

Your name:

The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2020

Round 2



Problem 2. Yoruba (20 marks)

Yoruba is spoken by almost 30 million people in West Africa. It is written with Roman script, with some additions:

- The accents on the vowels represent tones.
- e and é represent different vowel sounds.

These distinctions are important in Yoruba pronunciation.



Here are some numbers in Yoruba:

èji	2	eérìndilogóji	36
èrin	4	èrìndogóji	44
àrun	5	àádorin	70
èrinlá	14	eéjàdilogórin	77
eéjídilogun	18	ètàdogórin	83

Answer the following questions in your answer sheet.

Q2.1. Write the following Yoruba numbers in figures

- aádota
- àrúndogórin
- aárùndilogórin
- ètàdogórun
- òkándilogóji

Q2.2. Write out the following in Yoruba

- 12
- 90
- 57
- 45
- 99

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Solution and marking.

Scoring: (max 30)

- 2.1. 2 for each correct answer. (max 10)
- 2.2. 1 for each correct word-part (marked here by +). (max 20)
- Insist on correct accents and dotted letters

2.1.a	50	2.2.a	è+ji+lá (3)
b	85	b	àá+do+run (3)
c	75	c	e+étà+dilo+gó+ta (5)
d	103	d	à+rùn+do+gó+ji (5)
e	39	e	òkán+dilo+gó+run (4)

Commentary

Yoruba's counting system is based on 20s, with counting back: the numbers 6,7,8,9 are expressed as 4,3,2,1 before the next ten. 30,50,70,90 are expressed as 10 before the next 20.

In addition, the basic numbers undergo some tone pattern changes.

	Base number	Counting back +dil	Counting forward +d	X20 ogó-
1	<i>not shown</i>	òkán	<i>not shown</i>	ogun * (20)
2	èji	eéjì	èji	ji (40)
3	èta	eétà	ètà	ta (60)
4	èrin	eérin	èrin	rin (80)
5	àrun	aárùn	àrùn	run (100)
Tone pattern	' -	V' `	``	ogó -

Teens are expressed by adding lá to the base number. They are not shown here but there *are* base numbers for 6,7,8,9, only used as units. Odd 20s are expressed by àádo '10 off'.

The base form of 1 and the form for counting forward, eg 21, 31, do not follow the same tone pattern, and so are not used here. * Likewise 20 'ogun' is not fully regular. But since 20 is a special value, this is not surprising.

So the given data can be glossed as follows:

èji	2
èrin	4

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àrun	5	
èrinlá	14	4 teen
eéjídilogun	18	2 before 20
ééríndilogóji	36	4 before 20x2
èríndogóji	44	4 + 20x2
àádorin	70	10 off 4(score)
éétàdilogórin	77	3 before 20x4
ètàdogórin	83	3 + 20x4

A1. Write the following Yoruba numbers in figures

- a. àádota 50 10 off 3(score)
- b. àrúndogórin 85 5 + 4x20
- c. aárùndilogórin 75 5 before 4x20
- d. ètàdogórun 103 3 + 5x20
- e. òkándilogóji 39 1 before 20x2

Note: òkán has not been seen in the data but if you realise there are only words for 1-5 because of the counting back system, it must be 1: we've seen 2,3,4,5.