

# Nn Kpasi Àbèsàbèsì:Mo gb Àèsàbèsì: I Undwestand Àbèsàbèsì

Taiwo Opeyemi Agoyi

Department of Linguistics and Languages Adekunle Ajasin University,  
Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

**ABSTRACT:** This booklet tests Agoyi 2012 roposed orthography for Àbèsàbèsì a language known as Akpes in Literature with ethnographic identity ibe. In Agoyi 2012 I mentioned that Agoyi 2008 proposed the name Àbèsàbèsì formed from the root morpheme Àbèsì 'we' because it is the only identity accepted by all the nine communities that speak variant of the language. After proposing orthography for an unwritten language there is the need to subject the orthography to test; such test will help to determine how easy to learn the writing system will be for the targeted learners. The first edition of the booklet was printed in 2012 in Ikare Akoko Ondo State, Nigeria in honour of the Akala of Ikaramu on his iwúyè and first Installation ceremony. This edition came as a result of demands for a review of the first edition by Àbèsàbèsì sons and daughters at home and in diaspora. The booklet is my contribution to implementation Nigeria National Policy on Education 2004 section 4 subsection 19e which states that 'the medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language of the environment for the first three years. During this period, English shall be thought as a subject'. The booklet will assist speakers of Àbèsàbèsì a minority languages who feel the need to safe their languages from death. To assist the learner comprehension of the content, the booklet adopts a trilingual model: Àbèsàbèsì, Yoruba, and English. The booklet teaches the alphabets, parts of the body, some essential questions and greetings in the language. The research is sponsored by Àbèsàbèsì Language Development committee.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This booklet is an effort to revitalize the highly endangers Àbèsàbèsì (a language known in literature as Akpes initially spoken in nine linguistic communities in Akoko Northern division of Ondo State, Nigeria). Studies have shown that out of nine Àbèsàbèsì speaking communities: Àkùnnù, Ìlúdòtun, Dája, Èşùkù, Gèdègède, Ìkàràrà, Ìyàni Ìbàràrà and Àsè, one, Èfiffà has completely lost the language, the language in Àsè is at the verge of extinction, in other communities proficiency in the language is limited to adults from age 55. The elders are lamenting the status of the language within the communities. The love for the language informed the establishment of a language development committee. This booklet is one of the efforts of the committee to revitalize the language. The educated natives are facing the challenged of how to pass the language to the younger generation.

This booklet will assist both indigenes and strangers to learn the language with easy. It starts with the teaching of the alphabets and ends with the rudimentary greetings.

## II. ABD ÀBÈSÀBÈSÌ: TEACH YOURSELF ABÈSÀBÈSÌ ALPHABETS

Aa Bb Dd Ee Èè Ff Gg NGng GB gb Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Oo Pp KP kp Rr Ss Şş TŞ tş Tt Uu Ww Yy NYny

Aa

Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English

àdòdó òdòdó flower

Ní tş àdòdó Mo já òdòdó I plucked a flower.

Àbèsàbèsì	Yorùbà	English
àjàà	ìkòkò	pot
owosi ekìni nàjàà u.	Àbèsàbèsì	
Òkùnrin kan ati ìkòkò rẹ.	Yorùbà	
A man and his pot	Englis	

**ani**                      **àw ǎn èniyàn**                      **persons**

ani idín á tşeni.                      Àbèsàbèsì

Àwọn èniyàn yíí n sòrò. Yorùbá

These people are discussing English

áheyì                      aáyán                      cockroach

Ní wólí áheyì                      Mo pa aáyán.                      I killed a cockroach.



**Eebingi**                      **ilù drum**

Ebingi no géèni                      Ilù mi rẹ é

This is my drum



**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**

ebo                      a já                      dog

Ebo á tóni işo                      ajá n şó ilé.                      a dog on guard.



eşingi                      obúko                      he-goat

eşingi èèni ga                      Òbúko yíí tóbi                      This he-goat is big



**ehu**                      **eku**                      **rat**

Ehu tí işó no                      Àbèsàbèsì

Eku wà ní ilé                      Yorùbà

There is rat in my house.                      English



**èşò**                      **ijàpá**                      **tortoise**

Ní ye èşò ekini                      Mo rí ijàpá kan                      I saw a tortoise.



étù                      filà                      cap/hat

Étù no gí tèèni                      Filà mi rẹ é                      This is my hat.



**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**

Èę                      bird

Énamà ęę                      Àbèsàbèsì

Énamàá mà á tşiga.                      Yoruba

Èę má n fò.                      English

Birds do fly.



**ègè**                      **ilẹkùn**                      **door**

Nyi ègè ná                      Şí ilẹkùn fun mi                      Open the door.

ęnyo                      ejò                      snake

nń ye ęnyo. Mo rí èjò.                      I saw a snake.



**ẹjéyi**                      **akpèré**                      **basket**

ibó tíwùdi ẹjéyi                      Àbèsàbèsì

Ajá wà nínú Akpèré                      Yoruba

dogs are in the basket                      English



**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**   **English**  
 ètşéyìn                      ìrè                      cricket



**Nn kái ètşéyìn**    **Mo he ìrè**    **I found a cricket**

Ìi

ìşo                      ilé                      house  
 Oòsi ta ìşo ná.                      Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ọlórún kólé fún mí.                      Yorùbá  
 Oh God, assist me to build a house    English



**ìkokò**                      **adię**                      **hen**

ìkokò    gí tu èéni    Adię rẹ é                      This is a mother hen.



ìtòlótòlò                      tòlótòlò                      turkey  
 Nn tşì ìtòlótòlò    Mo ní tòlótòlò    I have a turkey.

**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**  
 ìkpàrì                      awon omọ                      children

ìkpàrì ìkokò ísasi Àbèsàbèsì

òròmọdię męta    Yorùbà  
 three chickens    English



Oo  
 Òdùgù                      eşe                      leg  
 Òdùgù oniwẹnwẹn                      Àbèsàbèsì  
 Eşe èniyàn                      Yorùbà  
 the leg of a human being    English



Ògburugburu                      ìgbín                      snail  
 Nn káyì ògburugburu íjọ.    Àbèsàbèsì  
 Mo he ìgbín ní oko.                      Yorùbá  
 I found a snail in the farm    English



**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**  
 onyó ìni owosi                      aya ati okọ                      wife and husband



**Onyó ìni owosi dẹnì iyese.**    **Àbèsàbèsì**

Aya ati okọ ní ifẹ ara wọn.    Yorùbà  
 The couple are in love.                      English

Àbèsàbèsì                      Yorùbà                      English  
 òtùtù                      ọtí                      wine

Bà a bángì ìgò òtùtù èéni                      Àbèsàbèsì  
 wọn dára sí ara ìgò ọtí yíí    Yorùbá  
 The bottle of wine is decorate    English



Ọọ  
**ọkọdọ**                      **alángbá**                      **lizard**  
 Gbilẹ ọkọdọ.    Wo alángbá.                      Look at a lizard



**oni**                      **ènìyàn**                      **person**  
 Ọọ sà oni èéni?  
 Njẹ o mọ ẹni yí?  
 Can you recognize this person? English



**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**  
 ọfuọdọ                      àkùkọ                      cock  
 Ọfuọdọ ko m'èkidónyò.  
 Bí àkùkọ ba kọ ojumọ.  
 Cockcrow signals day break.  
 [Lit. When a cock crows]



**ọbani ikoko**                      **òròmọdiẹ**                      **chick**  
 Gbìlẹ ọbani ikoko no.  
 Wo òròmọdiẹ mi.  
 Look at my chick.



**ọbọ**                      **ọwọ mi**                      **hand**  
 Nn nàngì ọbọ na.  
 Mo na ọwọ mi sókè.  
 I raised my hand up



**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**  
 Uu  
 Ìwùdì                      inú ilé                      inside  
 Àkpòmì tí ìwùdì isọ no  
 erù kpọ nínú ilé mi  
 my house is full of luggage (load)



**Bb**  
 baye                      wá                      come  
 Ọjọ baye.                      Ọjọ wá.                      Ọjọ, come.



**ba**                      **dé**                      **arrive**  
 Ọ wí ègùré bá    Ọ ti àjò dé                      He arrived from a journey.

**Àbèsàbèsì**                      **Yorùbà**                      **English**  
 bàtà                      bàtà                      shoe



**Gbìlibàtà ọbani**                      **Àbèsàbèsì**  
 Wo bàtà ọmọdé                      Yorùbà  
 Look at a child's pair of shoes                      English



**Dd**  
 di                      wọ                      enter  
 ọnikọni ekìni díşọ    ajagun kan wọlé    a warrior came in



dèdè ronú sí guess  
 Ọ á dèdè ẹ Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ó n ronú sí i Yoruba  
 He is trying to guess English



**Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English**

Ff  
 fèè wọ aṣọ wear  
 Ọ é féwù. Ó n wọ aṣọ He is wearing a dress  
 fẹfẹrẹ fò fly  
 Ilabalábá ẹẹ fẹfẹrẹ Àbèsàbèsì  
 Labalábá náà fò lọ Yorùbá  
 the butterfly flew away. English



fùyì fọn blow  
 Ọ ó fùyì ẹhùndẹ Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ó n fọn ipè Yoruba  
 he is blowing a trumpet. English



Gg  
 go gbàdùrà pray  
 owosì ẹéni é go Àbèsàbèsì  
 ọkúnrin yìí n gbàdùrà Yorùbà  
 this man is praying English  
 Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English



GB gb  
 gbilẹ wò look  
 Ọ á gbilẹ. Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ó nwò òréré. Yorùbá  
 He is looking afar off English



gbo gbó bark  
 Ebo ẹéni é gbo Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ajá yìí n gbó Yorùbá  
 This dog is barking English



NGng  
 ngọ mu drink  
 Ọ á ngọ òtùtù Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ó n mu ọtí Yoruba  
 He drinks wine English



Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English  
 Hh  
 hudà gbàgbé forget  
 Ọ hudà étù u Ó gbàgbé filà rẹ He forgot his cap



Jj  
jòmì búrà swear  
Ọ gbà Oòsì jòmì. Àbèsàbèsì  
Ó fi Ọlórùn búrà. Yorùbá  
He swears by the name of God. Englis



Kk  
ko (ohumò) kọ (orin) sing  
Ọ é ko ohumò. Ó n kọ orin. He is singing.

kèdì gbé carry  
Ọ kèdì òdè. Ó gbé ìjòkó. He carries a stool.



Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English

KPkp  
kpèdi tọ jump  
Ìhueri kpèdi. Kònkò l tọ a frog jumps



Ll  
lami tàn lighten  
Ọ lámi ọkpa dí iṣo. Àbèsàbèsì  
Ó tan iná wọ ilé. Yorùbá  
She lights the lantern to see her way. English



libòngò bèrè mólẹ bend down  
Ọ libòngò kèdì àkpòmì. Àbèsàbèsì  
Ó bèrè mólẹ gbé ẹrù Yorùbá  
He bends to carry load English



Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English  
làgi yin shoot  
Nn làgi òbò mo yin ìbọn I shot the gun



Mm  
miṣì sùn leaps  
Esi èéni á miṣì. Àbèsàbèsì  
Ẹlédé yí n sùn. Yoruba  
This pig is resting English



mifọ farapa to be injured  
Ọ mifọ ókpo. Àbèsàbèsì  
Ó farapa ní ọ̀nà Yorùbà  
He sustained injury on his way English



Nn  
nàabu dúró stand/wait  
Nàabu kpá na. Dúró dè mi Wait for me.



Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English

Pp  
ìpòm̀pòm itan lap



Ó kípòm̀pòm̀ tèní iyésì    Àbèsàbèsì  
 Ó gbé itan lé itan    Yorùbá  
 He sits lap-on-lap    English

Kpkp  
 ik̀p̀oǹkp̀od̀o    kp̀oǹkp̀od̀o    pins



ǹǹ t̀sì ik̀p̀oǹkp̀od̀o    mo ní kp̀oǹkp̀od̀o    I have pins

Rr  
 rèsè    dám̀o    recognize  
 ó rèsè no?    sé o d á mi m̀o?    do you recognize



Àbèsàbèsì    Yorùbá    English  
 Ss  
 sùhùndò    kúnlẹ̀    kneel down  
 owosi èèni sùhùndò    Àbèsàbèsì  
 ọ̀kúnrin yí kúnlẹ̀    Yorùbá  
 this man kneels down    English



Şş  
 sà    m̀o    know  
 ǹǹ sà iwé    mo m̀o iwé    I am knowledgeable



TŞtş  
 t̀şingì    rìn    walk  
 ó á t̀şingì dasi    Àbèsàbèsì  
 ó n rìn lọ    Yoruba  
 he is walking away English



**Àbèsàbèsì    Yorùbá    English**

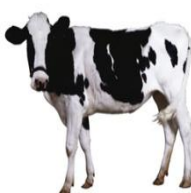
Tt  
 túgè a    bo    cover  
 ó gbà òli b̀o túgè ayòò    Àbèsàbèsì  
 ó fi aşo bo ọ̀jú    Yoruba  
 he disguised    English



tèni    gun    eşin    ride/climb  
 ó sà ègèji à tèni    Àbèsàbèsì  
 ó m̀o eşin ǹ gùn    Yorùbá  
 he knows horse riding    Englis



Ww  
 Woli    pa    kill/slaughter  
 Áá bá wóli ẹ̀na    Àbèsàbèsì  
 A ọ̀o pa màlú    Yorùbá  
 we will slaughter a cow.    English

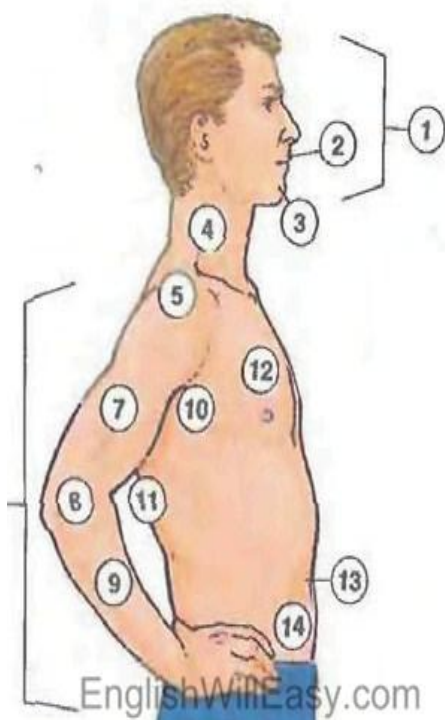


Àbèsàbèsì	Yorùbà	English	
Yy yasi àñ yási na!	gbà egbà mi!	take/save please save me!	
yo onyo èéni é yo omòbirin yíí n jó this girl is dancing	jó Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English	dance	
NYny Nyadumi Ó nyadumi tší ítsumu òdè Ó jókòó sí orí ìjòkó He sits on a stool	jókòó Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English	seat down	
Àbèsàbèsì nyasi	Yorùbà tẹmólẹ	English step on	
Ó nyási oku Ó tẹ okùn mólẹ He stepped on a rope	Àbèsàbèsì Yorùbà English		

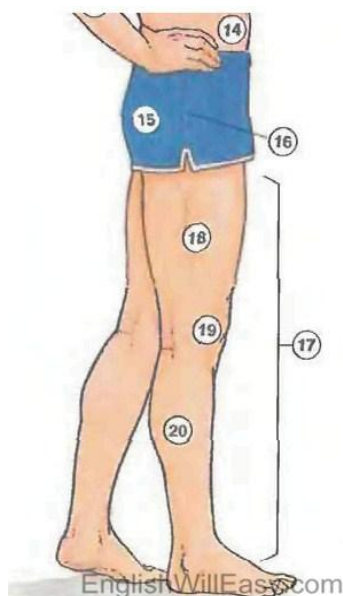
### III. PARTS OF THE BODY

This section teaches the lexical items for the different parts of human body the English WilBeasy.com body diagram is adopted as the teaching aid for easy comprehension.

#### Iyesi Ara Body (parts of the body)







1	ayoò		ojú	face
2	onu		ẹnu	mouth
3	àkpàn		àgbòn	chin
4	ọhọnọn		ọrùn	neck
5	ihunaga		ẹ̀jìkà	shoulder
6	ahunnù		inú	nose
7	ihunaga		apá	upper-arm
8	ihuneşegọbo		ìgunwọ	elbow
Àbèsàbèsì		Yorùbà	English	
9	ọbo		apá	forearm
10	ihàràtàà		abíá	armpit
11	òtşumu		ẹ̀yìn	back
12	ẹ̀kàkì		àyà	chest
13	ònyì		ìbàdí	waist
14	aku		ikùn	abdomen
15	àgòrì		ìdí	buttocks
16	efilàgòrì		awẹdí	hips
17	òdù		ẹ̀şẹ	leg
18	ìpọ̀mọ̀m(ì)		itan	thigh
19	ihuneşegòdù		orókún	kneel
20	òdù		ẹ̀yìn	calf

### 3.1 Noun phrase with pronoun qualifiers

Onú no	ẹnu mi		my mouth
Onú so	ẹnu rẹ		your mouth
Onú u	ẹnu rẹ		his mouth
Onu èsì	ẹnu wa		our mouth
Onu ènì	ẹnu yín		your mouth
Àbèsàbèsì		Yorùbá	English
Onu bo	ẹnu wọn		their mouth

### 3.2 Subject pronouns

Ònì	emi	I
òsì	iwo	you
àù	oun	he/she
àbèsì	àwa	we
àbèni	èyin	you
àba	awon	they
òni gí tu èéni	èmi rè é	here I am
òsì gí tu èdèni	ìwo ni ìyèn	there you are
àmi gí tu èéin	òun rè é	here is he
àbèsì gí o	àwa ni	we are
àbèni gí ó	èyin ni	you are
àba gí o	awon ni	they are
kíyì isó omisi?	ilé oba dà?	where is the king's house?
ẹ tu ìyòtù e	ó wà ní Ìyòtù	it is in Ìyòtù (name of a quarter)
áyé so síkò?	iyá rẹ ní kò?	what of your mother?
Àbèsàbèsì	Yorùbá	English
ó to isó	ó wà ní ilè	she is at home
nń́ ń bósì isomì ikùrè	mo se ọ̀bẹ̀ ewédú/ ọ̀ọ̀yọ̀	I cocked ewédú/ ọ̀ọ̀yọ̀ (a type of vegetable) soup
nń́ to ijeyi je	mo gún iyán je	I ate the pounded yam I prepared
nń́ de ijeyi je	mo ra iyán je	I bought the pounded yam I ate

### IV. SOME RUDIMENTARY GREETING IN ÀBÈSÀBÈSÌ

Àbèsàbèsì	Yorùbá	English
Ísemè	Ìkíni	Greeting
n dẹ o	n lẹ ò	how are you (one person)
à n dẹ o	ẹ n lẹ ò	how are you (many people)
à n dẹ iso èéni ò	ẹ n lẹ ní ilé yí ò	how are you in this house (many people)
n bó	pèlẹ	sorry (greeting for one who is sick)
n bóyèn	káàrọ	good morning
n bó natşingi	káàbò	you are welcome
n bó nẹwù	káàsàn	good afternoon
n bó ni isumù	o kú işé	well done (one person)
àn bó ni isumù	ẹ kú işé	well done (many people)
n kò	o şe é	thank you (one person)
n kò ná	o şeun mi	thank you for assisting me
à n kò	ẹ şe é	thank you (many people)
à n kò ná ò	ẹ şeun mi	thank you for assisting us

### V. CONCLUSION

I have tried as much as possible to make this paper 'teach yourself Àbèsàbèsì'. I included as much as possible the day today lexical items in the communities. With the greeting, the sample questions and answers, I envisage that a stranger learning Àbèsàbèsì will have little or no difficulty in learning the language. The pictures are aids to memories of the learner.

Acknowledgement:

I like to acknowledge that this booklet was edited by my senior colleagues: Professor Francis Oyebade and Professor Oluwayemisi Adebowale. All mistakes observed in the final output are mine. This booklet is dedicated to Oba Mómòdù the Oşònà 1 The Àkàlà of Ìkàràmmù on his Ìwúyè and 1st installation ceremony held on 23rd June 2012, All Àbèsàbèsì kings, and all Àbèsàbèsì indigenes at home and in Diaspora. I am grateful to Professor Francis Oyebade who wrote the forward thus:

#### Forward

One of the most critical factors that make a language prestigious is that it has a writing system. A generally acceptable writing system affords a community the opportunity of documenting its cultural practices and experiences, in a permanent way, for posterity.

In the light of the observations made above, Dr Agoyi's effort is very commendable. She has produced an alphabetic system for Àbèsàbèsì (usually referred to as 'Akpes' in the literature). She has faithfully followed the

phonetic principle in producing these alphabets and is in the process of testing it for general acceptability. She has brought to bear on the project her experience as a phonologist as well as her passion as a speaker of the language.

This booklet is recommended to anyone, native speaker or ‘stranger’, who desires to understand how to write a language which hitherto had no writing system. The booklet will be of great service to the linguistic community as it strives to document and maintain endangered languages the word over.

Francis Oyebade

**Professor of Linguistics**

- [1]. Agoyi T.O “The Phonology of Àbèsàbèsì Vowel Harmony” doctoral dissertation: Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Ondo State Nigeria 2008.
- [2]. Agoyi T.O 2012 Àbèsàbèsì Orthography: A Proposal OSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (JHSS) ISSN: 2279-0837, ISBN: 2279-0845. Volume 6, Issue 2 (Nov. - Dec. 2012), PP 41-45
- [3]. Agoyi T. O 2012 Nń Kpasi Àbèsàbèsì Mo gbó Àèsàbèsì I Undersand Àbèsàbèsì.
- [4]. Nigerian Education Research Council 2004; National Policy on Education
- [5]. The Illustrations are from corel.com and EnglishWillEasy.com