

Speaking Multiple Languages

Yoruba transcript:

Òdòbìnrin: Báwo ni ẹ sẹ kó àwon èdè yíí?

Arákùnrin: Àwon èdè wòn yíí... torí bí a se ń káàkiri Nigeria... bé ni... nígbà tí a wà ní kékeré, irú èmi Kaduna ni wón bí mi sí, nítorí nà mo gbó Hausa dáadáa. Ìgbà tí a sì se tán, ìgbà tí ó yá diè emm, isé gbé bàbá wa lo sí Ilorin, ìgbà yẹn ní Yorúbà mi tó wà gbóná ló... ló... ló... ló wa múnà diè, ìgbà yẹn ní mo gbó Yorúbà sí. Èdè tẹmi gangan alára nà sí tún wá wà, ni èdè Núpé, èyí tí wón bí mi pèlú è, ìdí tí gbogbo wá se ń gbó kákiri nì yẹn torí bí a se ń kákiri Nigeria. Bó ti lè jé pé kò dà bée mó léun lówolówo yíí ní Nigeria, òpòlopò àwon èyàn, ibi tí wón bá bí won sí nà, ná máa ń wà yàtò sí gèèsì, won ń gbó imí mó.

Òdòbìnrin: Kíni ànfàní tí ẹ rí nínú àwon èdè tí ẹ lè so?

Arákùnrin: Ehh gbogbo àwon òré tí mo ní, àwon òré orílè èdè... gbogbo orí lè èdè Nigeria ni mo fée ní òré sí, emm ànfàní è ni pé, tí o bá lo so èdè elòmíràn, wón ma fi tífétífé bá o se dáadáa nígbà yẹn, yàtò sí pé kí o máa so gèèsì torí tí o bá so èdè won, inú won ma ń dùn pé o ti jé bákannáa pèlú àwon so ànfàní kan nì yẹn. So ànfàní kejì, gbogbo ibi isé tí isé bá gbé èniyàn lo, tí o bá ti lè so èdè won níbè, isé á rò é lórùn lati se nígbà yẹn, o ó dè tètè rí òkan ti o ń wá níbè. Yàtò sí yẹn bíi èketa ni, bọyà ebáfé se fàájì pèlú ara yín tàbí olúwa rè fé iyàwó, à bí o fé àwon òré mii, tàbí o fé ra òkan lójà ... o fé... èdè tí wón bá so níbi tí o bá wà ó pàtàkì tí o bá gbo, á jé kí òkan ó ròun fún ẹ. Ànfàní tí èmí rí nínú àwon èdè tí mo gbó nì yẹn.

English translation:

Young Girl: How did you learn these languages?

Man: These languages... Because as we¹ moved around the country of Nigeria... that is how... when we were younger – like me, I was born in Kaduna, and because of that I understand the Hausa language perfectly. When we were through, after a while, emm, our father was transferred to Ilorin by his office, and that was when my Yoruba became better, became... became... became... became a little better, and that was when my knowledge of Yoruba increased. I also have my own language, which is Nupe language²; that is what is spoken where I was born. That is the reason we heard different languages as we were moving around Nigeria. Though it is not like that anymore in Nigeria; presently, most people, where they are born is where they grow up; apart from the English language, they do not understand any other language.

¹ The speaker and his family

² Nupe language is spoken primarily by the Nupe people of the middle belt region of Nigeria.

Young Girl: What benefit did you derive from the languages you can understand?

Man: Ehh, every friend I have, friends from the country... I have friends in almost every part of Nigeria. Emm, the benefit in it is that, if you speak different languages, you will be welcomed with joy compared to speaking in English, because if you speak their language, they are always very happy that you have become one of them, so that is a benefit. So the second benefit, every place you are transferred to, if you can speak their language, you will have a stressless stay in such places, and you will make it faster. Apart from that, the third one is if you want to socialize, you want to marry, or you want to make friends, or you want to buy things from the market... you want... the language spoken by the community is important for you to understand; it makes thing easy for you. Those are the benefits I derived from understanding the languages I speak.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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