to arrive at the same semantic value.

Other criteria have been postulated in the literature. Ullman (1962) identifies two types of words. These he names 'transparent' and 'opaque' words. According to him the former can be determined from the meaning of their parts while the latter's meaning cannot be arrived at through their parts. Thus 'chopper', and 'doorman' are transparent but 'axe' and 'porter' are opaque (Palmer, 1976).

Words are composed of different segments which determine their structural classifications- simple words, compound words and complex words (Arokoyo, 2013). Each of these classifications will be substantiated with relevant examples drawn from both Okun and English languages.

2.9.1 Simple Words

Simple words are free morphemes with independent form and meaning (see, Arokoyo, op cit). It is deduced from this assertion that all root (unadulterated) words are simple words. Examples of this type of words are found in both English and Okun languages as exemplified in:

Table 11: Simple Words in English and Okun

English	Okun
Speak	ígbáun ‘locust beans’
Man	họ ‘say’
Fish	ìwọ ‘navel’
Tall	kọ ‘sing’
Wise	okùlé ‘faeces’
Change	bá ‘meet’
Here	bí ‘give birth’

Field data (2015)

2.9.2 Compound Words

Compound words are derived from the merger of two or more independent lexical items into one word (Adeosun, 2014). The occurrence is reflected in both English and Okun. Examples from English are bedroom, chalkboard, ice water, boyfriend, dry fish, barman, landlord, etc. while ómíkọngá (well water), ùsàdùdù (black pot), ileọbá (king’s house), isẹhúnwà (work is good), ẹtọghá (our right), etc. constitute examples of compound words in Okun.

2.9.3 Complex Words

Complex words contain the root and one or more bound morphemes. Arokoyo (2013), affirms that complex words are made up of more than one meaningful grammatical unit that can further be broken down into its constituent parts. Words like *bags*, *walks*, *calling*, *taller*, *commonest*, *lovely*, *introduction*, *workable*, *cattle*, *went*, etc. are examples of complex words in English. In Okun, words like *ìfẹ* ‘love’, *éhó* ‘fruit’, *íkú* ‘death’, *ẹsẹ* ‘sin’, *ólílẹ* / *ólúlẹ* ‘landlord’, *ẹlejá* ‘fish owner’, etc. are complex words.

It is therefore obvious that every attempt to define the word as a unit of grammar is in many ways more complex than similar attempts with respect to the morpheme. Of course, morphemes have been identified as the minimal/smallest meaningful segment of a word in any language while words in languages of different structures are extremely varied in nature. The opinion of Yule (1996) vividly points out that the characteristics of all the words of a language can be identified in terms of their phonetic and morphological make-up. As earlier observed, the traditional grammar, which specializes in describing languages such as classical, Latin and Greek; attempt to define and identify English words using the parts they belong as a parameter. These attempts have received a lot of criticism at all levels.

Despite the numerous criticisms that the above scholarly descriptions and classifications of words have received, they have gained global acceptability. However, the researcher discovers that none has recognized the existence of compound-complex and multiple words which should be treated independently. Rather, they were embedded in complex and compound sentences respectively in the languages contrasted in this study. It is observed that the former refers to words that contain two independent morphemes and at least one dependent

morpheme while the latter represents all words that have at least three independent morphemes. Examples are found in the following tables.

Table 12: Compound-Complex Words in English and Okun

English	Word	Okun	Word	Gloss
Bed + room + s	Bedrooms	Ilé + dé + ilé	Ilédélé	From house to house
Boy + friend + s	Boyfriends	Ọmọ + kọ + ọmọ	Ọmọkọmọ	Useless child
Book + shop + s	Bookshops	Ilu + hi + ilu	Ilùhílù	From town to town
Town + crier + s	Towncriers	mọ́ímọ́í + elé + épó	mọ́ímọ́íelép ó	Cooked beans powder with red oil
Rumour + monger + ing	Rumourmongering	Iyé + eni + édé	Iyénédé	Mother cannot be belittled

Table 13: Multiple Words in English and Okun

English	Word	Okun	Word	Gloss
sergeant + at + arm	Sergeant-at-arm	Ọloun + ghún + mi + adé	Ọlounghúnmadé	God has crowned me
Never + the + less	Nevertheless	Ari + ókó + yọ	Arókóyọ	One that is delighted in farm
Three+ man+ panel	Three-man-panel	mọ + kọn + ojú + ọlá	mọkọnjúọlá	Do not be in a hurry to be wealthy
Sister + in + law	Sister-in-law	Ojú + étó + inú	Ojúétónú	The belly cannot be seen
Commander + in + chief	Commander –in- chief	Adé + la + ibú + ọlá	Adélbúọlá	One that opens a pool of wealth

Field data (2015)

The relevance of the phonological and morphological aspects discussed above to this study is deeply rooted in the fact that they form the basic platform for the realization of syntax or grammar and semantics. Of course, the conventional occurrence of one or more sounds forms a morpheme/word; while a conventional string of two or more words that contains either subject or verb or any other sentential component culminates in phrase formation.

2.10 Phrase as a Linguistic Phenomenon

Structurally, the phrase is considered the next important segment of a language and has attracted prominence in both definition and classification. Grammarians have advanced several descriptions of a phrase. Crystal (2008) says it is a single element of structure typically containing more than one word which often lacks the subject-predicate structure typical of clauses. O'Grady, Dobrovolsky and Katamba (1996) identify the phrase as one or more words that are built around a 'skeleton' consisting of two levels: a phrase level and a word level and acts as a syntactic unit. Wikipedia(2011) notes that the determiner is the head that projects into a phrase. Oji (1994) sees it as a group of words which does not contain a finite verb. He claims that a phrase is a group of words equivalent to a single part of speech. The inadequacy of this definition is embedded in its inability to capture verb phrase as exemplified in: '---is going', '---was arranged', '---keep talking', '---has been done', '---will be travelling', etc. Olatunbosun (1990) states that, a phrase consists of one or more words. The later definitions agree with Chomsky's conception of a phrase. From his (Chomsky's) viewpoint, the phrase structure rule stipulates that a noun phrase for instance, can consist of a single noun with or without a modifier.

Hodges and Whitten (1984) observe that a phrase is often defined as a group of related words without a subject and a predicate. Adeosun (op cit) sees a phrase as a group of words without a subject and a finite verb (predicate). Hornby (1975) stresses that a phrase is a word found in grammar to refer to a group of words without a verb especially one that forms part of a sentence. Omoniwa (2003) buttresses this assertion by describing a phrase as another grammatical unit (group of closely related words) not including a subject and finite predicate and serving to make the meaning more specific.

Halliday (1961) offers a new term to replace the phrase, and this he tags the 'group'. He states that a group is referred to one or more words that occupy a

distinctive grammatical slot in a stretch of linguistic signals. In conjunction with other scholars' contributions to the description of phrase, Boadi (1968) and Nwankwo (1990) adopt the Halliday's name for phrase (group). They state that sentences fundamentally comprise different arrangements of four classes of group. These are: Nominal group, Verbal group, Adjectival group, Adverbial group. Adeosun (op cit) further emphasizes that the terms 'phrase' and 'group' can be used interchangeably. Moore (2000) overtly states that "a phrase is a useful all-purpose name (or even a single word) considered as an element in the structure of a clause or sentence especially a grouping which could be replaced by a single word". He further explains that a phrase which works like or equates to a noun is a noun phrase, one which qualifies a verb is an adverbial phrase.

Hasselgard (1999) offers a similar definition of a phrase as the earlier ones given by other linguists. He classifies a word or group of words which can fulfill a syntactic function in a clause to be a phrase. He in addition claims that a phrase is named after the most important word in it (the head). Similarly, he proposes a classification of a phrase as belonging to distinct categories of structures. Phrase as a phenomenon has been immensely embraced by the structuralists to some extent. The grammatical rules that stress how to generate all and only the grammatical sentences of the language are built up out of words. The phrase structure rules have come to exist because of the structures that could be generated by this set of rules (Chomsky, 1967).

From the above definitions of a phrase, it is deduced that there is common platform that linguists and researchers base their definitions and classifications of a phrase without significant disparity. That is, a phrase lacks the linguistic capacity to accommodate both a subject and a predicate and this accounts for why it does not express complete or meaningful thought.

2.10.1 Phrase Structure: A Generative Grammar's Perspective

Before discussing the nature and organization of grammar within the Minimalist framework, the researcher sees the relevance of giving a brief review of the antecedent models that gave birth to Minimalist Programme (MP). There is need to do this in order to bring out the weaknesses of these models that gave rise to the MP version of generative grammar.

The major goal of generative grammar is to account for the nature of Universal Grammar (henceforth refer to as UG). According to Katamba (1993:8), 'the human child is born with a blue-print of language which is called Universal Grammar'. Following Chomsky (1986), Katamba (op cit) defines UG as the faculty of the mind which determines the nature of language acquisition in the infant and of linguistic competence. Generative grammar tries to explain linguistic knowledge and how such knowledge is represented in the human mind and how human beings acquire language. The central goal of generative grammatical theory is to determine what it is that people know if they know a particular language. Chomsky's (1955, 1957, 1995) view about knowledge of language is the ability to produce and understand an unlimited number of utterances of that language which one may never have heard or produced before. This ability is made possible by the acquisition of a finite set of rules that can be used to generate infinite number of utterances. In describing the nature of knowledge, Chomsky (1957, 1965) makes a distinction between competence and performance. Competence is defined as the implicit knowledge which a person has about his language which makes it possible for him to make grammatical judgment about the utterance he makes or hears. Performance, on the other hand, is the actual use of the language which may not be an accurate reflection of the person's competence in the language. The acquisition of this finite set of rules is made possible by the nature of the mind which is endowed with a specialized language faculty.

Just like any other aspect of enquiry, the theory of generative grammar has developed over the years giving rise to different modifications. The stages in the modification of generative grammar are recognized by different names: Classical Transformational Grammar otherwise known as Standard Theory (Chomsky 1965, Katz and Postal 1964, Bach 1964), Extended Standard Theory (Chomsky 1970, Jackendoff 1972, Emonds 1976), Revised Extended Standard Theory (Chomsky and Lasnik, 1977; Lasnik 1976), Government and Binding Theory (Chomsky, 1981; 1986a; 1986b; Riemsdijk and Williams, 1986) and the most current, the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1992, 1995, 2004).

Lamidi (2008:147) asserts that it is Chomsky's pursuit of an adequate explanation for the structure of nominal that can be explained through the use of transformations and others which are not amenable to transformational rules that leads to the emergence of the x-bar theory. The two types of nominal referred to here are gerunditive and derived. Chomsky(1965) is of the opinion that if derived nominals were to come under transformational rules, linguists might be forced to construct a very complex grammar that would be too powerful: a grammar that would generate ungrammatical/unacceptable structures. It is the reactions to Chomsky's view that gives birth to the Lexicalist school that is championed by Jackendoff which holds that transformations are not necessary in the derivation of some nominal, by extension, some other lexical items. The Lexicalist Hypothesis states that a word projects directly from the lexicon to the deep and surface structures without the application of transformational rules (Jackondoff, 1977).

Riemsdijk and Williams (1986) support the Lexicalist Hypothesis and they highlight the differences between the two types- Gerunditive and Derivative nominals. According to their analysis, the former behaves like sentences and are regarded as reduced form of sentences while the later behaves like noun phrases. This claim is consolidated in Lamidi's examples:

1. Gerundive Nominal

- i. His complaining about the boy
- ii. Her obeying the rules
- iii. Aisha's believing in God

2. Root Sentences

- i. He complained about the boy.
- ii. She obeyed the rules.
- iii. Aisha believes in God.

Lamidi's (op cit) analysis shows that 'complaining' in 1(i) is a transformed form of complained in 2(i); obeying in 1(ii) is a transformed form of obeyed in 2(ii) and believing in 1(iii) is a transformed form of believes in 2(iii). It is pertinent to know that the analysis of the derived nominal takes a different pattern as exemplified below:

3. Derived Nominal

- i. The harassment of the girl
- ii. Her survival of the auto-crash
- iii. His report about the manager

4. Regular Nominal

- i. The thrust of the theory
- ii. Our farming in the past
- iii. Their observation about the claim

The derived nominals have the grammatical potential to occur in the same slots that the regular nominals occur. In a linguistic milieu where they have a common distribution, they must have a relationship. Since the regular nominals are not products of transformations, derived nominals are not. Lamidi (2008:148) observes that such a postulation of transformational rules will generate unacceptable structures.

Derived nominals are related to specific verbs; they are also preceded by determiners and post-modified by prepositional phrases. The distribution excludes most gerundive nominal (Lamidi, *ibid*). In gerundive nominal, adverbials occur before the gerund while in derived nominals, adjectives precede the nominals. Examples are shown in the following strings:

5a. Bekky's quickly backsliding from the faith

b. Ijeoma's persistently confronting the rogue

6a. Bekky's quick backslide from the faith

b. Ijeoma's persistent confrontation of the rogue

In the examples above, the words 'quickly' and 'persistently' in 5(a) and (b) precede gerunds while 'quick' and 'persistent' in 6(a) and (b) precede derived nominal. A comparison of the two occurrences affirms that the strings of words in 5 look like sentences while those in 6 take the form of noun phrases.

Another contrast that exists between the two types of nominal is the presence of regularity in the realization of gerundive nominal while derived nominal have no regular form. Therefore, insistence on transformation will be tantamount to expecting the transformed to be also regular. The irregular nature of derived nominals shows that derivation does not use transformational rules. As a result of this, the form of derived nominal cannot be predicted. Also, the output of such transformations should be regular. This is however not so as illustrated below:

7. Root Verbal Gerundive Nominal

Derived Nominal

Achieve	achieving	achievement
Eradicate	eradicating	eradication
Eat	eating	eat

The situation is however, different with various derived nominals which do not use regular form and an attempt to force regular form on them will culminate in unacceptable structures as in:

8. Root Verbal -al

-ment

-ation

Announce	*announcal*	announcement	*announcation*
Approve	approval	*approvement*	*approvation*
Educate	*educatal*	*educatement*	education

From the foregoing, it is deduced that each derived nominal is independently projected from the lexicon. Practically, this concurs with the Lexicalists' Hypothesis.

Another predicament noticeable in the tenet of transformational grammar is that the relationship between the verb and the derived nominal is unpredictable. This points to the fact that a verb and its corresponding derived form may have different meanings. Of course, we cannot be sure that a particular nominal is derived from a particular verb even if they seem to be related. This braces the claim of the hypothesis that the nominals are not derived by transformations. Examples are shown below:

9. VerbalDerived Nominal Possible Meaning

a. elevate	elevation	altitude/promotion
b. erect	erection	building/turgidity of sex organ
c. revolt	revolution	political uprising
d. revolve	revolution	movement of the earth

From the above examples, it is discovered in 9(a) and (b), that the verb is generally associated with one of the possible meanings thereby making it impossible to point out exactly the speaker's intended meaning. Another challenge is that the words 'revolt' and 'revolve' in 9(c) and (d) have revolution as their counterpart. Transformation rules can therefore, not easily show which of the meanings is attached to the particular word. To solve this problem of ambiguity following the Lexical Hypothesis, each occurrence of revolution has an independent entry with its own meaning. In regard to the gerundive nominal, the meaning is absolutely predictable because it is constant. Examples are shown in item 10:

10. Verb	Nominals
Chase	chasing

Chat	chatting
School	schooling

The Lexicalist position also attracts attention because there are certain verbs that do not have corresponding derived nominals and vice-versa. This is illustrated below:

11. Verbals	Nouns
a. i to spew	_____
ii to arouse	_____
b. i _____	repercussion
ii _____	parastatal

From the above example, it is established that there is no evidence of association between verbs in 11(a) and nominals in 11 (b); that suggests the separate listing of the words in the lexicon. It is observed that with the adoption of the Lexicalists' Hypothesis, limitations are placed on the expressive ability of transformation thereby stopping it from performing certain tasks that other rules can perform in addition to constraining it from generating unacceptable structures. The Lexicalist School therefore, as earlier asserted, developed the x-bar theory.

2.10.2Phrase Structure: A Structuralist Grammar's Perspective

The proponents of structuralism- Ferdinand de Saussure, Leonard Bloomfield, etc. expressed their dissatisfaction over the unscientific approach of the traditional grammarians to the study of language. According to the structuralists, the study of language is data-based in its scientific approach and should be independently done without the interference of any other language. Language should be studied via its present state by avoiding its historical past.

From the structuralists' viewpoint, a phrase is a group of words appearing between well-defined junctures which possesses a head-word. In general, the

adherents of this school overtly state that phrases function as a unit in larger structures, and they fall into groups which are largely determined by the head-word. Phrases in this structural category include: NP, VP, AdvP, AdjP and PP (Awolaja et al 2014).

Structure deals with the internal and conventional arrangement of a sentence in terms of a hierarchically organized representation. The sequences should be organized to fulfill three conditions: preserve the same grammatical meaning, fit in the greatest number of environments and belong to a form-class without structure. Structure reveals how the various elements of the surface structure of a language are conventionally patterned rather than relying on the process rule acting on deep structure (John 1966:190 in Awolaja, et al 2014:120).

Culicover (1997:134) states that, “Phrase structure concerns the hierarchical and left-right relationship between syntactic categories. This means that there is conventional linguistic norm governing the arrangement of phrases in every language. In the same vein, each constituent of a phrase does not possess equal grammatical or semantic value and that is responsible for the relevance of the principle of hierarchy in phrase structure. To further support this assertion, Yule (2002) states that the analysis of the constituent structure of the sentence can be represented in different types of diagrammes (immediate constituent analysis, tree diagramme, etc.). According to the structuralists, there are four fundamental categories which are: unit, structure, class and system (Osisanwo, 1999).

2.10.3 Phrase Structure: A Systemic Grammar’s Approach

The Systemic Grammar was pioneered by M.K.A Halliday who owes some allegiance to his former teacher, J.R. Firth, a fact which has made some people to refer to the grammar as Neo-Firthian grammar. Halliday (1966a) cited in Osisanwo (1999:10) puts up the following points to differentiate it from other grammars:

- a. Systemic grammar postulates four theoretical categories of unit, structure, class and system which are used to account for the fundamental grammatical patterns of any human language.
- b. While unit and class apply to both surface and deep planes of grammar, structure operates only in surface grammar, system operates only in deep grammar.
- c. It is a generative non-transformational grammar that operates at surface and deep planes. At the surface plane, the grammar deals with how any given system is ultimately realized in grammatical structures and their elements. At the deep plane it accounts for how semantic features are organized into networks, with the entry conditions into any given network explicitly stated.
- d. Classes are defined by their roles in structure. For instance, the class 'nominal group' is defined in its role as subject and complement of a clause.
- e. There are differences in delicacy of items of analysis. Some items or elements are more delicate than others.

In Systemic grammar, five units are recognized and it can be arranged using either ascending or descending rankscale magnitude:

Morpheme, Word, Group, Clause, Sentence or Sentence, Clause, Group, Word, Morpheme respectively.

It is quite lucid from the forgoing that Systemic grammar recognizes the existence of the group (phrase) which is classified into: nominal groups which have the grammatical ability to occur at the subject and complement positions, verbal groups which are predicates, and adverbial groups which occupy the adjunct positions in sentences.

This grammatical model embraces the notion of headword with symbol “h” which forms the mandatory or obligatory element that cannot be discarded. The pre-headword is tagged modifier with the symbol “m”. The post-headword referred to as a qualifier with the symbol “q”.

The classification of phrases by the systemic grammarians is deficient in scope as it does not capture adjectival and prepositional phrases. The two are embedded in NG and AG respectively. This is not appropriate because every sentential constituent is incorporated for a designated grammatical function which cannot be undermined. This significance accorded each constituent’s function should inform their categorization.

2.10.4 Phrase Structure Rules (PSR)

Phrase Structure Rule is a reaction to Traditional Grammar (TG) which was based on ‘word-grammar’ as it pays attention to selected aspects of morphology and very little to syntactic rules. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there was the need for a change which gave rise to modern linguistics from different schools of linguistics with Ferdinand de Saussure being referred to as the father of Modern Linguistics (Tomori, 1977). Various scholars such as Sweet (1899), Bloomfield (1933), Fries (1952), Firth (1962) among others contribute to English and approach English as a living speech, a sentence-grammar as opposed to word-grammar of Traditional grammar. The radical approach to the study of syntax came about as the result of the publication of Chomsky’s (1957) *Syntactic Structure*.

The Chomsky’s Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) is fundamentally focused on how sentences can be divided into constituent parts such that each word in a sentence is a constituent of some phrase that, in turn, is ultimately a constituent of the sentence. The constituent structure of sentences is determined in part by Phrase Structure Rule (PSR) of grammar. In TGG, finite (i.e. limited)

rules are used to generate infinite (i.e. unlimited) sentences in a language. The term ‘generative’ in this context means ‘to specify’ or ‘to account for’ all the grammatical sentences in a language.

According to Carnie (2007:66), Phrase Structure Rule is a rule that generates the phrase structure tree of a sentence. Yusuf (1997:6) says ‘Phrase Structure Rules are set of rules that generate the constituents of a phrase or clausal category. They are also set of rules, which generate structural description of sentences.

Horrocks (1993:31) refers to Phrase Structure Rules as a formal device for representing the distribution of phrases within sentences. According to him (Horrocks), PSR have the following sets:

$$\begin{array}{lll} S & \rightarrow & NP \quad VP \\ VP & \rightarrow & V \quad (NP) \\ NP & \rightarrow & DET \quad (ADJ) \quad N \quad (PP) \end{array}$$

In all, Phrase Structure Rules can be defined as the rules that generate constituents of phrases from lexical category. Constituent, according to Carnie (2007:64) is a group of words that function together as a unit and the head of a phrase is the word that gives the phrase its category. Thus, the implication of this is that, Noun phrase will be headed by noun, Prepositional phrase will be headed by preposition, etc. It worth noting that, the structure of phrases within clauses is universal, comprising a specifier, optional heads, and complements, and a recursive adjunct.

The head of a phrase is important in many ways. The head is unique such that it has specific features that distinguish it from other heads, and it is obligatory since other words in the phrase converge on and derive their overall meaning in relation to it (Cowper, 1992; Chomsky, 1981, 1986 and Kornai & Pullum, 1990). These features follow from the θ -criterion (Chomsky, 1981:36), the Projection Principle (Riemsdijk & Williams, 1986: 52), and the Endocentricity

Principle (Chomsky 1981: 36). Abney (1987: 55) discusses two types of heads: the functional head and the lexical head. The characterization of these heads is arrived at through binary feature specifications of [F]. While functional heads are [+F], lexical heads are [-F]. The lexical heads therefore include nouns, adjectives, verbs and prepositions. Abney (1987), Webelhuth (1995) and Radford (1997) identify certain features that distinguish functional categories from lexical ones. The first is that functional categories belong to a closed set such that new ones cannot be created or added to the existing ones. These include determiners, inflectional elements and complementizers. Lexical heads can, however, accommodate additional words that are created.

Another distinction is that while lexical heads have independent substantive meaning, functional heads do not. They derive their meanings through the contexts in which they occur. However, as heads, functional elements may take certain kind of complements but may not take a specifier (Chomsky and Lasnik, 1995: 54). They are usually inseparable from their complements. While functional heads permit only one complement, lexical heads form such complements (e.g. VP and NP). Finally, functional heads serve as linguistic frames for structures in a language while lexical heads serve as flesh for the group.

The fact that languages vary as to the relative position of the “head” within the phrase demands a study of head-modifier or head-complement order in a given language. Considering the fact that headedness is a key concept in the x-bar theory, and since x-bar theory is one of the modules of grammar within the principles and parameters (P&P) theory, it could be said that headedness remains of interest in the syntactic analysis of a given language. In the syntactic analysis of a phrasal category, the phrase is said to be a projection of the head. This, according to Sells (1985:25) constitutes “a fundamental and central

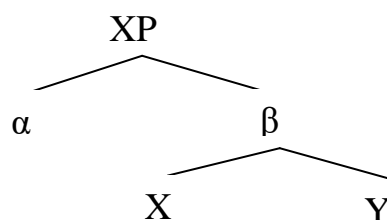
concept in all contemporary syntax is the concept of a head. The head of a linguistic unit is that part of the unit that gives its essential character”.

From the above remarks by Sells, a noun heads a noun phrase. Similarly, an adjective heads an adjectival phrase, a verb heads a verb phrase, a preposition heads a prepositional phrase, and so on for other phrases. Headedness is very crucial in the syntactic analysis of a given language. In support of this assertion, Stowell (1981:27) opines that, the grammar of each language must specify whether the head appears at the left or right boundary of X-bar (i.e., whether it is “head-first” or “head-last”).

Using Spanish and Miskito as “mirror images”, Chomsky (1988:70) illustrates the values of Head Parameter in the two languages as follows:

The order of head and complement is one of the parameters of universal grammar, as we can see by comparing Spanish and Miskito for example. In Spanish the value of the parameter is “head first”; each lexical head precedes its complement. In Miskito the value of the parameter is “head last”; each lexical head follows its complement. Miskito and Spanish are “mirror images” in this respect.

Given the impression created from the above quoted sources, it is deduced that a language has the heads on the same side in all its phrases. However, empirical evidence from natural languages like English and Okun has shown that there is no cross-categorial consistency in the specification of head-complement order; although, there are variations across languages. In English language, where a preposition is found often, a NP follows, giving rise to the statement that a preposition governs its NP object. Only lexical categories can be governors (Chomsky 1981:162). The configuration for government is as below:



In the above schemata, α C- command β and other nodes dominated by XP. The list of governors includes the lexical categories noun, verb, adjective and preposition that is, everything that can be the head of a phrase (cook, 1998:36).

2.10.5 Phrasal Categories

Phrasal categories are the syntactic categories, which the phrase structure rules operate with. Phrasal Categories include:

- a. Noun Phrase
- b. Verb Phrase
- c. Adjectival Phrase
- d. Adverbial Phrase
- e. Prepositional Phrase

2.10.5.1 Noun Phrase

Yusuf (1997:8) defines NP as the category that codes participants in the event or state described by the verb. NP can also be defined as a word or group of words that can function as the subject, direct object and indirect object of a sentence.

The most important and significant word whose occurrence is obligatory in this Phrasal category is the Noun. It is a single word that can replace the whole phrase. Collins (1990:215) describes noun phrase as one of the important constituents of grammatical structure based on their multiple functions. Basically noun phrase is headed by a Noun. And it could be made up of just a word or often co-occur with a class of words such as ‘determiners’ (the, a, this, those, no, etc.) as well as ‘adjectives’. That is, a Noun phrase can be described as indicated in the phrase structure rules below:

- (i) NP \rightarrow N (PN)
- (ii) NP \rightarrow Det, N
- (iii) NP \rightarrow Adj. N

(iv) NP → Det. Adj. N

The following are examples of noun phrase in Okun language:

i. *Mo ríòkùnrínghóngá yin*

I see man that tall the

‘I saw the tall man’

ii. *Ilé lílá àé jẹ gbé*

house big this (neg) eat carry

‘This big house is not habitable’

2.10.5.2 Verb Phrase

Yusuf (1997:21) explains that, verb phrase (VP) is traditionally called ‘the predicate’ because it contains the sentence predicator namely ‘verb’. Stockwell (1977:40) states that ‘verb is a chester of words in surface strings of which the node are verbs’. The verb is the head of a phrasal category VP. Similarly, Lamidi (2000: 166) recognises that the verb is the head of a VP. Whenever it occurs, the verb maintains the same syntactic feature. Like other categories, the VP contains optional specifiers (never, perhaps, often, always, etc.) while the other phrasal categories like NP, PP, AdjP, etc. serve as its complement. The formal notation for verb phrases is:

VP → V (NP) (PP) (S’). However, noun phrase and prepositional phrase can also be embedded within verb phrase. Therefore, verb phrase can open up schematically as:

VP → V

VP → V NP

VP → V NP PP

Generally, verb phrase can be said to be made up of the verb and its complement and other satellites. The following are examples of verb phrase (VP) in Okun language:

- i) *Ọ jejíjẹ*
They eat food
‘They ate the food’
- ii) *Wọ ti fọ kókò*
You have break pot
‘You have broken the pot’
- iii) *Mo rí wọ lánọn*
I see you yesterday
‘I saw you yesterday’

2.10.5.3 Adjective Phrase

Adjective phrase is a kind of phrase that is headed by an adjective. An adjective is a word that modifies a noun or its equivalence. Greenberg (1966:115) states that, an adjective phrase is a phrase with an adjective as its head, and it functions syntactically as an adjective phrase. Lamidi (2000:73) says, it is a phrase having an adjective as its head and can be premodified by adverbials.

Adjectival phrase can occur within the NP as an optional ‘premodifier’(very, quite, more, almost, etc.) of the head noun. However, AP can be opened up to Adj. N, Adv. Adj. N, and this is shown below:

AdjP → Adj. N
AdjP → Adv. Adj. N

Examples of Adjectival phrases in Okun language are as follows:

- (i) *ọ̀dàkpukpa yòrògòdò*
Paint red absolutely
‘Absolutely red paint’
- (ii) *aru wówó kuku*
load heavy very

‘the load is heavy’

- (iii) ẹpeyo wóró mẹwà
 groundnut piece ten
 ‘ten pieces of groundnut’

2.10.5.4 Prepositional Phrase

Radford (1997:268) says that a prepositional phrase is a phrase whose head is a preposition. A prepositional Phrase is frequently used to form idiomatic phrases which function as adverbial phrase of time, place, manner and adjectival phrases. Carnie (2007:71) states that “most preposition phrases take the form of a preposition (the head) followed by a NP. Instances of preposition in Okun language are:

- (i) lí orí òkè e
 On top mountain this
 ‘on this mountain’

- (ii) ghí sùkúlù
 to school
 ‘to school’

- (iii) Ẹ́ línú Èkò
 They are in Lagos
 ‘They are in Lagos’

2.11 Previous Studies on the Phrase Structure

A sizeable number of works have been done on the phrase structure of different languages across the globe. Virtually every work on the phrase structure has its focus on the particular languages it uses as a linguistic platform to portray the authenticity of the phrase structure that is obtainable in such language(s).

Majority of these works study the phrase structure from both descriptive and analytical points of view. Such works will be mentioned below.

Sanusi (2014) examines Headedness in Yoruba Determiner Phrase using the SVO parameter. He analyses the inconsistency in the value of head parameter with reference to the value of DP (determiner phrase) in Yoruba. He discovers that despite the fact that English and Yoruba share the same basic word order (i.e., SVO), lexical heads in the two languages are differently modified by determiners in their NPs, thereby producing different values of the Head parameter. As Abner's "DP-analysis" can work for English NPs, it over-generalized for the syntactic analysis of every human language. While it works for English, "NP-analysis" works for Yoruba.

Arokoyo (2013) surveys Focus Construction which encompasses the contrastive analysis of English and other languages- Nembe, Uhrobo, Hausa, Yoruba, Okun etc. using the case theory model for analysis as obtainable at both phrasal and sentential levels. She reveals that the particle that serves as Focus Marker in Owe (including other Okun dialects) is 'ki'. It heads the Focus phrase. She further states that Yoruba and Owe Focus Constructions are very similar except for the difference in their focus markers. The former uses 'ni' while the latter uses 'ki'. She also discovers that every part of the sentence can be focused but the most focusable constituent is the noun phrase and this accounts for why other focused constituents apart from noun are 'nominalizeable'.

Uzoigwe (2011) examines a contrastive analysis of Igbo and English determiner phrases. He reveals that the structural positions in the two languages differ considerably judging from the x-bar syntax model which defines languages as either left branching or right branching because of the placement of the complements modifying and qualifying the head of the phrase. The Igbo language is however considered as a right branching language, which has

its determiners post-posed to the right of the head, leaving the head at the left. This means that the determiner phrase in Igbo is post-posed. He further reveals that the Igbo language has a head initial structure where the determiners are positioned after the head 'X...'; the ellipsis represents the determiners while English maintains the structure of its head assuming the final position in a phrase. This means that all determiners come before the head '...X'.

Taiwo (2009) surveys Headedness and the Structure of Yoruba Compound Words adopting the Phrase Structure Rule of generative syntax as model for analysis. He reveals that morphologically complex words in Yoruba have heads in that they are endocentric. A part of them bears the same syntactic category features with the words and is one level lower in the x-bar hierarchy; being of the same word class, it actually represents the core meaning of the constituent. He discovers that the right-hand headed rule (RHR) of Williams (1981) and Selkirks (1982) revision of the same cannot be generalized to include language such as Yoruba words that have their left-hand members as heads.

Lamidi (2004) observes that structures have some underlying grammatical and semantic rules that account for their well-formedness and acceptability. The importance of the heads in their structures has, however, not been fully explored. He studies the interaction of functional and lexical heads and the scope of each. This is done through their influence over elements within their respective scopes. The Scope Limiting Constraint is proposed to account for the overlap between two heads as they co-operate to ensure grammaticality and acceptability of expressions. He categorically confirms that functional head legislate on the structure of an expression while lexical heads regulates the meaning of the structure.

Larson (1992) examines Issues in Verb Serialization using Serialization Structure and Principle Parameter as model for analysis. He submits that in a variety of world languages, notions that would elsewhere be expressed through

conjunction, complementation, or secondary predication are rendered uniformly by means of a sequence of verbs or phrases. He finds clear echo in the secondary predicate structures of English and that the difference between English and a language like Yoruba lies in the fact that secondary predicates are fundamentally nominal in the former, but verbal in the latter. He further observes that serial verbs present themselves as a noun phrase (often with accompanying inflectional elements): [S NP INFL VP1 VP2 VP3...]

Olaofe (1982) examines a sector analysis-based contrastive study of English and Yoruba verbal systems with teaching implications. The various steps taken in the analysis include: evaluating the previous treatments of this aspect of the Yoruba grammar and bringing the shortcomings of the earlier attempts; a more detailed description of the verbal layer unfolding the slots and sub-slots within it. He concludes that inter-lingual interference constitutes a major source of errors for the Yoruba students learning the English verb forms. He also notes that some verb forms are completely non-existent or partially similar in the two languages were found to have posed some problems to the students.

Up to the time of this work, only little effort has been made in research on the contrastive structural sequence of both English and Okun phrases, clauses and sentences.

In the related studies above, it is quite glaring that none has adopted the model used in this study to analyse contrastively the phrase structures of both English and Okun languages, hence, this study bridges the gap in this area.

2.12 Theoretical Framework

This segment presents the linguistic model adopted for the analysis of the phrase structures of both English and Okun. The x-bar (the theory of the structure of phrases) syntax propounded by Noam Chomsky is adopted for analysis as it functions within the government and binding theory. This is aimed

at expressing general phrase structure of all human language rather than features that are particular to one part of a language or to a single language. The theory helps in the description of words found in the contrasted languages as reflected in the analysis of the data collected from the native speakers with the use of descriptive grammar. The implication of the model on the method of analysis and interpretation is brought to bear.

2.12.1 Government and Binding (GB) Theory

The GB modules or principles interact with one another, as if in a relationship of mutual conspiracy, to ensure the well-formedness of structures. The principles have some variations which explain the variations found from one language to another. According to Frasier (1988:9), ‘in this modular view, what appear on the surface to be major structural differences among languages result from each language setting slightly different values (parameters) for each of the various grammatical subsystem’ The ‘setting of slightly different values’ of a particular principle is the reason why GB is commonly referred to as Principles and Parameters Theory (P&P). It is so called because, though there are general principles which are linguistic universals, there are in addition different variations from one language to another which make it impossible to realize the principles in a uniform way in all the languages. These different variations of the principles are what is referred to as parameters (Haegeman 1991:14).

Haegman (1991:13) defines Government and Binding (GB) theory as the theory of universal grammar which is the system of all the principles that are common to all human languages. Government and Binding theory is otherwise known as principle and parameters theory. In GB theory, the grammar is a continuous interaction between component and sub-theories embodying different principles and parameters. Again, Sanusi (1996:21) explains that Government and Binding Theory greatly eliminates proliferation of transformational rules, like passive,

affix-hopping, verb-number agreement, question formation, equi-NP deletion, raising, permutation, insertion, etc.

The details of GB theory will not be discussed here since it is not the model that is adopted in this study. For a detailed discussion of GB theory, please consult Haegeman (1991), Chomsky (1981, 1986a), Cowper (1992), Riemsdijk and Williams (1988).

2.12.2 Sub-Theories of Government and Binding

As research activities continue to probe deeper into the nature of human languages, there arose the need to narrow down the various alternative rules in linguistic analysis and also to shift emphasis from the study of rule system to that of principles. The Principles and Parameters approach which had been Chomsky's goal in developing generative grammar is formalised within the Government and Binding framework. GB is a radical revision of the earlier models where different syntactic rules for different constructions are reduced to only one rule, Move-alpha. This could simply be explained as a rule which requires the movement of an element from one position to another leaving behind a trace at the place of extraction (cf. Lasnik and Uriagereka, 1988). Move-alpha and other derivational processes are constrained by a number of principles which operate at the D-structure and the S-structure to ensure that only grammatical structures are generated by the general rule. The sub-theories of GB include: X-bar theory, Government theory, Case theory, Theta theory, Binding theory, Control theory and Bounding theory.

These sub-theories, even though independent, interact in a system of principles to define each language which structures are possible and which ones are not, though they can operate on the same configuration independent of each other. Newmeyer (1980:76) rightly points out that syntactic complexities result from the interaction of grammatical subsystems. Each is characterisable in terms of its own set of general principles.

The sub-theories are described briefly below.

The x-bar theory deals with the nature and constraints associated with the phrase structure. It shows what is common among all phrases. The Government theory defines the structural relationship between the head of a construction and those categories that are dependent upon it. The Case theory deals with the assignment of abstract case and the conditions under which they are assigned.

The Theta theory concerns itself with the assignment and functioning of thematic roles. The Control theory determines the potential reference of the abstract pronominal element referred to as PRO which serves as the subject of an infinitival clause. Binding theory links grammatical elements such as pronominals, anaphors, referring expression, traces, with their antecedents.

Lastly, the Bounding theory constraints the operations of the movement rule.

Among other theories mentioned earlier, the x-bar theory will be adopted as a model for analysis in this study because it allows a simple, economic and comprehensive classification of levels and so captures generalisations about structure which had hitherto been expressed formally.

2.12.3 X-Bar Theory

The x-bar theory is a component of linguistic theory which attempts to identify syntactic features presumably common to all human languages of the world that fit in a presupposed framework. X-bar presupposes that, all languages share certain structural similarities which are not captured in the analysis of the phrase structure rules for English and other natural languages.

The x-bar theory is designed to capture the inadequacies of the Phrase Structure Grammar (PSG). First, the PSG embraces many rules. For instance, an average sentence takes about seven rules before it can be analysed. For example: *The young man has stolen a pen.*

$$S \rightarrow NP\ INFL\ VP$$

$NP \rightarrow Det Adj N$

$INFL \rightarrow AGR Tns ASP$

$AGR \rightarrow Pers No$

$Pers \rightarrow 3rd$

$No \rightarrow Sg$

$Tns \rightarrow Pres$

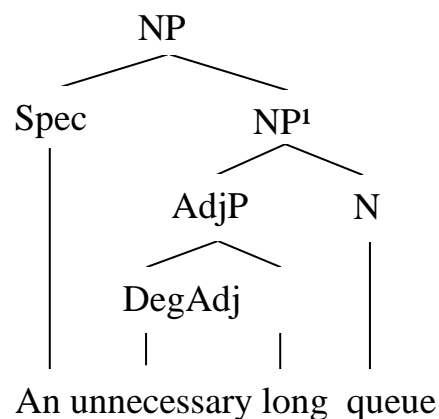
$ASP \rightarrow Perf$

$Perf \rightarrow have-en$

$VP \rightarrow V NP$

$NP \rightarrow Det N$

From the foregoing, the sentence has eleven rules that account for its component structures. Besides, PSG rules do not capture the analysis of complex sentence. The PSG rule is also limited in the number of categories it recognizes. Generally, PSG recognizes NP, VP, PP, etc. and lexical categories – Noun, Verb, Adjective, etc. Radford (1988) observes that certain structures are larger than the lexical categories but smaller than the phrasal categories. E.g. an unnecessary long queue



From the analysis of the above strings of linguistic values, NP¹ comprises AdjP and N which form a constituent. This component is, however, greater than a lexical category (e.g. queue) but smaller than the phrasal category like ‘an

unnecessarily long process’. It should also be noted that the component does not have the same distribution as a phrasal or lexical category. Hence, it will be inappropriate to categorise it as a phrasal or lexical category. Linguists had to find a way of explaining this structure and the x-bar theory is the product of such search.

Konial & Pullum (1985) opine that the x-bar theory should narrow down the range of choices to a small, preferably universal set of possible analyses. According to Chomsky (1986), the x-bar convention states that “every maximal projection has a specifier of XP position with the intermediate bar projection serving as ‘XP’s core.” In other words, the x-bar theory brings out what is common in the structure of phrases and projects the characteristics of lexical entries into the syntax which links the D-structure to S-structure and logical form component to the lexicon by specifying the possible context in which a particular item can occur. The projection from the head to the maximal level is shown below:

XP	-	Maximal Projection
X ¹	-	Intermediate
X	-	The head

Table 14: ‘X’ Components

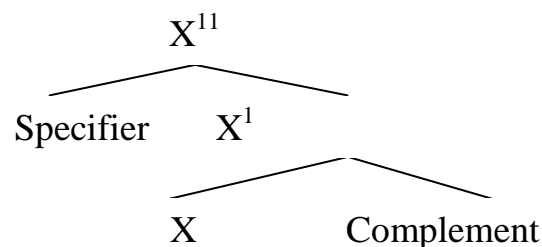
Lexical Category	Intermediate Category	Phrasal Category
N	X ¹	XP
N	N ¹	NP
V	V ¹	VP
A	A ¹	AP
P	P ¹	PP
I	I ¹	1P

C	C ^I	CP
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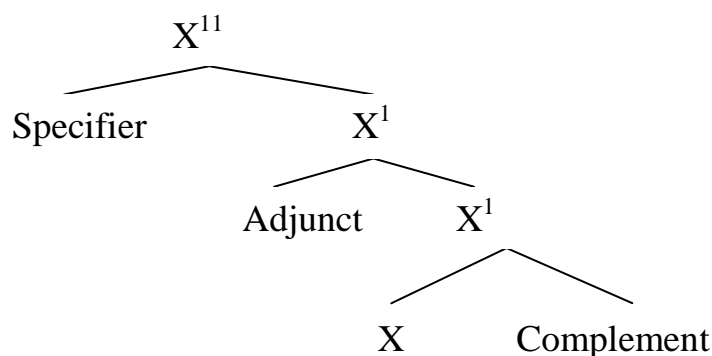
Source: Ndimele (1992:17)

The proponents of x-bar theory also argue that “there must be certain intermediate categories between the lexical head and the maximal categories (Ndimele, 1992:12). This intermediate category is normally represented as “X” which is given the name x-bar theory. “X” is a category variable which stands for any lexical head such as noun, verb, etc. It can also stand for non-lexical head such as inflections (I) and complementizers (C). These elements could head maximal projections. The maximal projection (X^{II}) stands for any phrase e.g. Noun phrase (NP), Verb phrase (VP), Adjective phrase (AP), Inflectional phrase (IP) and Complementizer phrase (CP).

The internal structure of x-bar describing a phrase is presented below:

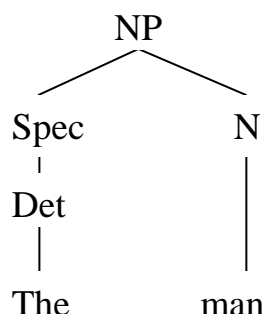


The head ‘X’ takes a complement to form a high X^I. The x-bar takes a specifier and projects maximally into a full phrase i.e. X-double bar. X is an obligatory element in the phrase. The specifier and the complement are the optional elements. In the x-bar theory adjuncts are sub-classes of x-bar. A phrase containing a specifier, an adjunct and a complement would have the schematic structure as illustrated below:



Moreover, the x-bar theory is engaged in the analysis of the contrasted languages in this research because it “provides principles for the projection of phrasal categories from lexical categories and imposes conditions on the hierarchical organization of categories in the form of general schemata” (Horrocks, 1987:101). Besides, the x-bar theory is designed to formalize the traditional notion called ‘head’ of a construction and to constrain the system in the recognition that the lexical categories: Noun, Verb, Adjective, Preposition are the heads and project to their phrasal nodes NP, VP, AP, PP, respectively. For example, Noun phrase is headed by a noun. It comes after possible constituents in the example below:

The Man ...



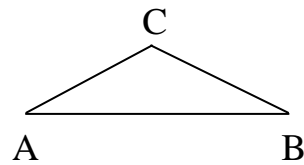
Again, x-bar theory makes explicit the notion ‘head of a phrase’. It may be that grammars vary according to the extent to which they utilize the resources made available by x-bar theory.

2.12.4 X-Bar Theory and Constituent Structure

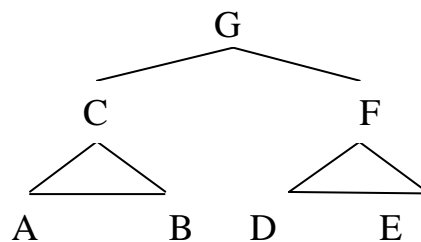
The x-bar theory generally claims that:

- i. the words in sentences and phrases have not just a linear order but also a hierarchical structure.
- ii in generative syntax, hierarchical structures are arranged in such a way that two syntactic objects are joined to form a larger syntactic object. Hierarchical structures are represented in tree diagrams and syntactic

objects or units are treated as nodes. This is explicated in following diagram:



It is quite glaring from the above illustration that node ‘C’ can join another syntactic object or another complex syntactic unit to form a new unit. It is also pertinent to note that only two objects can be joined to form a new object resulting in binary branching structures.



The hierarchies as reflected in the diagram above can be expressed with reference to structural relations- motherhood, sisterhood and dominance. Motherhood is perfectly illustrated in ‘G’s role to ‘C’ and ‘F’; ‘C’ to ‘A’ and ‘B’; the role of ‘F’ to both ‘D’ and ‘E’. In the same vein, dominance is reflected in the hierarchical placement of each item on the node. For instance, ‘G has super dominance on its immediate subordinates ‘C’ and ‘F’; its (‘G’s) dominance is also extended to ‘A’ and ‘B’; ‘D’ and E’ which are subordinating to ‘C’ and ‘F’ respectively.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This section states the research methodology chosen for this study. As discussed earlier in chapter one, the term language universal reveals that all languages across the globe share some common linguistic attributes at all levels of descriptions. Therefore, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, procedure for data collection and data analysis techniques are properly explained as they are relevant to this study.

3.1 Research Design

In the perspective of the research objectives and questions earlier stated to guide the study, the design has to be based on descriptive platform. A descriptive research examines critically a phenomenon or an event exactly how the situation is. Based on this assertion, Fernald (1995) reveals that a descriptive research investigates a phenomenon and report on it as it is, and it encompasses measurement procedures that involve asking questions from respondents. The view of Nworgu (1991) shows that a descriptive research is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. In line with this assertion, the present study contrasts the phrase structures of English and Okun using the descriptive or analytical capacity of the x-bar theory. This is structured as to justify the reality of the stated objectives and questions posed to guide this study.

3.2 Source of Data Collection

The source of data collection for this research is mainly based on the utterances from fifty-three (53) indigenous speakers of Okun language. The researcher

interacted with them as to enhance effective data collection. Consultation was also made with three (3) elites who hailed from Okun land (Iffe Ijumu, Kabba and Egbe in Kogi state) and frequently displayed some levels of mastery in the use of the languages (English and Okun), for either written materials or oral discussions. This fascinated the ample opportunity to seek for opinions, ideas, suggestions and views of these eminent personalities. It also provided the insight that has enormously guided the researcher on how best to approach this study. Data were also collected from written document such as books, journals and articles that were done by a few scholars on both languages (English and Okun). These written works were both in published and unpublished forms.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the research is the fifty-three (53) indigenous speakers of Okun who are resident in Ijumu, Kabba-Bunu and Yagba-East Local Government Areas of Western Senatorial District of Kogi state at the time of research. The researcher interacted with them as to enhance effective data collection. Oral interviews were also made with three (3) elites who hailed from Okun land (Iffe Ijumu, Kabba and Egbe in Kogi state) and frequently displayed some levels of mastery in the use of the languages (English and Okun), for either written materials or oral discussions.

3.3 Research Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample included the native speakers at different settings which include: wedding ceremonies, garden and relaxation spots. It was hoped that those served as the platform for the development and different usages of the language. The sample also included written works that were done by a few scholars that hail from Okun land. These written works were both published and unpublished forms.

For easy accessibility and quick collection of data in this study, the structured sampling method was adopted. In this study, structured method refers to a process (interview) well planned and organized in logical order to provide the necessary information leading to the achievement of the aims and objectives of the study. It provided a platform for the divergent linguistic situations which paved way for the language users to display the features capable of comparative study of both Okun and English languages. This was believed to yield the best result due to the dynamic and complex attribute of human language. The phenomenon that attracted the research questions also prompted the use of this procedure.

3.4 Instruments for Data Collection

The tools employed for data collection were: Written materials; Direct observation; Structured interview and Electronic medium

Written Materials: the most interesting development that Okun language has attracted is embedded in the recent attention directed to its study. This will immensely boost the maintenance and preservation of the language. Linguists have taken up the challenges of describing and analysing the languages forms and functions. Most utilized were the works of Chomsky (1995), Crystal (1995), Baiyere (1999), Otitoju (2002) , Carnie (2002), Arokoyo (2007), etc. These materials have greatly assisted the researcher to procure reliable data used in this study.

Direct Observation: the researcher made meticulous observation by directly interacting with the informants of the research as to be able to obtain relevant information. The researcher was actively engaged in the activities of the group being studied to formalize indepth interview and responses. The activities included those that took place in wedding ceremonies, relaxation spots and

garden. Therefore, data were collected by the researcher via such settings that enhanced unedited divergent expressions in Okun.

Structured Interview: the researcher exploited the available opportunity to present an already structured interview. According to Ngu (2005:135) the structured format is used to derive more accurate generalizations in later stages. It was standardized and formal. It encompassed some questions that were targeted at answering the crucial questions that were to elicit the problems. The questions targeted at the respondent, were consciously and carefully constructed. However, only a few respondents, who were considered erudite scholars in the languages, were interviewed. It is on this premises that the researcher generalized the respondents' views on the languages.

Electronic Medium: most of the utterances were collected via tape recordings as to further consolidate the authenticity of the study. Further effort was geared towards the transcription of the interview for explicit analysis. The information gathered from the interview glaringly showed the similarities and differences that are peculiar to both languages.

3.5 Procedure for Data Collection

Both monolingual and bilingual approaches were employed for eliciting the required data. Data were also collected from written materials- books, articles, journals and previous research works available in the languages.

Considering the relevant tools needed for this research, the researcher was able to present the best means by which solutions to the earlier posed problem could be obtained. The method for data collection cuts across all forms of utterances used by the native speakers of Okun in social gatherings such as wedding ceremony, garden, relaxation spot, etc. This method assisted in creating the interactive atmosphere that enabled proper observation and collection of data by the researcher. The processes tremendously assisted in providing the necessary

firsthand information (primary sources of information) for the authenticity of the earlier posed research questions. This serves as platform upon which the validity of this study was proved.

3.6 Procedure for Data Analysis

The brand of x-bar developed by Chomsky is the model of analysis adopted in this research. This is as a result of the fact that the database of linguistic theory is European languages. According to Nwachukwu (1988:2), "... the database of American linguistic theory is European languages." Any formal property of language seems to have its analogue in others, for the simple reason that they all belong to the same family of European languages. As a result of this, the x-bar theory is adopted to satisfy the needs of the segment of the Okun language under examination.

This analysis is in consonance with Tomori (1977:23) who observes that "in the formation of utterances a number of linguistic units are joined in a structural bond according to the rules of utterance formation in that language". In the light of this, data were collected and analysed as to schematically bring out the similarities and differences in the phrase structures of both languages with the help of tree diagramme. The surface structure of the utterances collected in the duo languages was observed. The data analysis did not capture the segment of sound system and the morphological make up of the languages. Without any doubt, the data used brought out maximum result of the study as expected.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter principally focuses on a brief description of the basic components of phrases in consonance with the x-bar headedness as obtainable in English as a model language. The head of a phrase is not related arbitrarily to the phrase type; it is not by chance that NP contains a noun rather than any other category. This general linguistic tenet that stipulates that each phrase is identified based on a particular type of head can be formalized as:

$$XP \rightarrow \dots X \dots$$

Based on the above principle, the head parameter for Okun language comprises both head-first and head-last as obtainable in English phrasal analysis. For instance,

$X'' \rightarrow X' \text{ Specifier}$, can be translated as:

$N'' \rightarrow N' \text{ Specifier}$

$V'' \rightarrow V' \text{ Specifier}$

$P'' \rightarrow P' \text{ Specifier}$

$A'' \rightarrow A' \text{ Specifier}$

Therefore, the target of this broad analysis is to show:

- i. the overall applicability of the x-bar analysis on the languages contrasted;
- ii. the structural convergence and divergence of phrases in both English and Okun;
- iii. the possibility to vividly adopt the x-bar model for the analysis of Okun phrase structure.

4.1 Data Presentation

4.1.1 Aspects of English

1. Noun Phrase (NP)

- a. The prophet addressed *the great multitude*.
- b. There are *some incorruptible lecturers in this college*.
- c. Dapo is *a maverick politician*.
- d. Nelson Mandela is *the most celebrated president*.
- e. *The egg in the refrigerator* is bad.
- f. *A modern mobile computer* is more sophisticated.

2. Verbal Phrase (VP)

- a. The woman *is travelling to London next year*.
- b. Latifat *has gone for meeting*.
- c. The delegates *will be speaking at the meeting*.
- d. The instructors *can train the learners*.
- e. The principal *should keep talking to them*.
- f. You *should have been speaking Okun by now*.

3. Adjectival Phrase (AdjP)

- a. The man *is very strong in battle*.
- b. The questions *were too tough*.
- c. The lady *is impeccably beautiful*.
- d. The future of Nigeria *is brighter than the morning star*.
- e. The instructor *is very fluent*.

4. Prepositional Phrase (PP)

- a. They found it *in the room*.
- b. I just came back *from the farm*.
- c. Patrick can dance *on the rock*.
- d. The cat is *under the table*.
- e. He kept the juice *beside the cupboard*.

5. Adverbial Phrase (AdvP)

- a. Hassan drives *sorecklessly*.
- b. They are *not so much into alcohol*.
- c. Tayo tackled the question *very well*.
- d. He speaks Okun *very fluently*.
- e. Dupe came *because of this matter*.

4.1.2 Aspects of Okun

1. Noun Phrase

- a. *Ajá àti jẹ ẹjá.*
Dog this (perf.) eaten fish
'This dog has eaten fish.'
- b. *Ade ati Aminu kọ orin lanṣon.*

- Ade and Aminu sing song yesterday
 'Ade and Aminu sang yesterday.'
- c. *Omọ ghon gbọnlẹtẹ.*
 Child these (+aux) wise very
 'These children are very wise.'
- d. *Morọ ọga Sọlahi Kano.*
 I send (+ past) master Sọla to Kano
 'I sent Sọla's master to Kano.'
- e. *Moti ri bọdá mi.*
 I (perf.) see brother my
 'I have seen my brother.'
O ti lọ ọbẹtẹ ghon.
 He/She (perf.) sharp knife these
 'He/She has sharpened these knives.'
- f. *Ọ ti lọ híọja keji.*
 They (perf.) go to market second
 'They have gone the second market.'
- g. *Hàlímọtùhọrọhí akọbi omọ Bayọ.*
 Halimọtù speak (+ past) to first child Bayọ
 'Halimọtù spoke to Bayọ's first child.'
- h. *Olú, olímọtòkpukpae ghà.*
 Olu owner carred (neg) come
 'Olu, the owner of a red car did not come.'
- i. *Sogo lu Bọdunrin omọmi.*
 Sogo beat Bọdunrin child my
 'Sogo beat Bọdunrin my child.'

2. Verb Phrase

- a. *Mi fẹ ri ghon.*
 I want see them
 'I want to see them.'
- b. *Mo gbé ọkọn lé wọ.*
 I carry heart on you
 'I rely on you.'
- c. *Ọ tiọ jẹun kuku.*
 They (modal aux.) eat too much
 'They can eat too much.'
- d. *Ọ ghá hí ibù lánọn.*
 They come (+ past) to here yesterday
 'They came here yesterday.'
- e. *Ẹ ti i kọrin láti anọn.*
 They (perf + be) sing (+ cont.) song since yesterday
 'They have been singing since yesterday.'
- f. *Mo ri omọ yin.*

I see (+past) child that

‘I saw that child.’

g. *Aẹ lọ hí Iffẹlọla.*

We (future) go to Iffe tomorrow

‘We shall/will go to Iffe tomorrow.’

h. *Ọremiti hun isu ghún mi.*

Friendmy (perf.) roast yam for me

‘My friend has roasted yam for me.’

i. *Ọla i ẹ re ilé.*

Ọla (modal+be) go house

‘Ọla will be going home.’

j. *Ayúbàyẹun ti họn éwó yin.*

Ayuba (modal) he (perf.) pay money that

‘Ayuba should have paid that money.’

3. Adjectival Phrase

a. *Eyin ẹ mọ funfun nini.*

Teeth your is white absolutely

‘Your teeth is absolutely white.’

b. *Ẹhin ghọn falúyalèté.*

Leg their big too

‘Their legs are too big.’

c. *Ọmọ ọdúdú bí édúdú.*

Childthis black like charcoal

‘This child is as black as charcoal.’

d. *Ọpà àgùn dọrọ.*

Stickthis long slim

‘This stick is slim and long.’

e. *kẹmi ti họnra rabata.*

kẹmi is fat too

‘kẹmi is too fat.’

f. *Okunrin in ti figbọnlẹ lèté.*

Manthis is giant very

‘This man is very giant.’

g. *Inuẹkpákpálá kuku.*

Stomach your flat too

‘Your stomach is too flat.’

h. *Ogun un ni ágbára kuku.*

Drugthis (be) power very

‘This drug is very strong/ effective.’

i. *Yara ghọn ti jọrọn jọrọn lèté.*

Roomthese large large too

‘These rooms are too large.’

j. *Ọmọọ tiyá ọlẹdárún.*

child this (perf.) become lazy irredeemably
'This child has become irredeemably lazy.'

4. Prepositional Phrase

a. Mi l^ohíilé.

I go to house

'I am going home.'

b. Ọre mi I bọ lati Iyàrà.

Friend my (be) come from Iyara

'My friend is coming from the Iyara .'

c. Omii li inú ìsà.

Water (be) to in pot

'Water is in the pot.'

d. Moriekulábẹ tébúrù.

I see rat under table

'I saw a rat under the table.'

e. Ójúláfẹ já hí inú omi.

Ójúláfẹ cut to inside water

'Ojulafẹ fell into the water/river.'

f. Iléghai líàbupọnọn.

House our (be) at beside the road

'Our house is beside the road.'

g. Mo gbé ọkọn léwọ.

I carry heart on you

'I rely on you.'

h. Ọgháhiibìi lánọn.

They come to here yesterday

'They came here yesterday.'

i. Kọlawọleti hun isu ghún mi.

Kọlawọle (perf.) roast yam for me

'Kọlawọle has roasted yam for me.'

j. Mo ri ghọn lí ọja lílá.

I see them in market big

'I saw them at the big market.'

5. Adverbial Phrase

a. Mì tí retí ghin látùùgbàìn.

I (perf) expect you since then

'I have been expecting you since.'

b. Mi ti dúrólátì èsì.

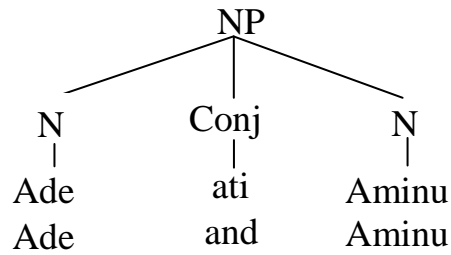
- I (perf) stand since last year
 ‘I have been waiting since last year.’
- c. *Ẹ liibi kọn.*
 They (be) place one
 ‘They are somewhere.’
- d. *Mi i líkpáàkiti omi.*
 I (be) at bank water/river
 ‘I am at the water’s/river’s bank.’
- e. *Wẹ ẹ se isẹ li ọlálíààrọ kùtùkùtù.*
 You (future) do work by tomorrow in morning early
 ‘You will work tomorrow very early in the morning.’
- f. *Ọ ro ilẹdádádá lónì.*
 They weed (+ past) ground well today
 ‘They weeded well today.’
- g. *Ọlajúwọ ilé mi bi aiga.*
 Ọla storm into house my like tornado
 ‘Ọla stormed into my house like a tornado.’
- h. *Mo ọọ sàbasàba hí ọdàlẹ ghọn.*
 I speak word shabbilly to traitor these
 ‘I spoke shabbilly to these traitors.’
- i. *Antimigbẹigbadó kátákátá hi okó mi.*
 Sister my plant maize sparingly to farm my
 ‘my sister planted maize sparingly in my farm.’
- j. *Ọ tó éwó òkpérékpéré láìni ìrújú.*
 They arrange money the orderly without confusion
 ‘They arranged the money orderly without confusion.’

4.2 Analysis of Data

- i. What are the structural similarities between English and Okun phrases?

1. Noun Phrase in English and Okun

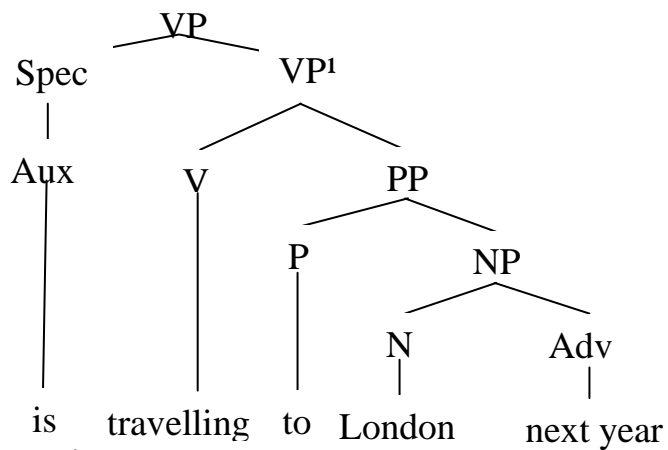
- a. Ade and Aminu...
- b. Ade ati Aminu...



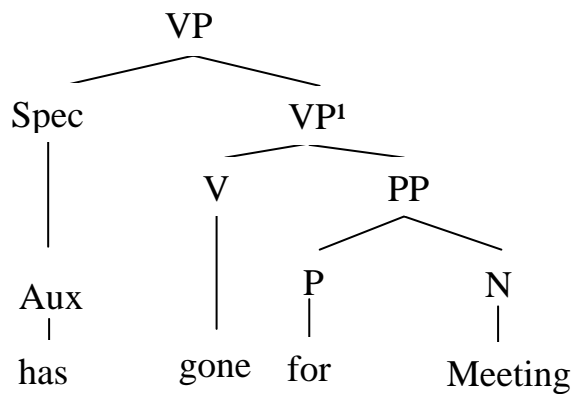
The above diagramme shows that the English and Okun compound subjects (nouns) maintain structural plausibility.

2. Verbal Phrase in English

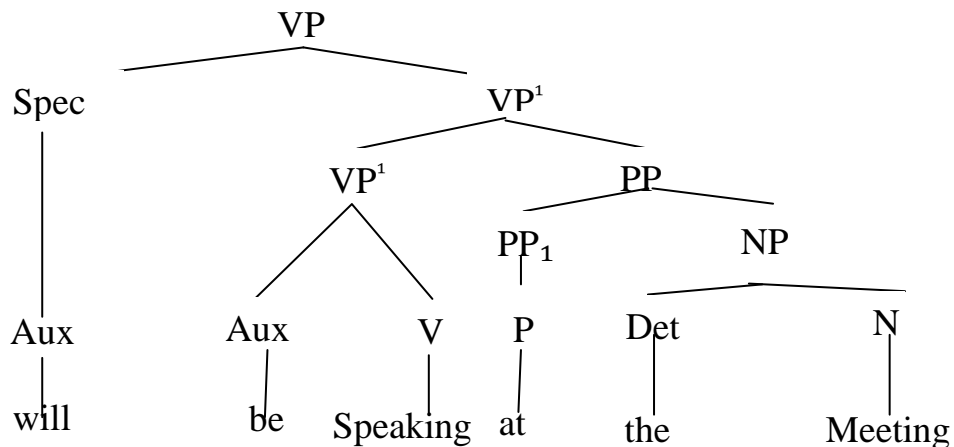
- a. The woman *is travelling to London next year*.



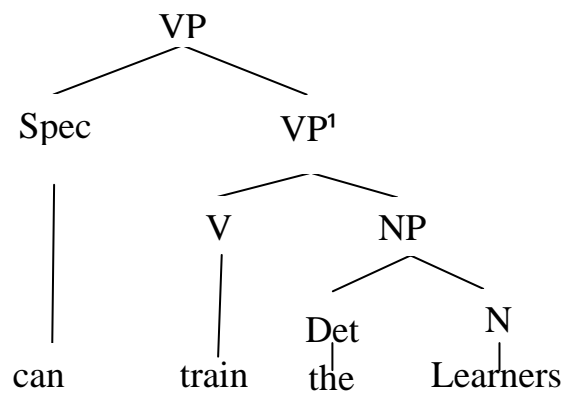
- b. Latifat *has gone for meeting*.



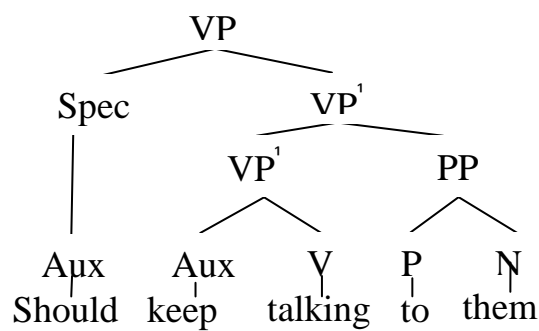
- c. The delegates *will be speaking at the meeting*.



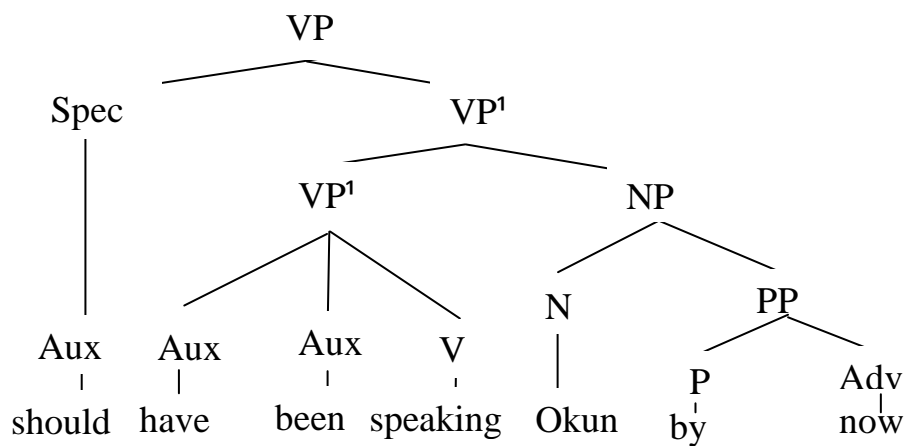
d. The instructors *can train the learners*.



e. The principal *should keep talking to them*.

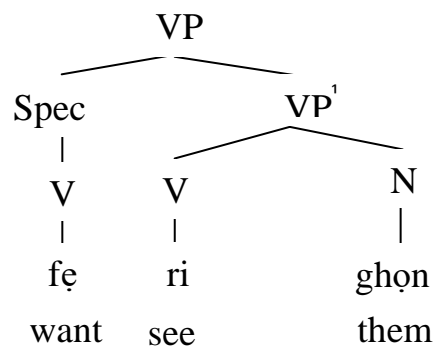


f. You *should have been speaking Okunbynow*.

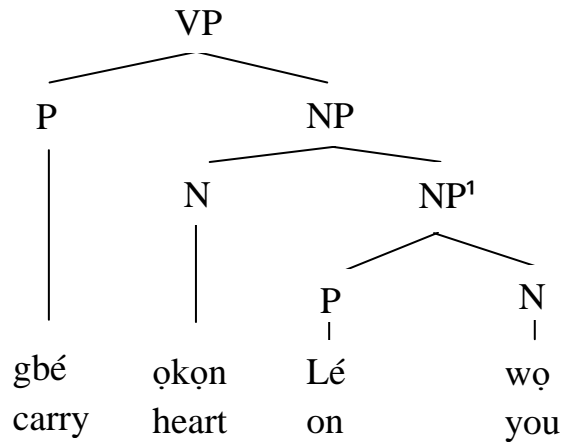


3. Verb Phrase in Okun

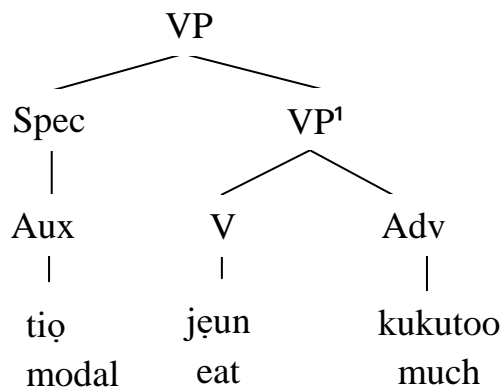
a. ... fẹrighon



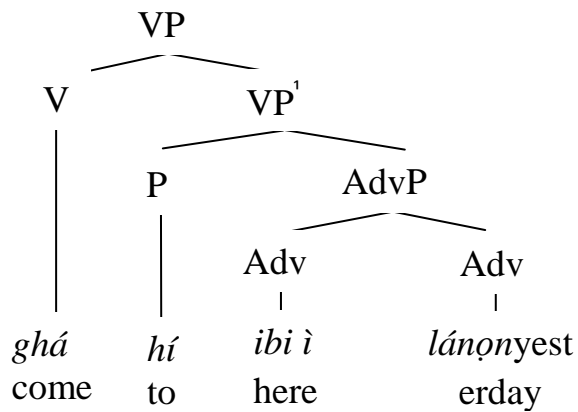
b. ...gbéọkọnléwọ



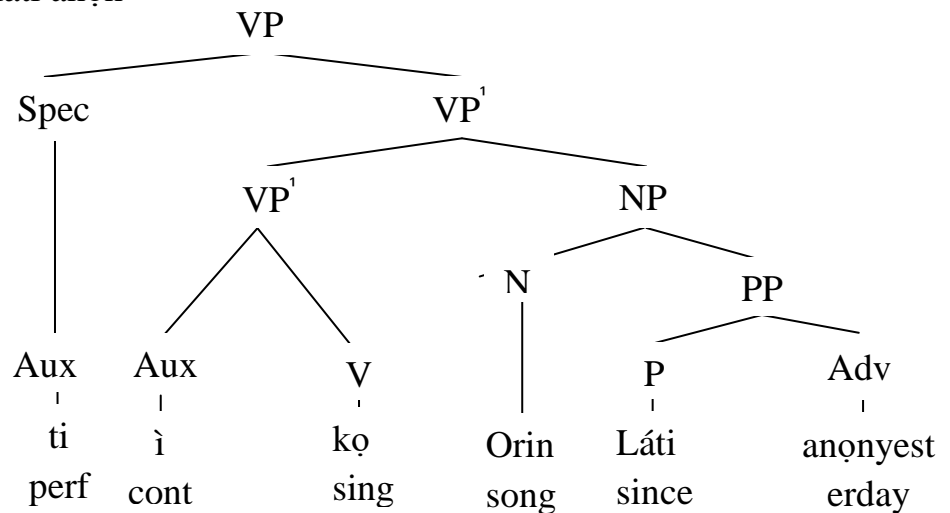
c. ...tiọjẹun kuku



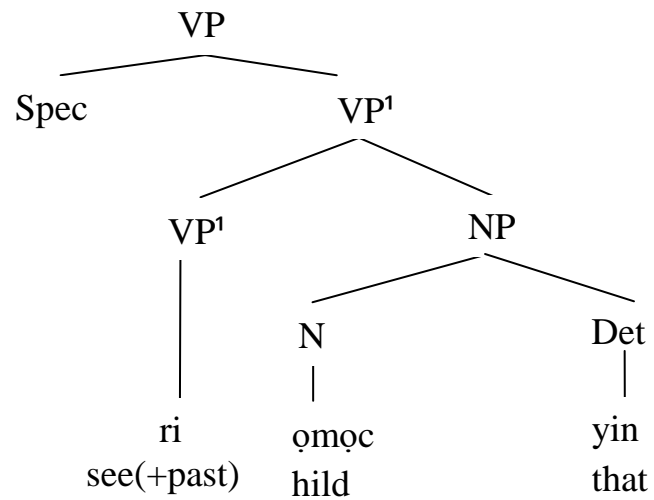
d. ... ghá hí ibiì lánọn



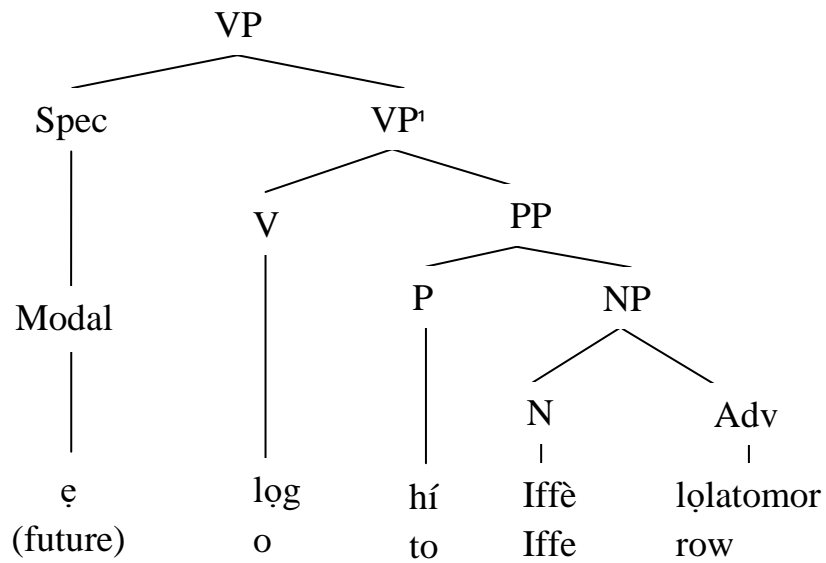
e. ... ti ìkọ orin látì anọn



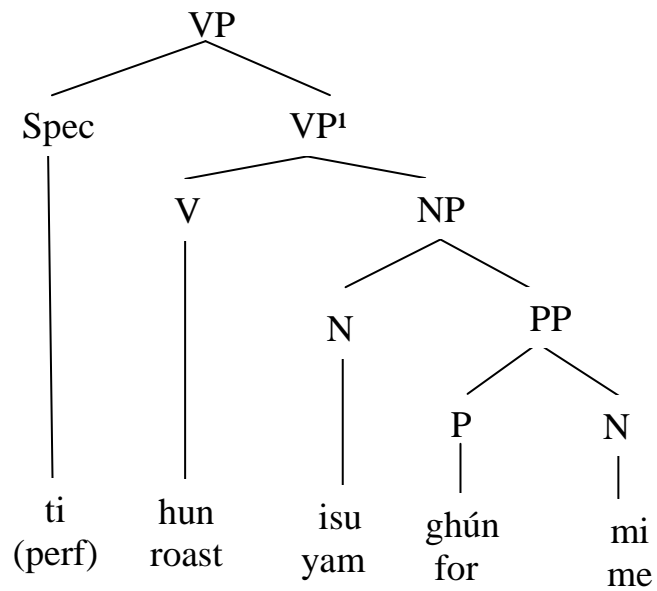
f. ... riomọ yin

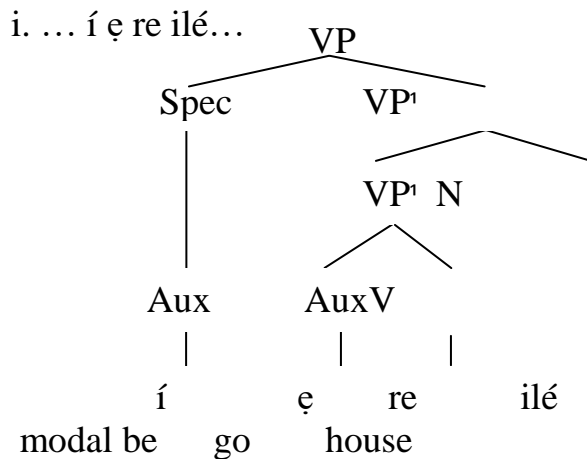


g. ... ẹ lọhíIffelọla



h. ...ti hun isu ghún mi

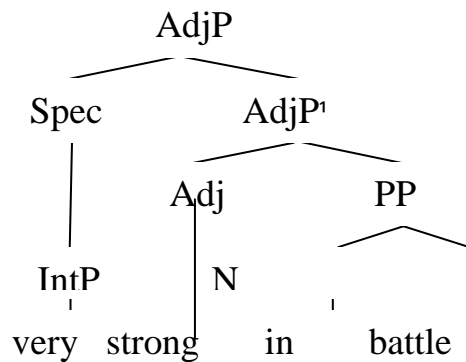




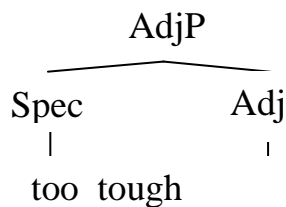
The above diagrammes show that the English and Okun VPs maintain structural plausibility as all their auxiliaries precede their lexical heads. But the lexical verbs in Okun do not attract any form of inflection as it is obtainable in its English counterpart.

4. Adjectival Phrase in English

- a. The man is *very strong in battle*.

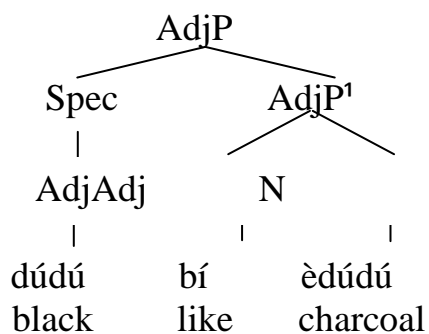


- b. The questions were *too tough*.



5. Adjectival Phrase in Okun

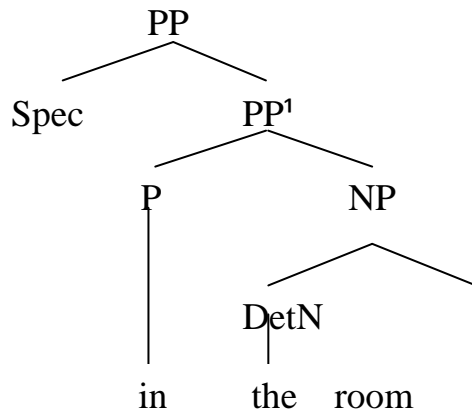
- a. ... dúdú bí édúdú



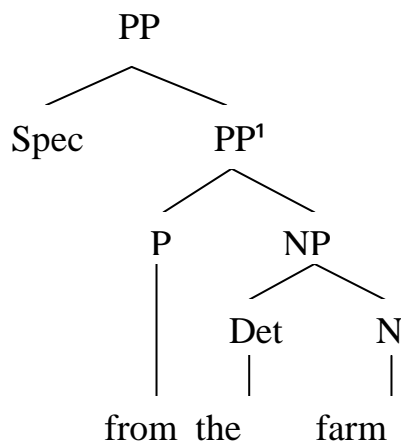
From the preceding diagrammes, it is deduced that there is structural agreement in the AdjPs of the duo languages. That is, the specifiers have the syntactic capacity to premodify its headwords in the languages.

6. Prepositional Phrase in English

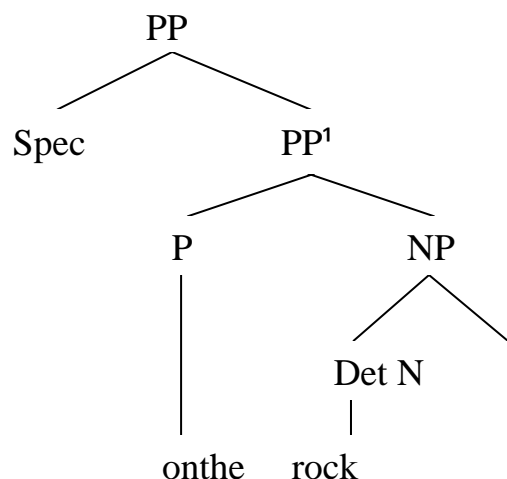
- a. They found it *in the room*.



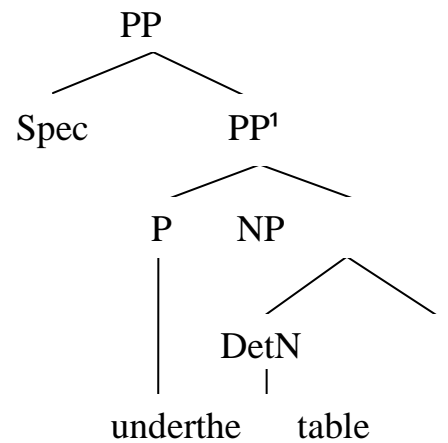
- b. I just came back *from the farm*.



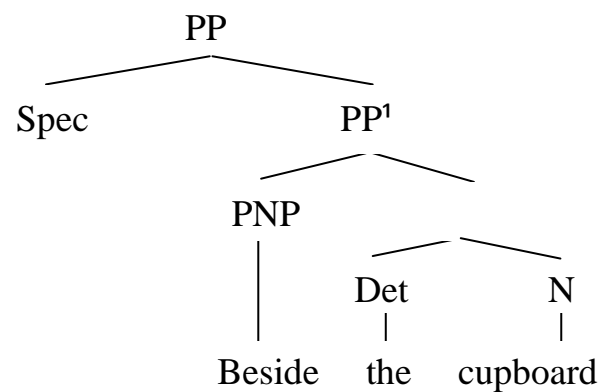
- c. Patrick can dance *on the rock*.



d. Thecatis *under the table*.

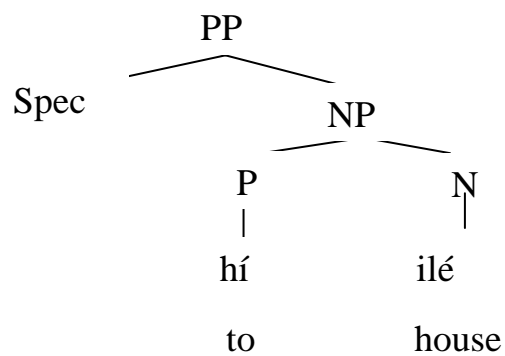


e. He kept the juice *beside the cupboard*.

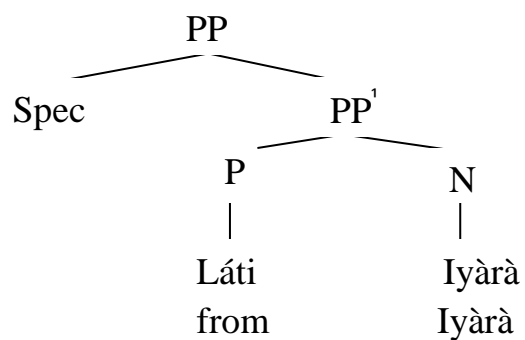


7. Prepositional Phrase in Okun

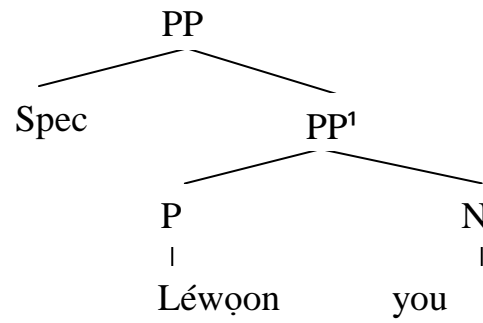
a. ...hí ilé



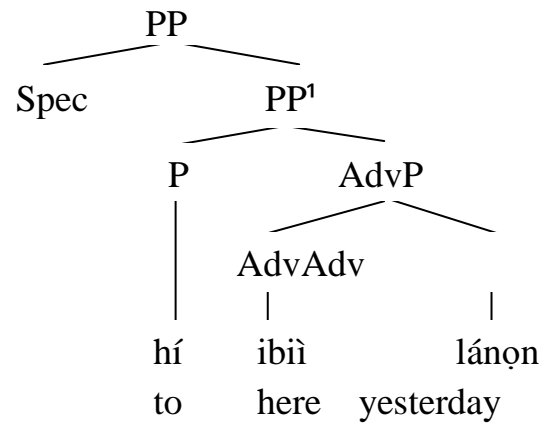
b. ... láti Iyàrà



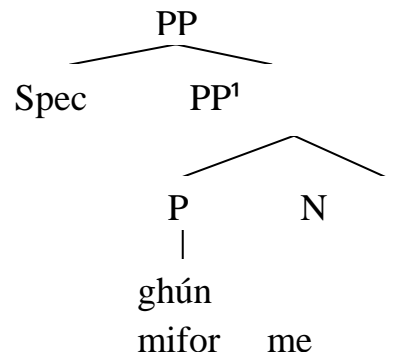
c. ... léwọ



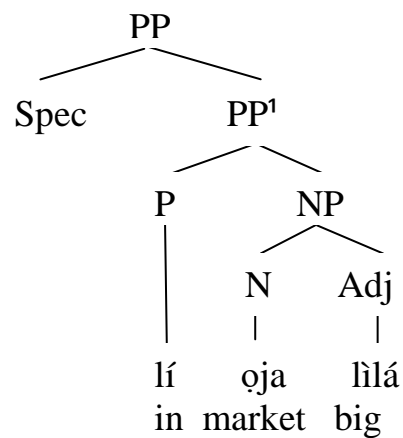
d. ... hí ibiì lánọn



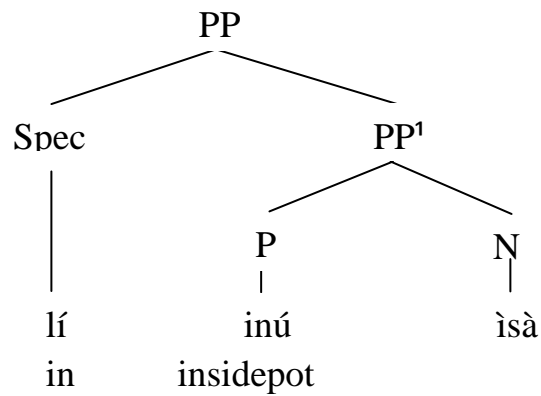
e. ...ghún mi



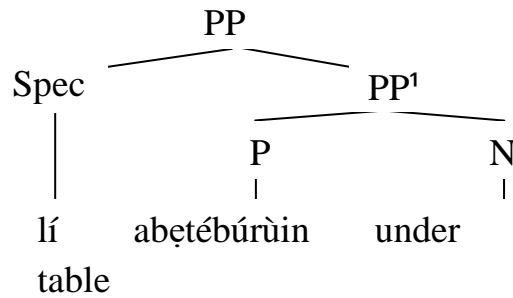
f. ... lí ọja lílá



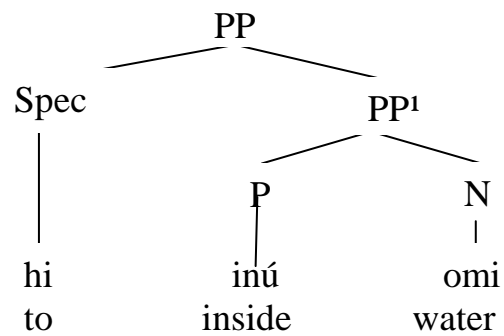
g. ...lí inú ìsà



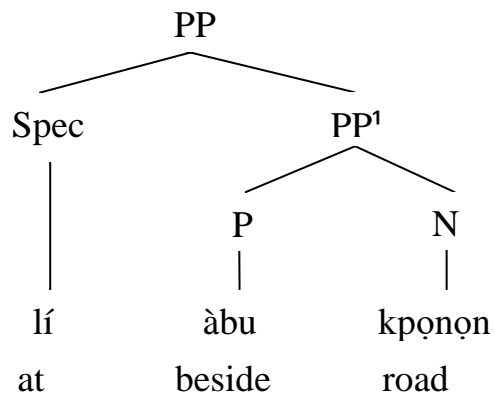
h. ...lí abẹ tébúrù



i. ...hi inùomi



j. ...lí àbú kponon

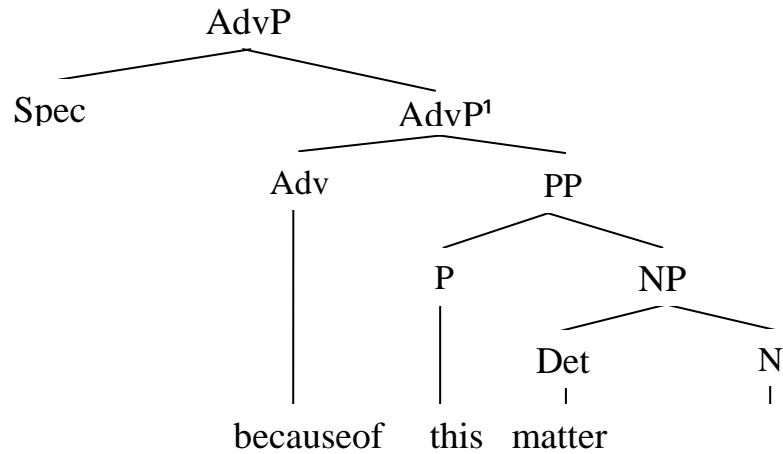


From the above diagrammes, it is deduced that, Prepositional phrase (PP) in Okun maintains structural similarity with PP in English. PPs in English and Okun have both ‘imaginary’ and ‘unimaginary’ specifiers. Also, prepositions

introduce a noun (an object) and an adverb in any conventional string of linguistic values in both languages.

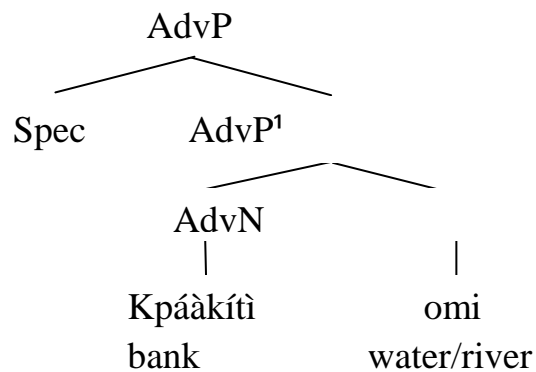
8. Adverbial Phrase in English

- a. Dupe came *because of this matter*.

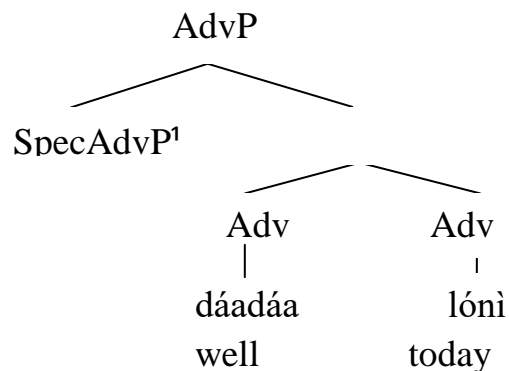


9. Adverbial Phrase in Okun

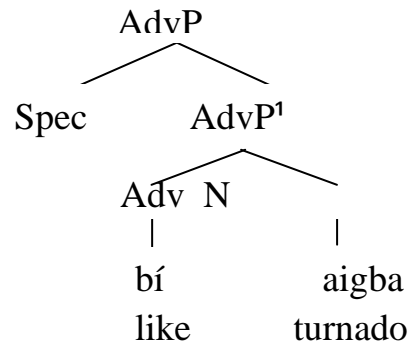
- a. ...kpáàkítì omi



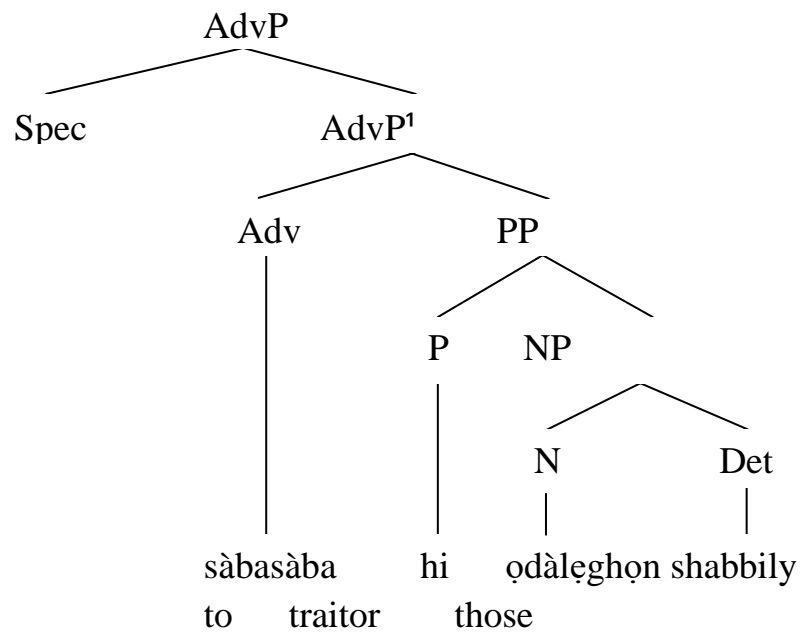
- b. ...dáadáá lónì



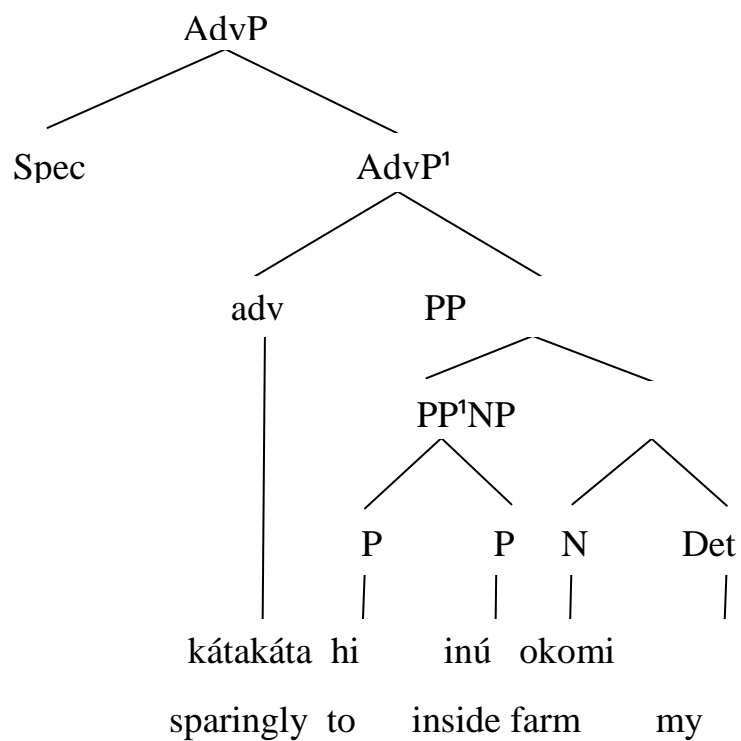
c. ...bí aigba



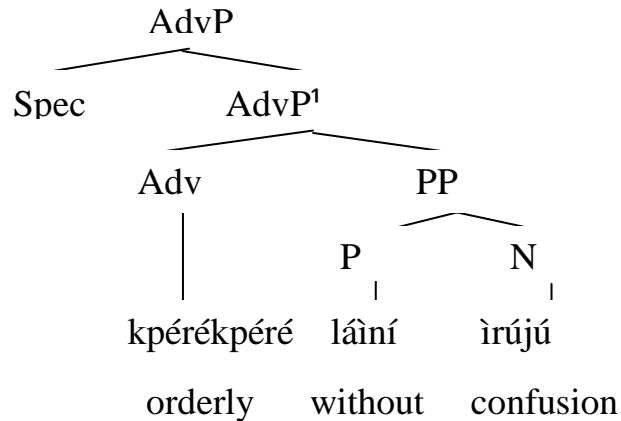
d. ...sàbasàba hi ọ̀dàlẹ̀ghọ̀n



e. ...kàtakáta hi inú okó mi



f. kpérékpéré láìní ìrújú

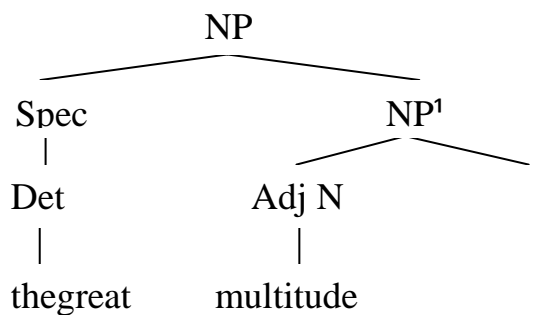


From the above diagrammes, it is apparent that adverbial phrases in both English and Okun have imaginary specifier.

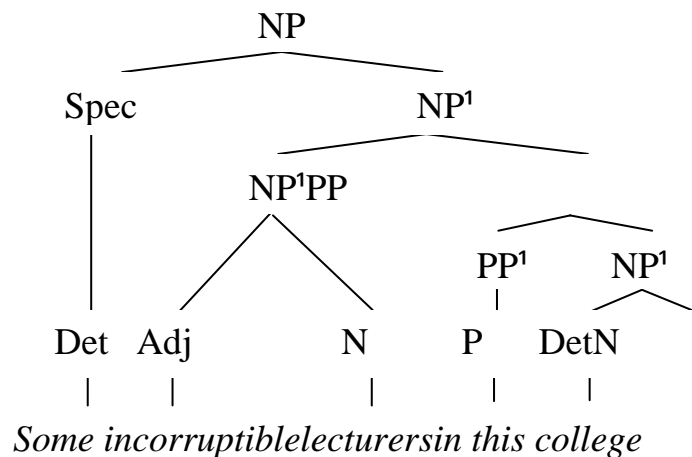
What are the structural differences between the two languages?

10.Noun Phrase in English

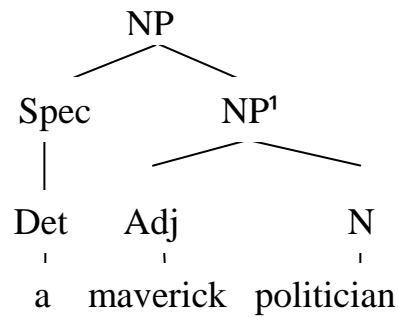
a. The prophet addressed *the great multitude*.



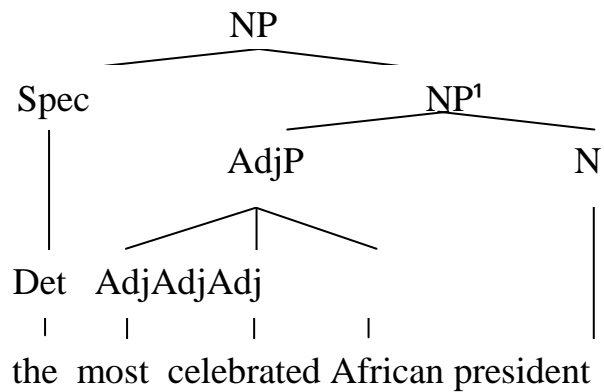
b. There are *some incorruptible lecturers in this college* ...



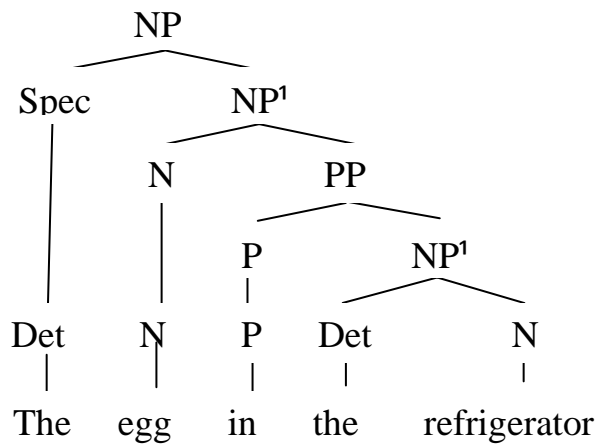
c. *A maverick politician* can easily gain access to the hearts of the electorates.



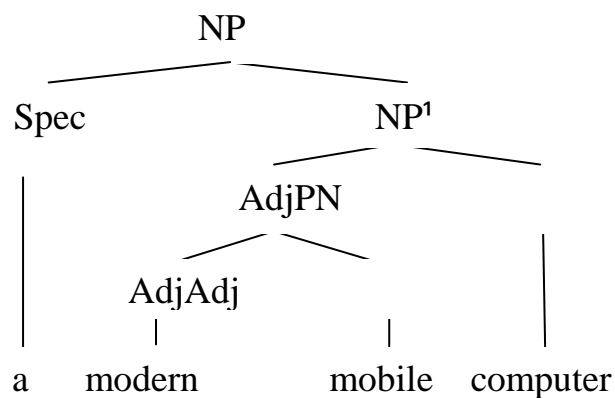
d. *The most celebrated African president* is Nelson Mandela.



f. *The egg in the refrigerator* is bad.

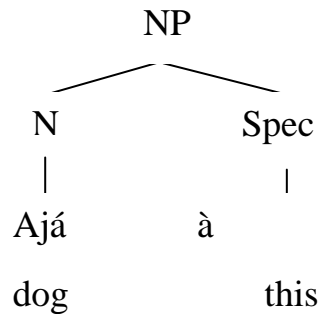


c. *A modern mobile computer* is more sophisticated.

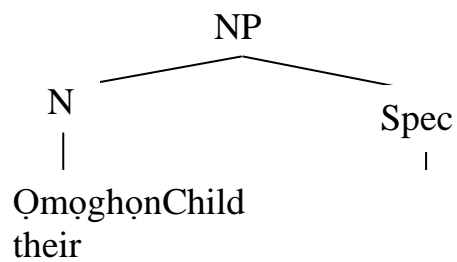


11. Noun Phrases in Okun

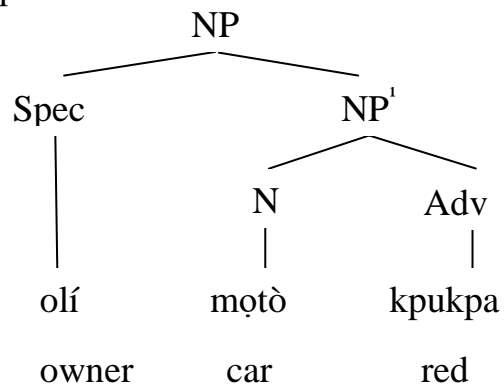
a. Ajá à ...



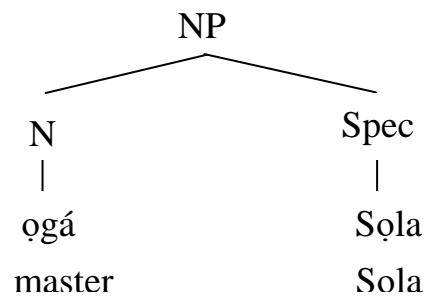
b. ...Ọmọghọ̀n



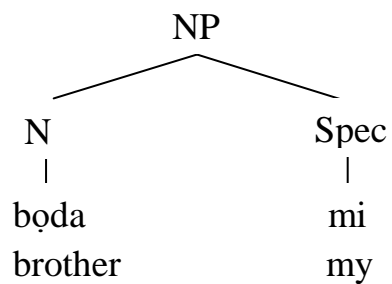
c. ...olí mọ̀tọ́ kpukpa...



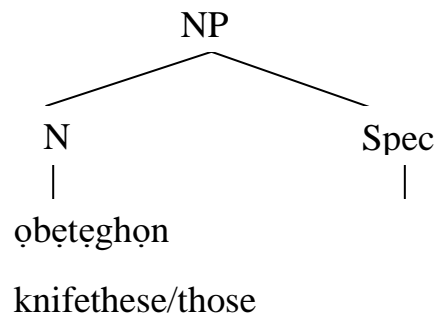
d. ọ́gáSọ̀lẹ̀...



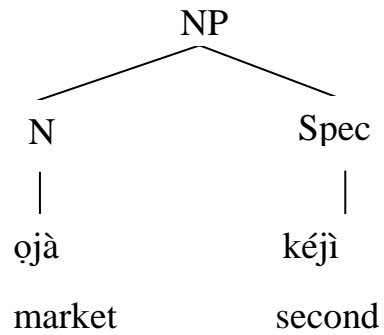
e. ...bọ̀dẹ̀ mi



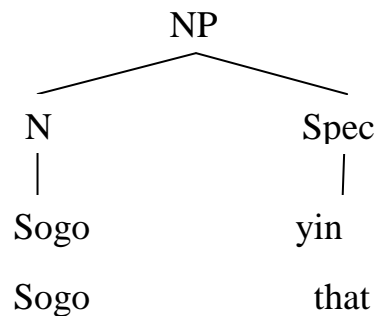
f. ...ọbẹtẹghọn



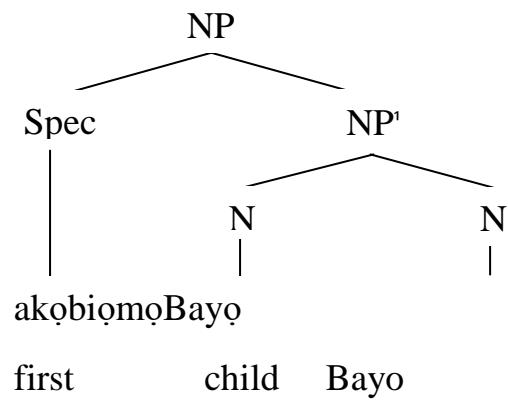
g. ...ọja kéjì



h. Sogo yin...

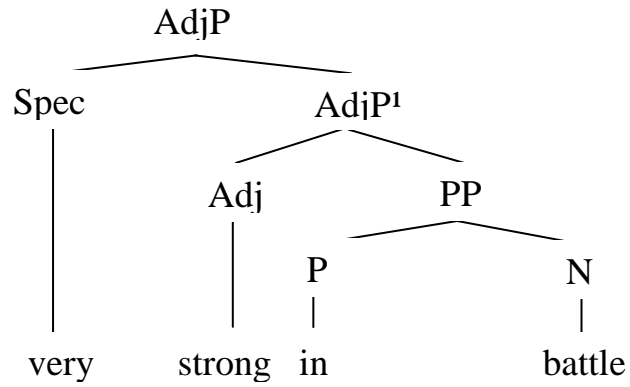


i. ...àkọbí ọmọBayọ

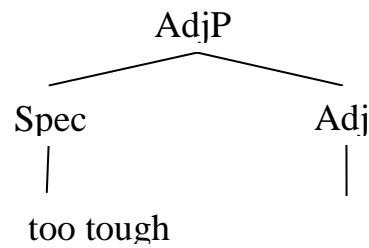


12. Adjectival Phrase in English

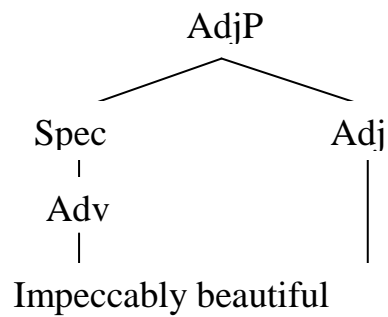
a. The man is *very strong in battle*.



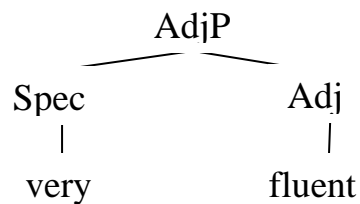
b. The questions were *too tough*.



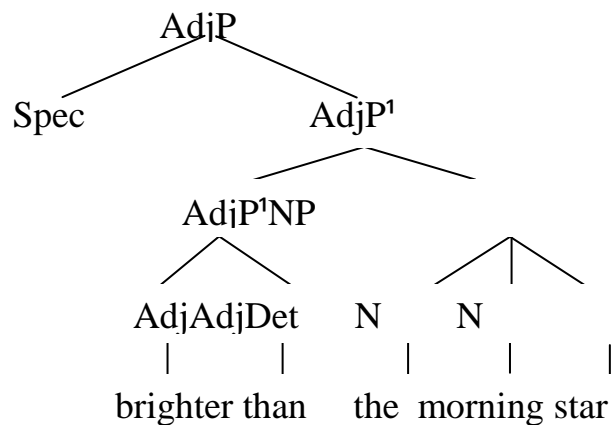
c. The lady is *impeccably beautiful*.



d. The instructor is *very fluent*.

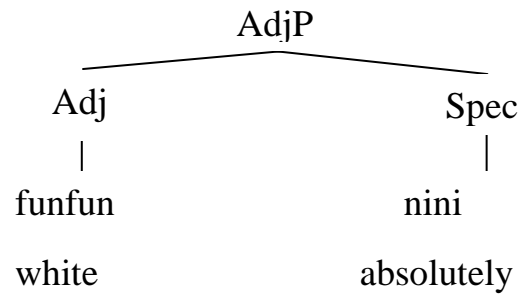


e. The future of Nigeria is *brighter than the morning star*.

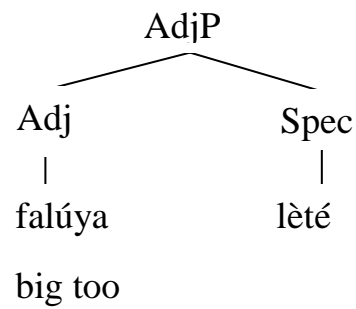


13. Adjectival Phrase in Okun

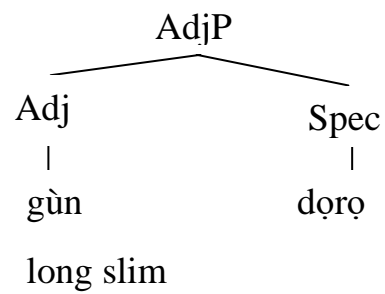
a. ...funfun nini



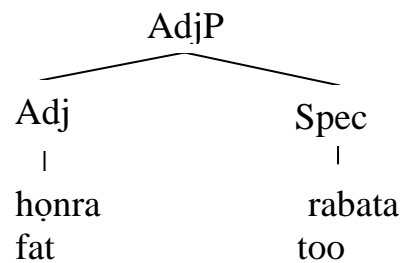
b. ... falúya lèté



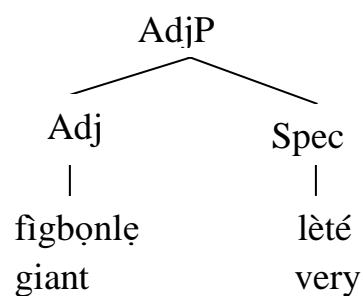
c. ...gùndọ́rọ



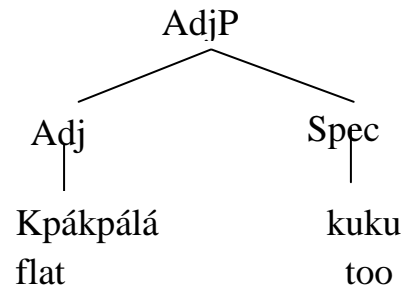
d. ...họ́nra rabata



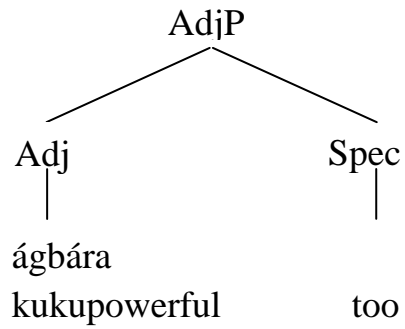
e. ...figbọ́nle lèté



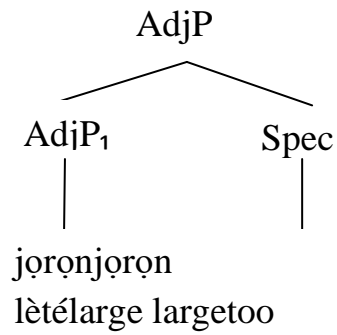
f. ...kpákpálá kuku



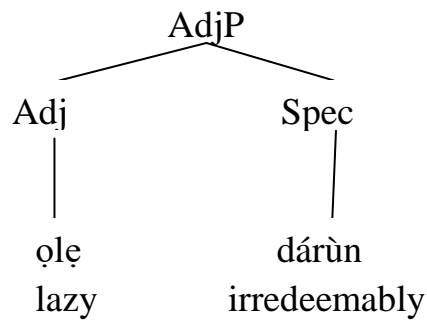
g. ...ágbára kuku



h. ...jọronjọron lèté



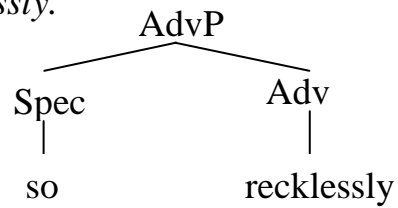
i. ...ọlẹ dárùn



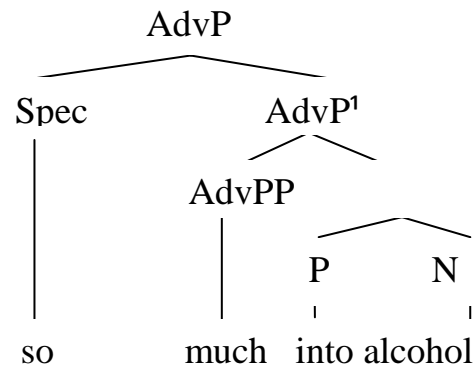
From the above diagrammes, it is established that specifiers in OkunAdjP can also postmodify their headwords.

14. Adverbial Phrase in English

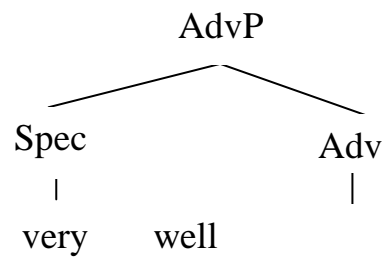
- a. Hassan drives *so recklessly*.



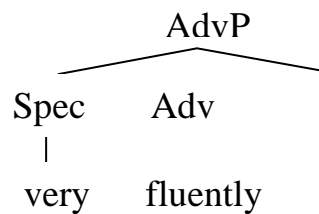
- b. They are not *so much into alcohol*.



- c. Tayo tackled the question *very well*.

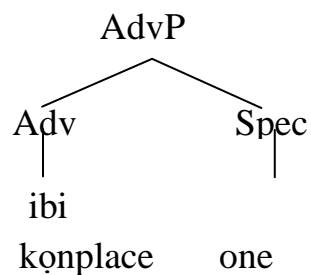


- d. He speaks Okun*veryfluently*.

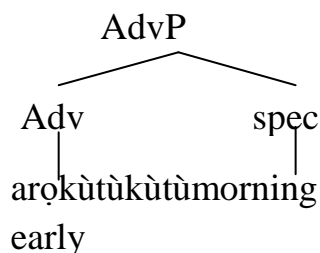


15. Adverbial Phrase in Okun

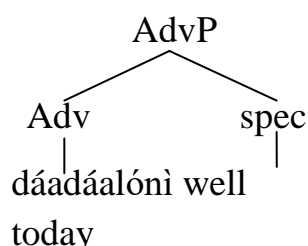
- a. ...ibi kọn



b. ...arọ kùtùkùtù



c. ... dáadáá lónì



From the diagrammes above, it is deduced that the specifiers of AdvP in English adhere to the left branching linguistic tenet while most of the specifiers adhere to right branching linguistic tenet in the AdvP of Okun.

iii. What are the difficulties that Okun users of English may face due to the structural differences between the two languages?

The structural differences in the NPs, AdjPs, PPs and AdvPs in the two languages contrasted are liable to pose a lot of difficulties to Okun learners of English. This accounts for why some Okun students produce phrases like: ‘man the’, ‘big too’, ‘at inside pot the’, ‘place one’ instead of: the man; too big; inside the pot; one place respectively. But, the exposure to and mastery of the syntactic principles of English have tremendously assisted learners of English from Okun linguistic background overcome such unstructural’ phrasal sequences.

4.3 Overall Findings and Discussion

This segment is classified in accordance with the earlier stated objectives and research questions posed to guide the study. It should be noted that each item in the findings is directly drawn from the above analysis.

- a. Similarities in the phrase structures of English and Okun languages
 - i. Both English and Okun phrase structures contain a head-word which other words converge on and derive their overall meaning in relation to it.
 - ii. Phrases in the duo languages have both functional and lexical heads. The former is commonly found in PP where the preposition governs lexical words that are contained in the phrase as reflected in the PP of the two languages contrasted: ...*in* the room, *from* the farm, ‘*hi ile*’, ‘*lati iyara*’, etc. each of the preposition italicised governs its noun. On the other hand, the latter which is peculiar to NP (as in: ... the great multitude, ...some incorruptible lecturers in this college, The egg in the refrigerator... ‘Aja a ...’, ‘Ade ati Aminu ...’, ‘... oga Sola...’, etc.), VP (as in: ... is travelling to London next year, ...has gone for meeting, ...will be speaking at the meeting‘... *fe ri ghon*’, ‘...*gbe okon le wo*’, ‘...*tio jeun kuku*’, etc.), AdvP (as in: so recklessly, ... so much into alcohol, ... because of this matter, ‘... *lati igbain*’, ‘...*ibi kon*’, ‘*paakiti omi*’, etc.), and AdjP (as in: ... very strong in battle, ... too tough, ...impeccably beautiful, ... brighter than the morning star, ‘...*funfun nini*’, ‘...*faluya lete*’, ‘*dudu bi edudu*’, etc.)
 - iii. It is also obvious that NP possesses the grammatical capacity to occur as a subject, an object, a complement or in apposition to the subject in any sentence as shown in the above analysis in both languages.
 - iv. Compound subject maintains structural plausibility in both languages as illustrated in diagramme 1 a and b.
 - v. The verbal conjugation has similar structure in both English and Okun.

- vi. This study vividly shows that all auxiliaries precede the lexical verbs in the two languages contrasted. The principal essence of verbal conjugation in both English and Okun is to express perfective, continuative, persuasive, futurity, ability, certainty, probability, obligation, negation, aspiration or intention, wishes and willingness.
- vii. The prepositional phrases in both languages maintain structural similarities as they attract imaginary and unimaginary specifiers as shown in diagrammes 6 and 7 above. Prepositional phrases in both languages in most cases also perform adverbial functions in sentences.

b. Differences in the phrase structures of English and Okun.

- i. Specifiers in English always precede (premodify) its head-word as exemplified in ... the great multitude (NP), ... is travelling to London (VP), ... so recklessly (AdvP), ... impeccably beautiful (AdjP), etc.; while specifiers in most cases succeed (postmodify) its head-word in Okun as contained in: 'Ajá à' (NP), '... funfun nini' (Adj P), 'ibi kọn' (AdvP), etc.
- ii. The use of possessive is found in the two languages phrases. Possessive in English attracts inflection while it is deverbal nominal in Okun. Examples are contained in: sọla's master and 'ọga Sọla' respectively.
- iii. The lexical verbs in English yield to tense representation- present tense, present progressive tense, past tense and past participle tense. Tense in English is marked with inflection '-s' for present singular tense, '-ed' for both past and past participle tenses of regular verbs and '-ing' for present progressive form. It should be noted that the irregular verbs in English do not attract inflection at the past and participle forms. On the other hand, verbs in Okun do not attract any form of inflection and therefore do not signal variance in tense except an adjunct is involved.

iv. The specifiers of both Adverbial and Adjectival phrases in English adhere to the left-branching (i.e. specifiers precede the head-word) linguistic phenomenon while intensifiers in Okun are described as right-branching (i.e. specifiers succeed the head-word) as reflected in data 3, 4 and 8, 9 respectively. However, this study has also revealed that there are a few cases where a specifier premodifies the head-word in Okun. This is explicated in diagrammes 3, 5, 7 and 9 above.

c. Difficulties the differences pose to the Okun learners of English

i. The structural differences in the NPs, AdjPs, PPs and AdvPs of the two languages contrasted are liable to pose difficulties to Okun learners of English who may produce phrases like: ‘man the’, ‘big too’, ‘at inside pot the’, ‘place one’ instead of: the man; too big; inside the pot; one place respectively. But, the exposure to and mastery of the syntactic principles of English will tremendously assist learners of English from Okun linguistic background overcome such ‘unstructural’ phrasal sequences.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion, Recommendation and References

5.0 Introduction

It is pertinent to understand that the salient issues in this contrastive study of the English and Okun phrase structures needs to be summed up and also to recap the findings of the study. In the light of this, this chapter contains the summary of the study, conclusion, the recommendation and references.

5.1 Summary

This study was undertaken to make a contrastive study of the phrase structures of English and Okun languages. It begins by making a statement of research problem and stating the general aim and objectives that prompted the study. The second chapter reviews the necessary and relevant or related literature that were fundamental to the validity of the research at a long run. The review of related literature is segmented into two- topical review and authorial review. The theoretical framework- x-bar theory that was employed for the analysis of all the data collected was briefly explained. Chapter three contains the methodology adopted for data gathering and analysis for the fascination of the achievement of the aim and objectives of the study. Chapter four reflects the diagrammic x-bar model of phrasal analysis of the data collected with principal attention on the traditional types of phrases-NP, VP, AdjP, PP and AdvP in both English and Okun. Chapter five gives the summary of the major findings of this study in relation to the objectives outlined in chapter one and the analyses in the fourth chapter. The major goal of this research is to establish the structural plausibility or divergence in both English and Okun phrases and show the possible difficulties the differences in the structures pose to Okun learners of English.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations made at the conclusion of this contrastive study of phrase structures of English and Okun, were basically due to the result of the major findings that were discovered in the course of this study. It would become meaningful if this recommendation would be accepted and implemented by those charged with the responsibility to do so.

In order to avoid the extinction of Okun, the researcher recommends the adoption of the following measures:

- there should be more creation of awareness among the native speakers of Okun about the need to promote the language by encouraging contrastive studies on every aspect of the Okun using English (being a global language) as a model.
- the environmental atmosphere should be made conducive for the study of Okun language in every facet- trade, agricultural practices, marriages, religious affiliation, etc.
- there should be a forum that would bring the elites of Okun land together as to deliberate on how the language could be standardized.
- authors should be encouraged to write books as well as other relevant materials that would strengthen the relevance of English and enhance the survival of Okun.

5.4 Conclusions

Following the analysis made in this study, there are some interesting findings and observations on the structural sequence of phases in the two languages. In line with the x-bar theoretical analysis, it is apparent that there is structural plausibility in the NP (compound nouns or objects) as reflected in diagrammes 1a and b; VP as shown in diagrammes 2 a, b, c, d, e, f and 3 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i; AdjP as illustrated in diagrammes 4 a, b, and 5 a; PP as exemplified in diagrammes 6 a, b, c, d, e and 7 a, b, c, d, e, f; AdvP as portrayed in diagrammes 8 a and 9 a, b, c, d, e of the two languages analysed.

It is established in this study that all specifiers premodify their headwords in NPs and AdjPs in English while they postmodify their headwords in Okun NPs and AdjPs except in a few cases that were earlier mentioned above.

It is equally reflected that the verb conjugation expresses future, probability, ability, certainty, etc. in the duo languages. Although, the lexical verbs could be inflected as illustrated in ‘work, works, worked, working’ to signal tense and time while the lexical verbs in Okun do not yield to inflection but it has a way of expressing time especially using adverb.

This research shows that the phrase structures of the two languages contrasted in this work possess both imaginary and ‘unimaginary’ specifiers.

It is also glaringly portrayed that there are structural differences in the phrase structures of the two languages as illustrated in NPs in diagrammes: 10 a, b, c, d, e, f and 11 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i; AdjPs as shown in diagrammes: 12 a, b, c, d, e and 13 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i and AdvPs as exemplified in diagrammes: 14a, b, c, d and 15 a, b, c.

Lastly, the premodified and postmodified roles performed by specifiers in the phrases of English and Okun languages respectively could negatively influence the Okun learners of English to undermine the convention governing the structure of phrases in English and hence, produce unstructural sequences that were shown in the findings and its discussion above.

5.5 Suggestions for further studies

It should be noted that no research is absolutely impeccable. In this regard, the following aspects of Okun language syntax can be explored by interested researchers in the future:

- i. Inflectional pattern in Okun verbal phrase.
- ii. Aspectual and tense distinction in Okun.
- iii. Clausal formation pattern in Okun.
- iv. Sentence formation pattern in Okun among others.

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APPENDIX

DATA TRANSCRIPTION

<p>DISCUSSIONS AMONG FRIENDS AT A MARRIAGE ENGAGEMENT THAT TOOK PLACE AT KAKUN</p> <p>(ONE OF THE VILLAGES IN OWE LAND)</p>	
Okun	English
Speaker A: É ! Èwó <u>ajá</u> à ti je <u>ẹja</u> ghin à yan lóri inon.	Speaker A: Eh! See <u>this dog</u> has eaten the fish that we are smoking/roasting.
Speaker B: Bẹ ki ajá ti ibi ghon sése, kpaakpaa o bà rí ikpé éhì oni isọ ẹja abi ẹran ghin ẹbẹ yon lóri inon.	Speaker B: That is the usual practice of the dogs here, most especially if the dogs discover that there is no one appointed to guard the fish or meat being smoked/ roasted.
Speaker C: óyẹ omọ ghon ghin saré lẹgbá un rí ajá yin ntó gbè ẹjá yin.	Speaker C: The children playing at the backyard are supposed to see the dog before it succeeded in taking away the fish.
Speaker D: O kpidi ri, o yọ mọsè nkọnkọn toríkpe édàjú kpé omú ghon sọ o. Omọ ghon <u>gbon lèté</u> . Yatọ hikpé aré ghon ti kpojù, orí ghon kpé kuku.	Speaker D: Even if they saw it, they might not do anything because they were not assigned to guard it. Those children are <u>very wise</u> . Despite the fact that they play too much, they are very intelligent.
Speaker E: Èkààrọ o, ẹ kújòkò o. Njẹ ẹ bá mi rí Olú láàrọ a?	Speaker E: Good morning, you are well seated. Have you seen Olu this morning?
Speaker A: Olú há? Sé Olú ọlọkpà kọọ ?	Speaker A: Which of the Olus? Is it Olu the policeman?
Speaker E: Eyé o, <u>Olú, olí mọto kpukpa</u> kọọ.	Speaker E: No, it is <u>Olu, the owner of a red car</u> .
Speaker A: Olú, olí mọto kpukpa é ghá híbì láàrọ	Speaker A: Oh! Olu the owner of a red car <u>has</u>

<p>ọ. Sé éhí ? Toríkpe <u>ó tí lọ hí ọja kejì</u>, ibi mo tirí bọdá mi lánọn.</p>	<p><u>not come here this morning</u>. Hope there is no problem because he <u>has gone to the second market</u> where I saw my brother yesterday.</p>
<p>Speaker E: kí mì fẹ rí ghọn mi báse mú ẹjọ Sògo hun. <u>Sògo yin</u> lu Bọdúnrìn ọmọ mi kuku lánọn. Mé mọ un ómúse ghin e ọ mú ẹjọ ẹ ghùn ntó bẹrẹ ghí lù ìlùkulù.</p>	<p>Speaker E: I just want to see him so as to report Sogo to him. <u>ThatSogo</u> beat Bodunrin, my child too much yesterday. I did not know her offence that made her deserve such merciless beating.</p>
<p>Speaker B: Okun kpe, mọ binú, àjísẹ ẹ gbàrà ghin Olú i bá dè.</p>	<p>Speaker B: Please, do not be angry, we will deliver the message to him (Olu) as soon as he comes back.</p>
<p>Speaker E: Ẹ seun, ódábọ.</p>	<p>Speaker E: Thank you. Goodbye.</p>
MARRIAGE EVE	
<p>Speaker A: ekú orí ìré o. lágbara ọlọun, àse irú ẹ ghùn ọghọn ọmọ gha ghọn líjọ wájú o.</p>	<p>Speaker A: Congratulations to all on the befitting ceremony. By God's grace, we will celebrate such for our children in future.</p>
<p>Speaker B: Ọghọn ha lé ghin kọrin libẹ ? Meti gbọ ohun Adé ati Amínù láti igbà ati líbì ì.</p>	<p>Speaker B: Who are those singing there? I have not heard the voices of Ade and Aminu since we came here.</p>
<p>Speaker C: kí ẹ kiyé hí ghọn. <u>Adé àti Amínù kọ orin lánọn</u>. Ati anọn ki ẹtí kọ orin amúlúba. Mo rí bọdá mi bi isé nọn wó kò ghọn lójú agbo. Igbà ghin ẹ kọrin kí <u>Hàlímọtù họtọ hi àkọbí ọmọ Báyo</u> ghin se jọlọjọlọ ká.</p>	<p>Speaker C: You did not pay attention to those singing. <u>Ade and Aminu</u> sang yesterday. In fact, they have been singing since yesterday up to this moment. I saw my brother 'spraying' money on them as they were singing. It was when they were singing that Halimotu spoke to <u>Bayo's firstborn</u> who was behaving sluggishly.</p>

Speaker D: Ọmọ ha lé ghin jó lí nọun lóun? Sé èsì Kẹmí kọ ?	Speaker D: Who is that person that is dancing there? Is she not Kemi?
Speaker E: Oun kọ. <u>Kẹmí tí hanra rabatà bẹ ẹ inú pápálá kuku.</u>	Speaker E: She is. Kemi has become <u>too fat</u> now with a <u>very flat stomach</u> .
Speaker D: Kábi aláré é tí ghá ? Ó morin kọ nọ kọ. <u>Eyín ẹ mọ funfun bí ghínghì.</u> Ọní íbá sá ewó nọun to éwó ẹ <u>kpérékpéré laini ìrújú.</u>	Speaker D: Where did the artist come from? He can sing very well and his teeth are <u>as white as snow</u> . The person picking his money too is very thorough. He arranges the money <u>orderly without any confusion</u> .
Speaker E: Njẹ ẹ mọ ọkunrin ghin gbé orin a ? Ọkúnrin mọ <u>figbonle</u> lèté; ibi ẹhín ghon falúya tó, bẹ nọki ọrá ghon sé fẹrẹ. Gbogbo ghon kí jó bí ròmìromi.	Speaker E: Do you see the man backing up the singer? He is <u>too giant</u> ; his legs are <u>too big</u> and his body is very light. All of the artists are dancing like river's larva.
Speaker D: Mé rò kpé ẹ rí ọmọ ghon dúró hí wájú gha.	Speaker D: I do not think you take note of the child that is standing in front of us.
Speaker E: Mé kídi kíyé ghi. Hunhun ! ọmọ mọ <u>dùdù bí èdúdú kókò.</u> Mé rò kpé ó hí ọni ẹ dúdú tó ọmọ ọ línú ìlu ù.	Speaker E: I did not pay attention to the child. Eh! He is <u>as black as charcoal</u> . I doubt if anyone will be as dark as this child in this village.
PREPARATION FOR CHURCH SERVICE	
Speaker A: Mò ró kpé ọghon ọni í tí múrá sọsì. Bẹ mé tíọ kó líbíì ba toríkpe ọrẹ mí <u>íbọ láti ìyàrà,</u> mí hẹfẹ ghí un bámi líbí.	Speaker A: I think people are preparing for church service and I cannot leave here now because my friend <u>is coming from Iyara</u> and I want him to meet me here.
Speaker B: A ẹ <u>lọ hí Iffè lola</u> nọbẹsù. ọpẹ mó dé	Speaker B: We <u>are going to Iffe tomorrow</u> . It is

ibẹ mọ. ilé gha i <u>lí àbú kponon</u> li ọwọ òhì lígbà oní bẹ lọ hí Iyámoye.	being long I visited there. In fact, our house <u>is by</u> <u>the main road</u> at the left side on the way to Iyamoye.
Speaker C: ìgbàhá lé ghin ẹ lọ ? mà ẹ tẹlé ghin lọ torí méti débẹ rí, mì hẹn ẹ mọ bẹ. ó ti kpe miti ígbọ ìròyìn Iffè, inú mì àdún mì ba ọ bá ghin débẹ.	Speaker C: When are you going? I will like to go with you because I have never been there and I want to know the village. It is being long I have been hearing about Iffe as a tourist centre in Okun land and I will be glad to go with you.
Speaker D: Éhì iyónú. Àà jọ lọ làgbàrà ọlọun. Rontí kpé, wẹ ẹ se isẹ lola láàrọ kùtùkùtù , kábi wẹ se ẹ rin torí àrọ ki àfẹ lọ, ábáse ọ bá oní ghon ghin àfẹrí.	Speaker D: There is no problem. We will travel there together by God's grace. Remember that you are going to work very early in the morning tomorrow. How are you going to cope because we want to leave very early in the morning ?
Speaker E: Mǎà gbìyánjù mì ọ tètẹ sẹ isẹ mì tọn. Ká ẹ jọ lọ. mo <u>gbé okon lè wọ</u> o. Mì ti duró <u>látì</u> <u>èsì</u> mì ọ rí irú ànfànì ghin ẹmú mì dé ilù Iffè, ilù oghon ọmowè – ólòògbẹ Adémọla Ọbáyẹmì, ólòògbẹ Adéremì Bámìkunlé láàrin ọni ghon ghón kú.	Speaker E: I will make effort to finish the job on time. We will travel together. I <u>rely on you</u> . I have been waiting <u>since last year</u> to have this kind of opportunity that will enable me visit Iffe, the city of renown professors- late Ademola Obayemi, late Aderemi Bamikunle among others.
THE DAY AFTER THE WEDDING	
Speaker A: Ẹkààrọ o. kabi ayẹyẹ ìgbeyàwò serí ? ibi ọnikonkon ti mú ewó jáde éni gbẹ o. A họn sẹ ìrùbẹ ghun oghon ọmọ gha ghon o.	Speaker A: Good morning to you all. How was the wedding event? May God replenish all you have spent. I pray that we will perform similar celebration for our children by God's grace.
Speaker B: Ase o. oghon èrò Kàdúná kọ ? sẹ ẹti rí	Speaker B: Amen! Where are visitors from Kaduna? Have you seen them?

ghon láàrọ ọ.	
Speaker C: Àti rí ghon lónì sugbon ọ gháhí <u>ibìlì</u> <u>lanon</u> . Ẹ gbádún raghon gón. Qníkón láàrin ghon wí ghon mì pé ghin bàní ànfàni atí lò ọsẹ mèjì líbìlì ghayọ.	Speaker C: We have not seen them today. Though, they came <u>here yesterday</u> , they were enjoying themselves. One of them told me that if he had the opportunity he would spend two weeks here joyfully.
Speaker D: Ó mọ yẹ akpidì rí npárun. Ámọyọ ghá hí ilé atú ase ise así.	Speaker D: We are supposed to get an appetizer. We cannot come home and be living a city life.
Speaker E: O! ẹghin kó rọnmetí ba. Kọlàwọlé, ọrẹ mì <u>ti hun isu ghún mì</u> . Ẹjà à lọ hí ilé ẹ abáse á mù isu yin kparun nǹjẹ gídí ntó yorí	Speaker E: Oh! You reminded me of Kolawole, <u>my friend has roasted yam for me</u> . Let us go there and eat it as appetizer before the main course will be ready.
AT KOLAWOLÉ'S HOUSE	
Speaker E: Ọbá mì, wọmọ káàrọ. Sé wọ jírẹ o ?	Speaker E: My king, good morning. Hope you woke up fine?
Kọlàwọlé: Àjírẹ o. Sé érerá kuku o ?	KOLAWOLE: Yes, we woke up fine. Hope you are not too tired?
Speaker E: Ká ẹrí lónì ghin Ojúlafẹ, ajá ghin étì gha ágbó gha. Ajá yin mọsẹ ẹ lise.	Speaker E: What a surprise that Ojulafe, your dog has not barked at us? That dog is very effective at its duty post.
Kọlàwọlé: Ojúlafẹ já <u>hí inú omi</u> bi ase lọ ẹ wajó lésì. Moti gbìyànjù ti rí ajá ghin ẹ wúlò bi tẹ (Ojúlafẹ). Miti dúró <u>látì esì</u> , mé tìrì elé ghon dábì tẹ o. Ọrẹ mì, ikú Ojúlafẹ dùn mì gidigón. Mílí <u>kpààkìtì omi</u> libi ọsón ti gbé lọ, é họn hi un mò ọ	KOLAWOLE: Ojulafe fell <u>inside the river</u> as we went to hunt last year. I tried my best to get another dog that will be like it (Ojulafe), yet, I have not found the one that will be as effective as Ojulafe. My friend the death of the dog pained

se hí títí ghin omi fimú gbére.	me seriously. I was at the <u>bank of the river</u> where the torrent of the water swept it away and there was nothing I could do to rescue it until it no longer be seen.
Speaker E: Kárí isu ghin wọ tí hun dè mì?	Speaker E: Where is the yam you roasted for me?
Kòlàwọlẹ: Mo kẹ tátì inọn. Mé fẹ ntutù kẹtì jẹ mi yọn dè wọ.	KOLAWOLE: It is by the hot coal. I do not want it to be cold that is why I have not peeled and kept it for you.
Speaker E: Ọlá ati ọrẹ ghon kọ? métì rì ghon bí asedé bí. Torí mò mọkpẹ ọghon kóni ètò.	Speaker E: Where are Ola and his friends? I have not seen them since we came because I know they are masters of the ceremony.
Kòlàwọlẹ: Ọlá àtì ọghon ọrẹ ẹ ghá. O ti kó ghon lọ hí ìgboro láti ànọn. Mo rí ghon <u>lì ọja lilá</u> . kódà, <u>mítì retí ghin láti ùgbàin</u> , afi ùgbà wọ kihí mi kẹ arọ ki wẹsẹsẹ ráyè ghà. <u>Egbẹ amúludún kẹ ghà</u> . <u>Ẹlìbì kọn</u> linú ilù bí ase họrọ ba. Ẹbọra kí Ọlá. Ojú ẹ sálẹ re ọní ghon ghin gbé ilẹ ẹ. Ọlá <u>í ẹ relé lola</u> . Mì fẹ nbá mi mú ewó kékeré kọn ko ẹgbon mi ún mi.	KOLAWOLE: Ola and his friends are around. He went with his friends to the town yesterday. I saw them at them <u>at the big market</u> . In fact, I have been expecting you since then until you called me that it is this morning you will get the chance to come. They (Ola and his friends) are the livewire of the society. They are <u>somewhere in the village</u> as we are talking now Ola is a deity. He has better mastery of every nook and cranny of the village much more than those living in the village. Ola <u>will be going/travelling home</u> . I want him to give some money to give to my elder brother.

<p>Speaker A: Ọlá jù wọlé mi <u>bí aigba</u> ọdún ghon kọjá toríkpe óhí mo họrọ <u>sábasàba ghi ọdàlẹ</u> <u>ghon</u> ghon mú ùghìn àyìn jẹ mi isu. Oye mì tí mú ẹjọ ẹ ghùn wọ, sùgbọn mo mọ kpè, irú ijọ oní i ẹ kó.</p>	<p>Speaker A: He stormed into my house <u>like a tornado</u> last year. He claimed that I spoke <u>shabbily to those traitors</u> who destroyed our relationship. Although, I should have told you but I know that a day like this will dawn for this kind of expressive opportunity.</p>
AT KỌLÀWỌLÉ'S GARDEN	
<p>Kọlàwọlé: Mi mẹ bọ. Mò rí eku <u>lí abẹ tébùrù</u> gbórógbórò o, mì hẹn fẹ kpá á.</p>	<p>KOLAWOLE: I will soon join you. I saw a rat <u>under the table</u> just now and I want to kill it.</p>
<p>Speaker B: Àsé ékpìdì hí ibi eku àtì ayọn é ọ wọ. Ọrẹ, óghí ògùn kọn. Ògùn yin ni <u>agbára kuku</u>. Wọ bá mú hílẹ ghún ghon ba, ọra ghon íbá sásìsì kọn, kì ẹ gbẹ ghéréghéré. Jẹ mi wo inú ápò mi bọyá mà kpẹ rì ndó si ẹyọkọn.</p>	<p>Speaker B: So, there is no place a rat and a cockroach cannot invade. My friend, there is a drug and it is <u>very effective</u>. If you apply the drug in any part of the house and a rat mistakenly touches it with any part of its body, it will dehydrate beyond recognition. Let me check if I have a sachet left in my bag.</p>
<p>Kọlàwọlé: séun kpẹ kún. Àsìrì ẹ ábò.</p>	<p>KOLAWOLE: Thank you very much. Your needs will always be met.</p>
<p>Speaker C: Àajẹ adúrú isu hihùn ùn, láì berè omi mímu. Ọnọfun ítí ní mi o. mì fẹ mu omi.</p>	<p>Speaker C: We ate this large quantity of roasted yam without asking for water to drink. My throat is seriously dried; I want to drink some water.</p>
<p>Speaker D: iwọ nìkọn kẹtì mù omi. Sí wẹ rí gha bí a se se omi látèghìn. Omi ílì <u>inú isà</u> labù ègbà à.</p>	<p>Speaker D: You are the one that had not drunk water. Did you not see us as we have been drinking water since. There is drinking water <u>inside the pot</u> that is close to the wall.</p>

<p>Speaker C: Mò ti re bẹ. Tòótọ, omí inú ísà ítutù yàtọ. Mo se àkíyèhì kpé, gbogbo yàrà ilé ghon ghì lí ilù ù ghin <u>jorónjorón lèté</u>. É dàjú kpé ẹrà ilé ilé. Bí ọ se kọ yàrà ghon yẹn wùmí, ọ gbá àyè.</p>	<p>Speaker C: I have gone there. In fact, the water in the pot is chilled in the traditional manner. I equally noticed that all the rooms in all the houses I have visited in this village are <u>very big</u>. I doubt if they buy the pieces of land which they build the houses. Though, I like the manner in which those rooms are built; they are spacious.</p>
<p>Kolawolé: Oko inú ogbà mi ké è. Òní kọbà mi ró ò. Qní ghon ghon ró ró <u>dáàdàà lónì</u> sùgbọ ọ ọ jẹun kuku. Ẹ họn rí ilẹ ghon ro kékeré. <u>Olẹ dárùn</u> ki alágbásé họn yin. Anti mi nọ ọ gbẹ gbàdo <u>kátakàta hí oko mi</u>.</p>	<p>KOLAWOLE: This is my garden at the backyard where the weeding was done this morning. The labourers weeded it <u>very well today</u> but they <u>consume a lot of food</u>. They only succeeded in weeding a small portion in the garden; so they are <u>irredeemably lazy</u>. My sister also planted maize <u>sparingly in my farm</u>.</p>
<p>Speaker E: Ẹ rí ọkpà ghílí inú ogbà à ní? Ódámójú pé, métì rí irú ẹ rí irú ẹ rí. Kẹ gbè irú ọkpà <u>gígùn dọrọ</u> sé?</p>	<p>Speaker E: Do you see the long wood kept in this garden? I doubt if I had seen such before. What do you use this <u>long and slim wood</u> for?</p>
<p>Kolawolé: Éhì ibi igi òronbó, mọngórò, kasú àtì ìghon ghònkú ghin métì dàrúkọ gùn tò, ọkpà à kalòò ẹmu ká un àbàní ká lorí ghon. É hì ibi ẹti mẹ ghá ẹyá linú ilù gha à ọ ọmú ká èho.</p>	<p>KOLAWOLE: There is no how long a tree of orange, mango, cashew and others that I have mentioned, it is this wood that we use to pluck fruit from them. There is no part of this village that this wood is not borrowed for plucking fruits.</p>
<p>Speaker C: Mò gbádùn ibi èsì taré kọ. Ódàbì kpé mi rí àyè mi yọ aghá ghíbì gbàkọ ọdún. À ti</p>	<p>Speaker C: I really enjoyed this place as a matter of fact. It is as if I should have the opportunity</p>

kpe líbí, <u>mì lẹ hí ilé</u> .	that would make me visit this village once in a year. We have spent a lot of time with Kolawole, I <u>would like to go home</u> .
Speaker B: Mé tì rí ará Kánò ghon lóni. Mò rán <u>oga Sola</u> hí Kánò. Mì fẹ mọ bọyá áhí ọni i ẹ mọ ìgbà ghin i ẹ kpadà dé lẹra ghon.	Speaker B: I have not seen those that came from Kano today. I sent <u>Sola's master</u> to Kano when he came here yesterday. Do you know when he will be back?
Kolawole: Ọ ghá <u>hí ibi lánọn</u> . Sé èhí o ghin wọ mú rọn nì ghí Kánò? Leghá lé ghin wọ rọn ní ghí líbẹ?	KOLAWOLE: They came <u>here yesterday</u> . I hope there is no problem that made you send somebody to Kano? Who did you send the message to there?
Speaker B: Àyúbà è ètì họn ewó ghin mo marun ba lí jọkini. Bẹ mì hẹn fẹ lò ewó yin láikpe.	Speaker B: Actually, there is no much problem. It is just that Ayuba has not paid the money that I told you about in our previous discussion. He is the person I sent that message to because I want to use the money very soon.
Kolawole: Àyúbà <u>yẹ un tì họn ewó yin</u> tóòtọ. Mò mọ kpe kó hí un ó fà ghin ètì mu họn. É hí lẹra ọghon alágbèdà.	KOLAWOLE: Ayuba <u>should have paid the money</u> . I am sure there is something that caused his inability to pay because he is not in the category of irresponsible people.
Departure: All the 'conversants' bade themselves farewell as they journey back to their respective stations. They departed in batches just as they came. It was at that point the researcher left too.	