LANGUAGE SHIFT AND CULTURAL POLICING AMONG THE OGU OF SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

To
God Almighty
To whom I owe
My very Being;

To
My husband,
Dr Senayon Olaoluwa,
An Ogu *Cultural Police*,

And to
All Ogu people of Southwestern Nigeria,
Who speak Ogu with pride.

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ABSTRACT

Language Shift Language Maintenance (LSLM) designates the investigation of movement patterns from one language to another and the efforts made by native speakers and institutions to reverse the shift. Ogu, a minority language in Southwestern Nigeria, had been experiencing shift to Yoruba and English. Existing literature on Ogu LSLM affirm shift without extensively acknowledging systematic strategies being adopted by native speakers in the maintenance of the language. This study, therefore, examined cultural policing as a unique maintenance strategy that the elite Ogu have adopted to stem the tide of the shift with a view to investigating its dynamics and efficacy.

The study adopted Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) to assess the extent of shift of Ogu, and Giles *et al's* Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT) to assess the extent to which Ogu people's vitality has positively impacted on the language. Data were collected through participant observation and purposively through 12 key informant interviews with individuals involved in cultural policing: four in each local government area (LGA). Twelve in-depth interviews were conducted with four individuals who had been previously policed in each LGA. Three focus group discussions with native speakers in ancestral homelands were also held in Javie in Lagos State, Idi-Iroko and Obakobe in Ogun State. Data were content analysed.

Ogu language experienced widespread shift to Yoruba and English, which manifested in the bearing of Yoruba names, speaking of Yoruba and the denial of Ogu identity. A reversal of attitude in favour of Ogu was facilitated by members of the Ogu community, identified as cultural police, who adopted informal non-coercive and subtle policing strategies as well as persuasion. The efficacy of the strategy rested substantially on the high formal education and cosmopolitan experience of the cultural police team. The feeling of linguistic nostalgia was engendered while the denial of Ogu identity in public was reduced. Efforts towards maintaining the language included intergenerational transfer, use of Ogu in domestic and public domains, reversion to Ogu names, sensitisation of the people into developing confidence in themselves and renewed loyalty to Ogu; all of which increased its ethnolinguistic vitality. Loyalty to Ogu was also tied to socio-economic benefits, namely: scholarships, bursaries, monetary gifts and job opportunities for Ogu speakers, which endeared the language to its people. Cultural policing was complemented with publishing of books in Ogu, translation of Yoruba and English hymns and songs to Ogu and encouragement of the Ogu in the Diaspora to pay regular visits to their ancestral homelands, particularly during festive periods.

Ogu people have successfully initiated and ensured the maintenance of their language by employing subtle cultural policing strategies of persuasion and incentives. Cultural policing should be employed in efforts geared towards safeguarding minority languages.

Keywords: Ogu of Southwestern Nigeria, Cultural policing, Language shift and maintenance

Word Count: 447

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Language maintenance has become a topical issue in African sociolinguistics essentially because of the rising occurrence of language shift and endangerment, which many minority languages in Africa and indeed all over the world continue to experience. European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe (1992) defines minority languages as languages that are traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population and (are) different from the official language(s) of the state. According to UNESCO 2003, approximately 90% of the languages of the world are in danger of disappearing as speakers of minority languages continue to embrace, for numerous reasons, more prestigious languages to the detriment of their own languages. Majority of linguists are in agreement that the main reasons for language shift are socio-economic, political, cultural, and ideological, and that shift can either be voluntary or forced (Campbell and Muntzell, 1989, Fishman 1991, and Nettle and Romaine 2000, Coluzzi, 2015). Language shift, if not reversed, can lead to the ultimate death of a language and this, of course, has grave consequences for the speakers and their culture. Language maintenance arises when speakers of a language choose to continue to speak their language even in the face of pressures from a majority, dominant or more prestigious language.

Seeing that language shift and endangerment are global phenomena, what should be the preoccupation of linguists in this age is how to cause a reversal of attitudes and facilitate language maintenance. Central to this mandate is paying attention to maintenance strategies for languages facing attrition or are likely to be endangered. According to Fishman (2001:18), "Prognostications foretelling disaster are not enough. What the smaller and weaker languages (and peoples and cultures) of the world need are not generalized predictions of dire and even terminal illnesses but, rather, the development of therapeutic understandings and approaches that can be adjusted so as to tackle essentially the same illness in patient after patient." Again Garcia and Morin (2000) agree with Fishman that Language Shift and Language Maintenance (LSLM) studies should shift

focus from mere descriptions of socio-linguistic situations to steps that can be taken by ethnolinguistic communities to doing something about their sociolinguistic statuses. This becomes obviously expedient with predictions of many languages of the world disappearing in the near future. Krauss (1992, 1998) is of the view that more than half of the world's languages will have disappeared in the 21st century as children in language minority communities increasingly speak languages of wider communication rather than their ancestral languages. UNESCO (2003) puts the percentage of the number of the world's languages that are in danger of disappearing at 90%, while Grenoble and Whaley (2006) project that "to meet that time frame, at least one language must die, on average, every two weeks or so". Already some languages are on the verge of extinction. Dyirbal, an Australian Aboriginal language, comes to mind (Holmes 1992). Others like Boro in Ghana are already dead (Batibo 2005).

It is following from this premise that this work examined the language and culture of the Ogu who are a part of the Aja-speaking peoples of Southwestern Nigeria. It argues that the language is endangered as a result of shift which it continues to suffer due to its disadvantaged minority status, a situation that has an implication for maintenance strategies. Wurm (2003:16) describes language endangerment as "the gradual disappearance of the speakers of a language, usually beginning with children, continuing with young adults, middle-aged speakers, until only a few speakers are left with whose death the language becomes extinct." This situation best describes the state of Ogu in Ogun and Lagos States in Nigeria. The continued existence and survival of the language is being threatened largely by Yorùbá, its immediate linguistic neighbour and indigenous majority language. The other threat is from English on account of its historical and contemporary privilege in colonial and postcolonial Nigeria. Ogu youths and children continue to shift to Yorùbá as a matter of pride and prestige to the detriment and endangerment of their mother tongue. As language is one of the means of expressing culture and identity, the demise of a language usually has grave consequences for its speakers and their culture. It is in the light of this that this study aimed at examining strategies for reversing language shift and maintaining Ogu in Southwestern Nigeria which is the study area. This it has done by exploring a unique strategy for language maintenance which the researcher has termed *Cultural Policing*. Basically the term is conceptualized in this study to mean the simulation of certain non-violent, non-coercive and subtle policing

strategies adopted consciously or unconsciously by certain members of the Ogu linguistic community. They do this to stem the tide of the shift from the language to other languages like Yorùbá and English, which are of better economic, political and social advantages. Therefore, the study investigated the efficacy of a previously unacknowledged strategy in mainstream LSLM scholarship. It has however been adopted by certain members of the Ogu linguistic group in Southwestern Nigeria for the maintenance of the language and as a measure towards sustaining its vitality.

1.1 The Language of Study: Ogu

Ogu has been referred to as Aladagbe (Soremekun 1986); Egungbe (Capo 1990); Eegun (Gbolahan 1991); Gu (Akere 2002); Egun (Onadipe-Shalom 2013); Gungbe (Ofulue 2013), etc. over the years. Egun is the common nomenclature among non-natives but which the Ogu people abhor as they see it as derogatory. In August 1985, the Ogu Studies Society reaffirmed the correct name as Ogu and the people as Gu or Ogu (Gbolahan 1991) although Simpson (2008) feels that any change in the conventional nomenclature might cause some sort of confusion in identity. The language is a member of the Aja-Ewe language group, which in turn belongs to the KWA family (Greenberg, J.H. 1963).[1] Below is a table showing the classification of Ogu:

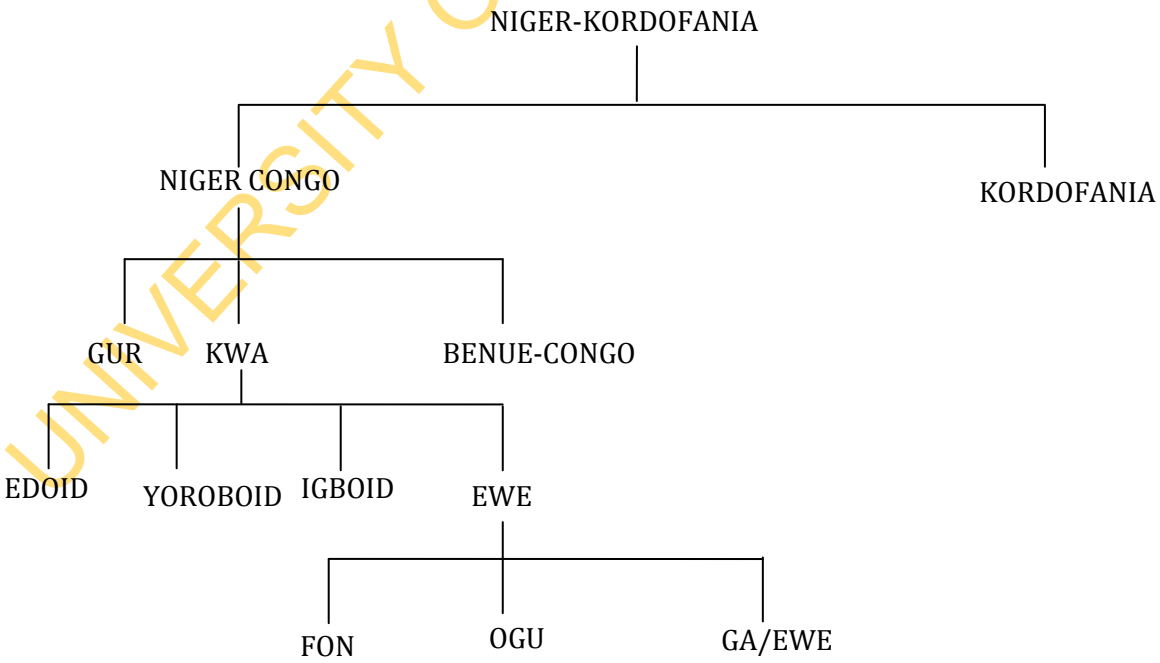

Figure 1.1. Greenberg's (1963) Classification of Ogu

[1] The researcher is familiar with Williamson and Blench's (2000) classsification of West Benue Congo languages; she has however stuck to Greenberg's (1963) because it captures better the classification of Ogu.

Ogu is spoken in Southwestern Nigeria; it is also spoken with greater recognition and privilege in the Republic of Benin. For instance, not only do Ogu people constitute 30% of Beninese population (Ofulue 2013), they are also politically and economically privileged, having severally produced presidents and heads of state including the just defeated former Prime Minister Lionel Zinsou and the just inaugurated President Patrice Talon. Closely related to Ogu, also in the Republic of Benin, is Fon, which also enjoys the status of a major language in the country. Ogu also shares affinity with Ewe as spoken in parts of Togo and Ghana. Generally, Ogu, Fon and Ewe belong to languages of people in the Aja-Tade belt in West Africa. From the diagram above, it is worthy of note that Greenberg's classification recognizes Ogu as a distinct language together with Fon and Ga under the Ewe branch of the Kwa family. There is a sense in which Greenberg's classification therefore gives more credence to the study of Ogu as a distinct language than Williamson and Blench's (2000) classification of KWA languages that does not feature Ogu in the family tree. However it may be assumed that the duo subsumed Ogu under Ewe, Fon, Ga or Aja. Again there is a way that this classification speaks to the marginalization of Ogu, which is exactly what the language has been suffering in Southwestern Nigeria where it has been accorded a minority status and worse still, tagged a dialect of another KWA language, Yorùbá. Yoruba, however has been classified by Williamson and Blench (2000) as a West Benue Congo language, which Blench (2009) again classified as Volta-Niger. See the diagram below adapted from Williamson and Blench (2000:29):

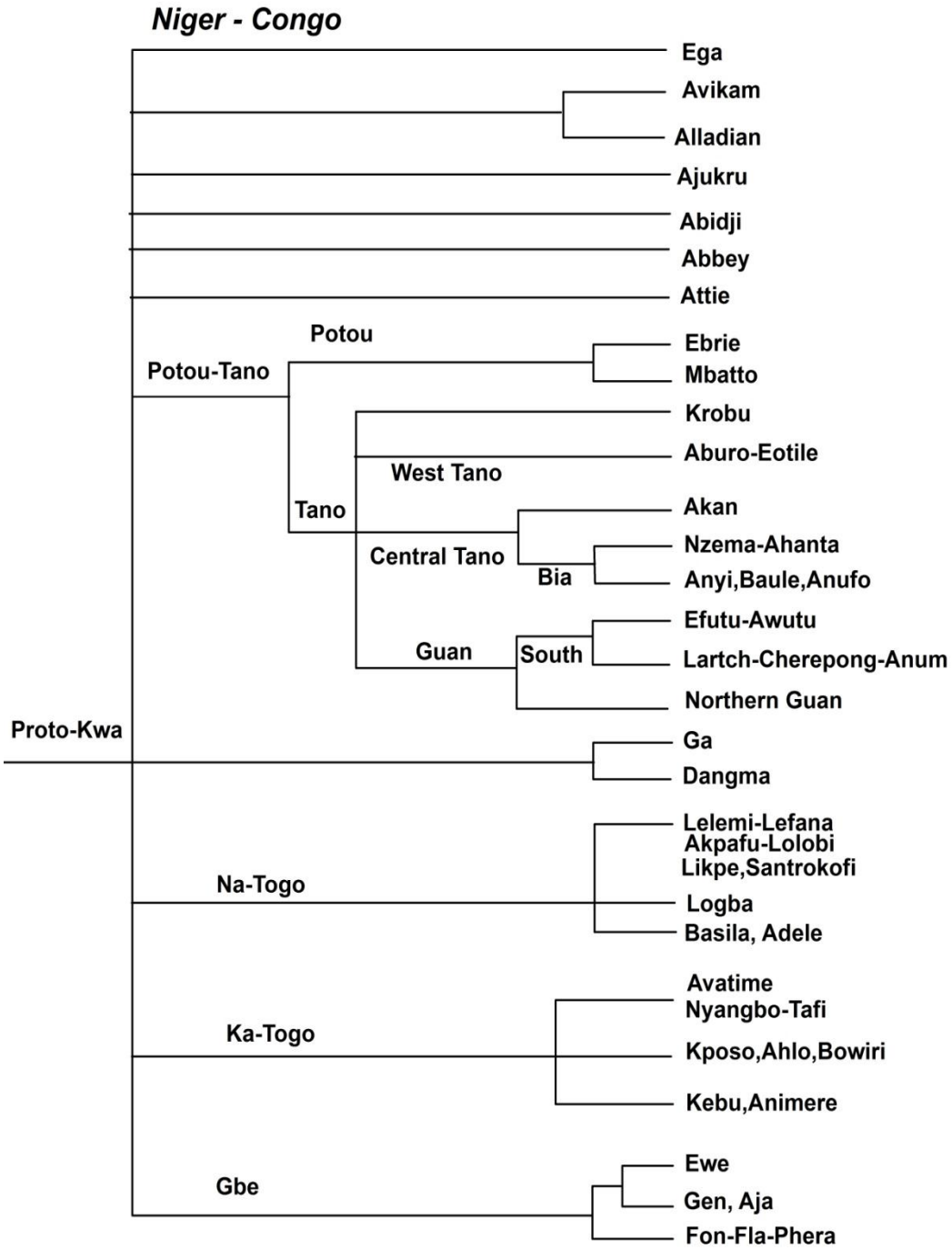

Figure 1.2. Williamson and Blench's (2000) classification of Ogu

According to Asiwaju (1979), the geographical location of Ogu speakers in Nigeria are the Badagry Local Government Area of Lagos State and the Ado-Igbesa and the Ipokia districts of Egbado South Local Government Area of Ogun State. This narrative however is flawed as recent developments attest to the fact that there are other places in Lagos where Ogu people assert their nativity in spite of the controversies that such an assertion often generates, especially in view of the absolutist narratives of their Yorùbá neighbours

in such places.[2] Some of the communities where Ogu is spoken in Lagos and Ogun States are Badagry, Obakobe, Ipokia, Ere, Tube, Maun, Ayede, Bandu, Koga-Whegbo (Ikoga-Ile), Ikoga-Zebe, Ajido, Aradagun, Gbekon, Gboje, Idolein, Iragon, Akasaun, Iragbo, Samo, Ere, Isalu, Isagbo, etc. See below the map showing the geographical location of Ogu people in Nigeria:

[2] Besides the acknowledged contribution of the Edo people to the founding of Lagos and the better known role of the Yoruba, Ogu oral tradition continues to affirm the place of Ogu people in the founding of the coastal city. Such recognition of the tripartite efforts would go a long way in addressing a blind spot in the rendition of Lagos history.

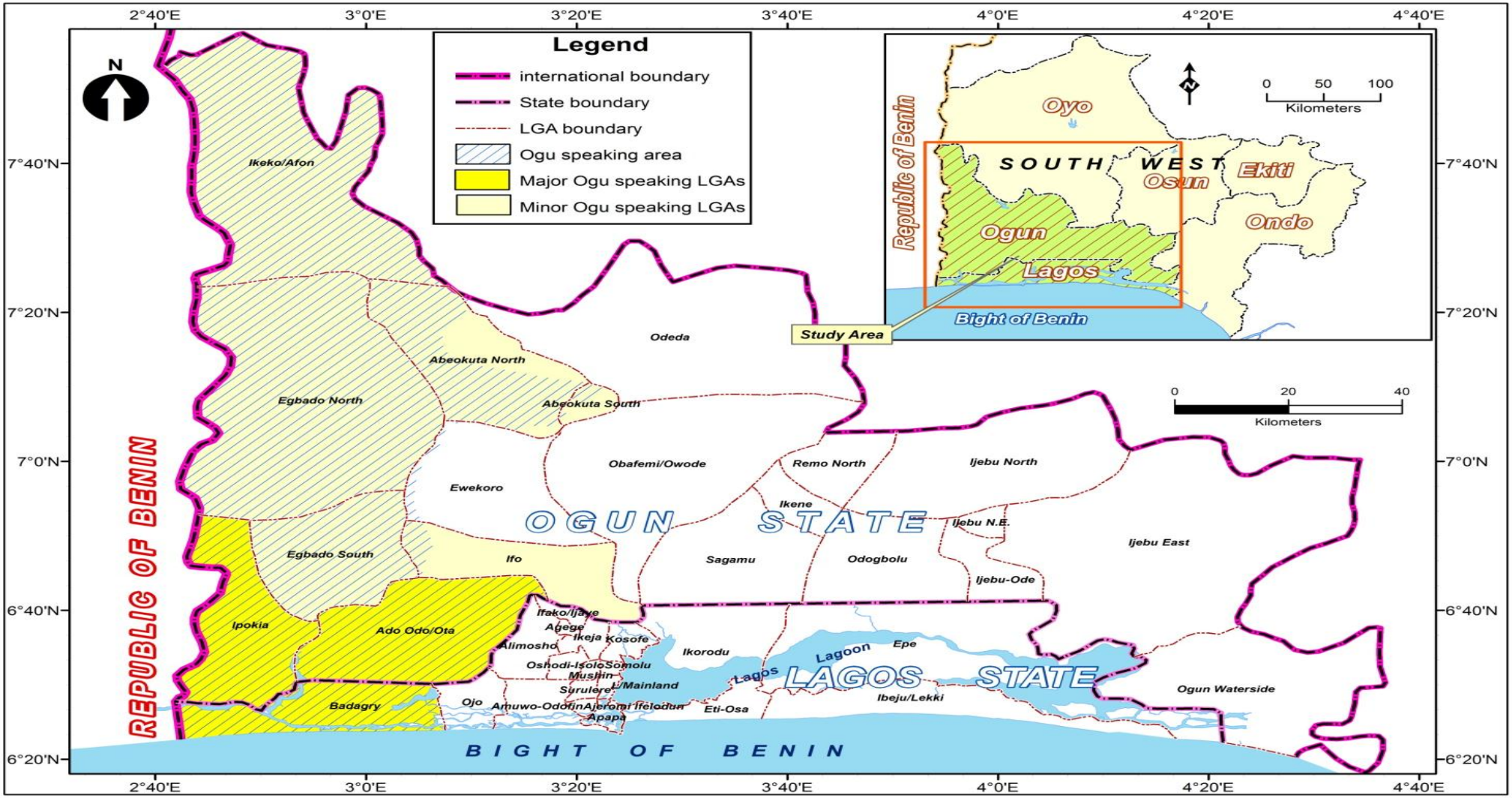

Figure 1.3. Map Showing the Geographical Location of Ogu People in Nigeria

Ofulue (2013) reveals that although the Ogu are a minority that make up less than 5% of Lagos state's population, they are a distinct group in that their language is the only one within the region that belongs to the KWA language group. Ogu has many dialects amongst which are Allada, Toli, Glo, Seetho, Vetho, Aganyin, Ajala, Wheda, Kento, etc. which are all mutually intelligible. The standard dialect however is Allada which is used in writing and broadcasting.

Ogu, as a consequence of language contact, has had some Yorùbá phonological inflections. Evidence of this is the presence of the alveolar trill (r) in some of its dialects which was hitherto absent. The alveolar trill only occurred in borrowed words before now but in recent times, its presence in some dialects of the language has brought about some slight variations in the dialects, which however are still mutually intelligible. Again the language is also now replete with borrowings from Yorùbá as there are many Yorùbá loan words in it. Ogu people use the Yorùbá terminologies, "Wá, káàbò, Ó dàbò, kúusé, etc." for Come, Welcome, Bye, Well done", etc. This is not to say that Ogu does not have words for these English terminologies but language and culture contact has brought about such transference just as Yorùbá too enjoys borrowings from Ogu and other languages like Hausa, Edo, etc. Examples of such borrowings from Ogu by Yorùbá speakers are: *De de mera o* which is a corrupt form of the Ogu expression "Thethe Medaho" (Easy, Brother!); 'fon dagbe', which means "to wake well" in Ogu, but has been invested with a radically different meaning in Yorùbá : to be scattered or take to one's heels. Another instance of the borrowing is at the lexical level, where, for instance, a word like *depe* that means 'young man' in Ogu is used in Yorùbá to mean a buffoon or stupid person. These Ogu expressions that are used by Yorùbá people are often used derogatorily to ridicule the language and the people. In fact, most of the Ogu borrowings in Yorùbá are usually corrupted and used to mock the speakers. Needless to say, the psychological effect of this derogatory use of their language by Yorùbá people has contributed, in no small measure, to the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá by the youths and indeed the elders too.

Ogu is replete with more borrowings from Yorùbá than Yorùbá from Ogu, to the extent that the language has completely lost some of the original terms to the Yorùbá lexicon and vocabulary that it is now replete with. This obviously points to the prestigious status of Yorùbá that endears it to the Ogu people. Code mixing and code switching of Ogu and Yorùbá are very common among Ogu youths and even among the middle aged who find it

rather difficult to hold conversations completely in Ogu without having to mix with or switch to Yorùbá. Cases abound of Ogu youths who can neither speak their language nor understand it.

1.1.1 Historical background of the Ogu

The Ogu are part of the Aja-speaking people found within the borders of the present-day Republic of Benin (formerly Dahomey) and Togo. They are found in Southwestern Nigeria as an indigenous people specifically in Lagos and Ogun States. However, as a result of colonial mapping, it is only a small number of the linguistic group that is located in the identified states in Southwestern Nigeria. The small number notwithstanding, theirs is more or less a complete expression of both the socio-cultural identity of the group as found in the other West African countries. This understanding is best captured in the observation that the Aja-speaking people are an important element in the ethnic affinity between Nigeria and Benin (Asiwaju 1979), two nations where the Ogu are immediately divided by colonial mapping.

There are also accounts that acknowledge the place of 18th and 19th century migration of a number of Ogu people into what in the 20th century became Nigeria. For instance, Badagry, a 15th century indigenous town (Olaide-Mesewaku 2011), became the settlement of the Hueda as a principal Aja group. Avoseh (1938) claims that Badagry owes its growth to the immigration of the Hueda, the Wemenou and the 'Whara'(Huela). The Aja-speaking people, better known today as the Ogu in Nigeria,[3] are concentrated in Badagry Local Government Area of Lagos State, the Ado-Odo/Ota and Ipokia Local Government Areas of Ogun State. They are also found, although to a lesser degree as indigenous people in other parts of Yewa Region and places like Abeokuta and Ifo in Ogun State. Beyond Badagry Region in Lagos State, Ogu people are similarly found in small numbers in a number of places in Lagos Island. Beyond the Aja-Tado origins, a recent study by Dotse (2011), has shown that the Ogu were part of the groups that migrated from ancient Egypt towards the south of the continent in primordial times. The group, according to the research, was led by its progenitor called Gu. The movement that resulted in the present day large concentration in the Aja-Tado belt of West Africa had evolved through several regions including Ethiopia and other places.

[3] Henceforth, the Aja-speaking people will be more frequently referred to as the Ogu.

1.1.2 Communal life of the Ogu

Generally, the Ogu live a communal life that is defined by distinct cultural practices which manifest in rites, rituals, ceremonies and other such activities that affirm their identity. Rites of passage such as burial and initiation take clearly distinct forms. For instance, the use of musical instruments such as, *gankokoe, aya, zenli, sato, gangbe, hunsogo*, among others mark Ogu people apart from their Yorùbá neighbours in Southwestern Nigeria. Naming is another significant and distinct cultural index among the Ogu. Children are named, just like in any other African culture, based on the circumstances surrounding their birth. Others are named in response to the philosophical reflections that have come to assume archetypal values among the Ogu. At other times, children and in some cases, adults are renamed when they turn initiates of Ogu deities and divinities. Some notable and common Ogu names across these cultural naming models are: Senami, Semako, Sewanu, Mautin, Mauton, Setonji, Senayon, Mausi, Avoseh, Zinsu, Agosu, Hunsu, Kodogbo, Jidenu, Gbenupo, Maumeh, Nunayon, Fasinu, Tuthonu, Minasu, Jesuyon, etc. These names however have not escaped influences by Yorùbá phonology. Again we see a shift from Ogu to Yorùbá in the area of naming. It is common practice these days for Ogu youths to either change their Ogu names to Yorùbá names or *Yorùbáize* their Ogu names.

1.1.3 Economic activities of the Ogu

The Ogu in Badagry are noted for farming and fishing. As a coastal area, fishing activities constitute a major part of their economic activities. The water ways are a major means of transportation between Lagos and Badagry on one hand and Lagos and Poto-Novo on the other hand. Trading activities are also rampant around the coasts. Ogu women weave mats, baskets and trays. In Ogun State, the Ogu are mostly farmers, hunters while those who settle along the coast like Ere also engage in fishing. Trading activities at the borders between Nigeria and Benin more or less constitute the bulk of the economic activities in that area. Other economic activities include animal husbandry, boat-building and net-making. The Ogu in Ado-Odo/Ota and Ipokia Local Government Areas are also famous for pig farming (Asiwaju 1979). Pork is the traditional meat of the Ogu. Important ceremonies are not complete without the slaughtering of pigs. As a result, pig farming and sale of pork are part of their economic activities. Cattle rearing, local gin distillation, pottery, blacksmithery, furniture works, building constructions, etc. are other economic activities notable among the Ogu. It is worth noting here that Ogu people were

decisive actors in the centuries-long Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade which witnessed the massive shipping of African slaves to sugarcane plantations in Europe and America (Olaoluwa 2010:6-7). The Badagry (an Ogu community) lagoon was one of the major slave routes. Though Heine and Nurse (2000:10) claim that Yorùbá was the only Nigerian language used by slaves during the Trans Atlantic slave trade, evidence of the involvement of the Ogu in the slave trade is found in the utilization of Ogu language in the attenuation process preceding the final shipping of the slaves to the Americas from the Badagry slave port. The incantations were composed in the Allada dialect of Ogu before translation into English. Slaves were compelled to recite the Ogu incantation in order to temper their aggression, whether they understood the language or not (Adedayo 2010:67). To date, even after the abolition of the Slave Trade since the later part of the 18th Century, there are still relics of the trade in the Badagry Heritage Museum (along Lander Road); Mobee Royal Family Original Slave Relics Museum and other parts of the town. Also standing to date in Badagry is the first storey building in Nigeria, built by Reverend C. A Gollmer of the Church Missionary Society in 1845. It was in that house that Bishop Samuel Ajai Crowther translated the English bible into Yorùbá. These sites have become major tourist attractions in the country.

1.1.4 Ogu religious practices

The Ogu, like other Africans, are worshippers of indigenous deities and divinities in the fashion of African Traditional Religions. The Ogu have not escaped the influence of the imported religions of Christianity and Islam as many have embraced these religions. However, in both Lagos and Ogun States, the Ogu are more of Christians than Muslims. Many though still cling to their traditional religion of worshipping indigenous deities and divinities. Notable among the deities are Hun, Than, Sapata, Vothun, Aylo, etc. While many erroneously tend to place Zangbeto in the category of the Ogu dieties, recent works by Hunsu (2011) and Okure (2015) indicate that Zangbeto is not a deity to be worshipped but a traditional vigilante group that defends its people and maintains law and order in the community. The Ogu also engage in 'Yoho', which is ancestor worship. They believe very much in the propitiation of departed ancestors. Particular communities usually have peculiar deities that they worship. Examples are the Ajara-Hungbo worshipped by the Ajara group; the Whego and Thejoro deities among the Toli and the Anavie-Hungbo among the Seto. In addition, some family names like Avoseh and Hungbo reveal the

deities worshipped by such families. Perhaps it is in the traditional religious domain that Ogu still survives today especially in shrines and groves. This again points to the reality that Ogu is on the verge of what Grenoble and Whaley (2006:17) call Bottom-to Top attrition, a situation where a language is no longer much in use in the family setting and many other domains yet is still widely in use in religious or ritual purposes. For them, this is an advanced stage of language loss. Religious music in Ogu communities is still in much use among the Ogu. It is associated with the worship of different deities.

Certain types of music are usually for royalty while others are for popular entertainment. An example of royal music is the *ajogan* of the Maseno of Ukoga-Zebe (Asiwaju 1979). Ajogan is also more common in use in the palace of the Akran of Badagry. Among the popular music genres are *hungan* among the Toli, *jeke*, the *zeli* and the *atiripi*. The wemenou in Imeko have the *Segede*. Despite all these shades of music, what is mainly heard in these Ogu communities is Yorùbá music blaring from shops and the loud speakers of music audio and video shops. At a first glance, one is wont to think that one is in a Yorùbá -speaking community until one comes across a few homes and shops where Ogu music is heard. Again Ogu people watch Yorùbá films as there are very few Ogu films and these are usually in the Fon and Ga variants of Ogu-with a touch of Ewe - in the Republic of Benin. Although these variants are intelligible to the Ogu in Nigeria, there are slight variations that make them a bit difficult for the Nigerian speaker to comprehend easily. The above are some of the factors that have also contributed to the shift to Yorùbá that Ogu continues to experience.

1.1.5 Education among the Ogu

Western education was first introduced in Nigeria in Badagry, the most outstanding of Ogu communities in Southwestern Nigeria famous for housing the first school in the country, St. Thomas' Anglican School which was the first elementary school built in 1845. This is in contrast with the claim by some scholars that western education in Nigeria started in Yorùbá land (See Sogunro, 2012). Again the claim that western education started in Yorùbá land attests to the marginalization and non-recognition of the Ogu in South Western Nigeria. Perhaps the claim is attributed to the fact that though Ogu people housed the first school, the Yorùbá, as the privileged linguistic, political, social and economic group, embraced western education earlier than the Ogu. In recent times however, the story is different as many of the Ogu in Lagos and Ogun States have embraced western education and are found in many government and private establishments. Several

secondary schools and higher institutions abound in the Southwestern part of Nigeria and the trend along education line among the Ogu has changed significantly with an appreciable number of learners found in various institutions of learning. In the same vein, many of Ogu professionals and intellectuals are today found in both private and public sectors of the Nigerian nation.

1.1.6 Controversies surrounding the identity of the Ogu

Over the years, several people from the two states in Nigeria where the Ogu are, and many others have always erroneously claimed that the Ogu are Yorùbá. Some even claim that Ogu is a dialect of Yorùbá. Even among learned people, this erroneous assumption still exists. From the history of the Ogu given above, it is evident that the Ogu are not Yorùbá. As explained earlier, colonial mapping has placed them in Nigeria as a minority group bounding the heavily populated Yorùbá in the Southwestern part of the country. However, this does not make them Yorùbá. The language and the culture of the Ogu are in consonance with the identity of other Ogu found immediately in Benin and bear little or no resemblance to those of the Yorùbá. For instance, kings in Yorùbá are called *Oba* while the Ogu call theirs *Aholu* (Olaoluwa 2006). While majority of the Ogu speak Yorùbá, very few Yorùbá understand Ogu let alone speak it. In fact, Ogu is usually referred to by the Yorùbá – with disdain – as an esoteric language. It is common among the Yorùbá to say that a person is speaking "Egun" if they don't understand what the person says. This derogatory way of referring to Ogu has resulted in many of them being ashamed to be identified with the language and as such the rate of language shift from Ogu to Yorùbá is on the increase. Again sounds that are present in Yorùbá like the alveolar trill (r) are absent in Ogu while the voiced interdental fricative which is present in Ogu is absent in Yorùbá. The voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ which is absent in Yoruba is present in Ogu.

In religion, culture and even tradition, the Ogu are markedly different from the Yorùbá.As a result of language and culture contact, Ogu people and language have been influenced by Yorùbá culture and language. Although Batibo (2005:90) opines that in a multilingual speech community people usually tend towards the dominant language, this does not however make Ogu people Yorùbá. In many Yorùbá communities, the Oro cult operates but in Ogu communities, it is the Zangbeto cult that is in place. News in local languages in Lagos and Ogun television stations is rendered in both Yorùbá and Ogu, an

acknowledgment of the distinctiveness of the language.[4] The Ogu and Yorùbá (especially the Awori stock) are always at loggerheads over land matters. The Yorùbá feel that as the majority tribe, they own the sole right to the land; whereas recent discoveries from the archives reveal that the Ogu people in Ogun State had settled there long even before the arrival of the Yorùbá people. This again underscores the point about the distinct identity of the Ogu people. Even when a number of them answer Yorùbá names, Olaoluwa (2006: 10) cautions on the tendency to regard the Ogu as Yorùbá: "what point are we making? The "Egun are not Yorùbá (even if some of them like me answer, unfortunately, Yorùbá names due to the accident and crisis of naming)."

Political boundaries have placed some Ogu in Nigeria, even when they have a greater linguistic and cultural affinity with the Ogu of Benin Republic. They are first and foremost Nigerians. Nigeria is a linguistically heterogeneous nation and the Ogu are part of it. The essence of this clarification of the distinct identity of the Ogu people lay in the motivation it provided for carrying out this research on the language as a distinct language and not a dialect of another language.

1.2 The linguistic situation in Nigeria

Nigeria is a linguistically heterogeneous nation with an estimated 450 languages as published in the 14th edition of *Ethnologue*. The indigenization scheme brought agitations, among other things, for a truly national language for Nigeria in order to break free from every vestiges of colonialism. After much consultation, debate and deliberation, the national assembly recommended Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo as national languages since they are major languages while all others were classified as minority languages. The socio-political strength of the speakers of the language; the number of people who speak the language as their L1 and L2 and the level of development of the language were the factors taken into cognizance in the classification of the languages as either major or minority (Babajide 2001; Igboanusi and Peter 2005). Bamgbose (1992) gives a broader classification of the languages in Nigeria into three groups. The first group is made up of the three major languages – Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo which are spoken by at least six million native speakers and enjoy patronage fairly widely outside their domains by other Nigerians whose mother tongues are different. These languages enjoy official recognition

[4] News broadcasting in Ogu in the two states is about the only regular feature that the language enjoys in old media. This contrasts with the broadcasting privileges of Yoruba for which it features not only for news but for other numerous programmes.

more than any other group. The second group consists of languages which have lesser speakers than the major languages. The number of the native speakers of each of these languages ranges from one to three million. They do not enjoy patronage outside their areas of origin but are highly esteemed in their respective states as well as enjoy some level of official recognition. Languages in this group include Fulfulde, Kanuri, Nupe, Igala, Edo, Esan, Urhobo, Ijo, Itsekiri, Ebira, Efik, Annang, among others. The third group is referred to as "Small Group", made up of languages with fewer speakers, some as few as one thousand. These languages are only recognized and useful in the communities where they are spoken. They lack both national and state recognition, as they are only significant at the local government level. Ogu and many other Nigerian languages like Ikwerre, Isoko, Etsako, Igede, Oko, Ghotuo, etc. belong to this group. Below is a map showing some of the major languages in Nigeria:

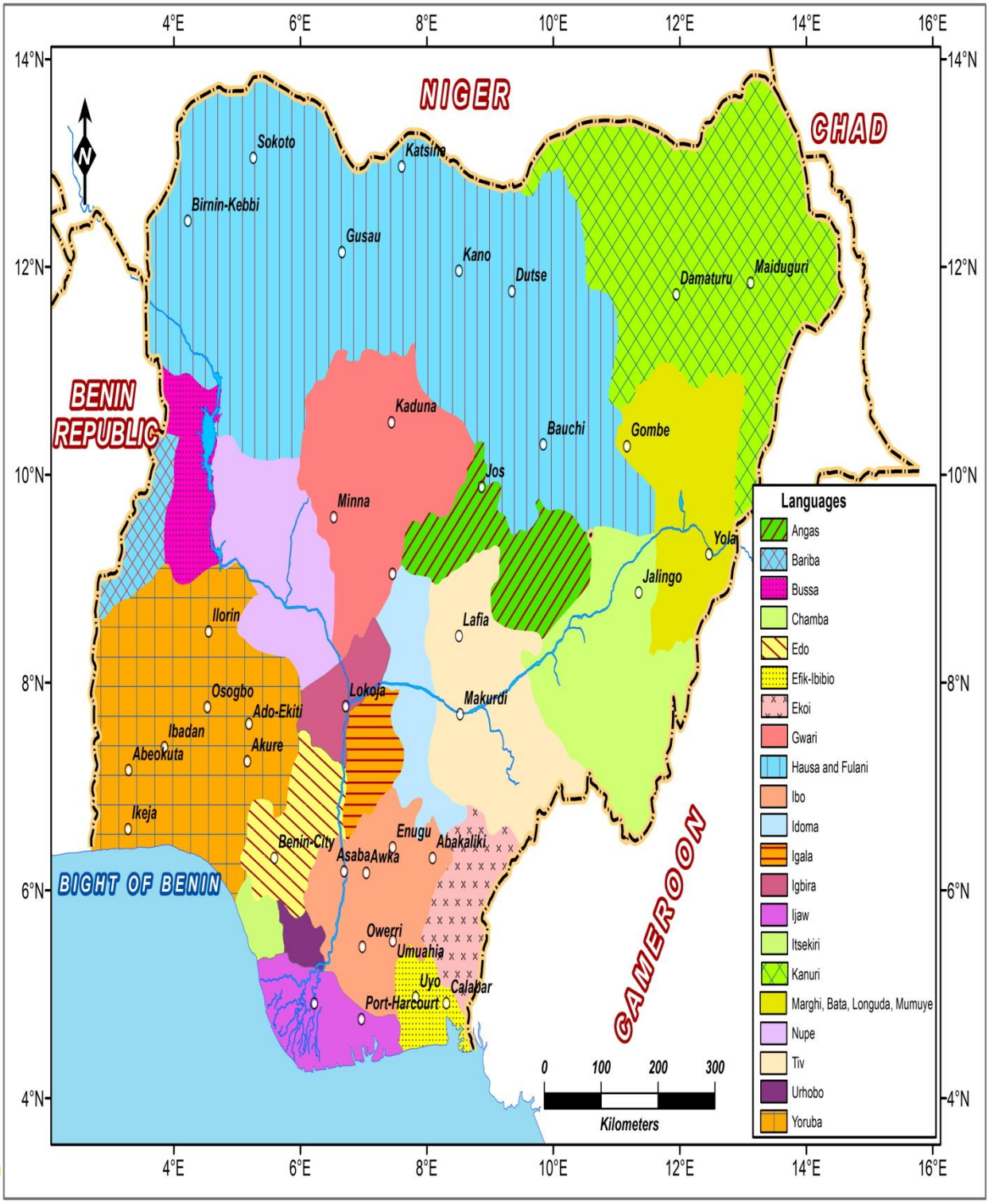

Figure 1.4. Map showing the major languages in Nigeria

Several controversies as well as linguistic rivalry have followed the classification of the languages in Nigeria as majority and minority languages (Oyetade 2003) as after English, the major languages enjoy more recognition and prestige than the minor languages for obvious political, demographic and socio-political reasons (Igboanusi and Ohia, 2001). The minor or small languages and their speakers are thus politically marginalized and economically deprived so much so that the speakers are forced to abandon their language for the more prestigious ones. For them, shifting to the major languages is a survival strategy since they feel inferior and inadequate. In the northern part of Nigeria, Hausa has almost swallowed up other languages like Gwari, Kanuri, Nupe, etc. while in the Southwest Yorùbá has overshadowed Ogu and Izon, once we recognize that Izon is spoken in a part of Ondo State. The scenario in the Southeastern part of the country is not much different from what obtains in the North and in the Southwest. The implications of language shift are multifaceted and grave for the speakers as their language is likely to go into extinction. Again, the cultural identity of the people is lost and coupled with this, is the fact that no one (especially the government) would take the language as seriously as to develop it or give it special privileges. Due to the political tension and linguistic rivalry that erupted among the speakers of the major languages and even the minority languages at the declaration of the official statuses of the major languages, the Federal Government has so far adopted a neutral or indifferent approach to the issue of language (Adegbija 1994).

The essence of the inclusion of the discussion on the linguistic situation in Nigeria in this study is to foreground the factors that have contributed to language shift which Ogu continues to suffer, especially among younger generations. The classification of Nigerian languages into Majority, "Minority" and "Small" languages has put Ogu in a precarious situation. Being in the "Small" group, it enjoys little or no official recognition and privileges. Its speakers are deprived of political and socio-economic privileges that accrue to members of the majority language communities. Due to such depravation and marginalization, majority of the people, as a matter of continued existence, are shifting to Yorùbá, the majority language in Southwestern Nigeria and one of the national languages of the country.

1.3 The linguistic situation in Southwestern Nigeria

The Southwestern part of Nigeria comprises six states: Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Lagos and Ekiti. Yorùbá is the majority language which is spoken by between 20 to 25 million speakers (Sogunro 2012:6; Igboanusi and Peter, 2005:77) within its native domain, and another 22 million second language speakers across countries (Grimes 2000:202). For instance, it is spoken in parts of Kogi, Kwara and Edo States and even across borders in The Republic of Benin, where it is a minority language, Togo, Sierra Leone, and Trinidad. Being one of the acclaimed major languages with official recognition, it has attained such a prestigious status that it has overwhelmed other minority languages in Southwestern Nigeria. For instance, the Ogu are found in both Lagos and Ogun Sates, but ironically, people erroneously conclude it is a dialect of Yorùbá. The Akoko people are also found in Ondo State, though they are already losing their language and culture to Yorùbá. Oyetade (2007) reports the endangered state of the Akoko languages, concluding that the natives are more proficient in Yorùbá than in their mother tongue, and that language use both at home and in the neighbourhood is Yorùbá. Dada (2007) also confirms that Erushu is disappearing from the mouth of its young speakers in Ondo State. The situation is not different with Ogu which has only about 1.5 million speakers in both Lagos and Ogun States. This figure is based on the 2006 census result and the Nigerian growth rate projection at 2.5%.[5]

Yorùbá and English enjoy patronage in all spheres of government and administration, politics, media, trade, education, etc. so much so that the Ogu are fast shifting to the language to the detriment of their own language. Among the youths and the middle aged, it is more prestigious to speak Yorùbá than Ogu in order to belong. Of course, there are many Ogu families living within Ogu communities and outside whose children cannot speak their language. The scorn and mockery (from the Yorùbá) that greet an Ogu when he owns up to his identity is often so demoralizing that Ogu people deny their identity and claim Yorùbá. They even go as far as taking on Yorùbá names. Some of the people who are counted as Yorùbá today are actually Ogu people who have abandoned their language and adopted Yorùbá. This again has reduced the number of Ogu speakers in Southwestern Nigeria, thereby aggravating their minority status. In the education sector, Yorùbá is the supposed medium of teaching in the first three years of primary education and is taught as

[5] The figure was provided by Dr Onipede Wusu, a demographer and sociologist who is also an Associate Professor with the Lagos State University, Ojo.

a subject from primary to university level in Southwestern Nigeria. It is even taught outside the country in many universities in Europe, North and South America and Asia. This obtains also in Ogu-speaking communities as against the national policy on education which stipulates that every child should be taught in his mother tongue in the first three years of primary education.[6] In almost every sphere of life, Yorùbá is the language used for interaction in most of the communities where the Ogu are found. Even in the domestic sphere and in informal gatherings like naming, funeral, market transactions, etc., Yorùbá is the language of interaction. It is no surprise then that many Ogu people have had to shift to Yorùbá as a strategy for survival. Needless to say, the linguistic situation in Southwestern Nigeria is inherently a contributory factor to the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Existing literature on Language Shift Language Maintenance (LSLM) globally has been limited to certain strategies that are not only considered paradigmatic but also sacrosanct. Invariably LSLM scholarship tends to be framed by Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) and other similar works as a result of which data collection and analysis on this area of sociolinguistics are more often than not both predictable and monotonous. The application of such global paradigms in the unpacking of LSLM situations tends to foreclose venturing beyond mainstream scholarship to report on otherwise non-paradigmatic strategies, which have evolved among cultures as responses relative to the peculiar conditions of language shift and maintenance. Again, existing works on Ogu as a minority language in a multilingual setting in Southwestern Nigeria tend to submit that the language is endangered or is on the verge of endangerment. The findings often affirm that the endangerment condition emanates from the shift by Ogu native speakers to Yorùbá and English and call for government and native-speaker intervention in the revitalisation of the language. Such studies, however, have not extensively investigated the systematic steps that certain influential members of the Ogu linguistic community have adopted to initiate the maintenance of their language.

This study therefore investigated a previously unacknowledged strategy in mainstream LSLM scholarship, but which certain members of the Ogu linguistic group have adopted in the maintenance of the language and as a measure towards sustaining the vitality of the language. This strategy is what this researcher has termed *cultural policing*. Basically, the

[6] See the Nigerian National Policy on Education.

term is conceptualized in this study to describe the simulation of certain non-violent, non-coercive and subtle policing strategies adopted by some Ogu people to stem the tide of the shift from the language to other languages like Yorùbá and English which are of better economic, political and social advantages. Therefore, the application of *cultural policing* is with a view to facilitating an understanding of how language maintenance is achieved through informal native-speaker-to-native-speaker agency. Again, existing literature on Ogu have focused mainly on Badagry town without a consideration of the Ogu in Ogun state. Ogu people occupy only one local government area in Lagos state while two in Ogun state. The value of this study therefore lies in the fact that it has drawn attention to the unique strategy of cultural policing as a maintenance strategy as well as a more wholesome study of the Ogu in Southwestern Nigeria.

1.5 Aim and objectives of the research

The general aim of the study is to examine the manifestations of *cultural policing* as a language maintenance strategy among the Ogu of Southwestern Nigeria. The study objectives are:

1. to draw attention to the extent of language shift involving Ogu;
2. to examine the dynamics of cultural policing among the Ogu;
3. to investigate the efficacy of *cultural policing* for Ogu language maintenance; and
4. to discuss other complementary strategies in the maintenance of Ogu.

1.6 Research questions

The research questions for the study are:

1. To what extent has Ogu experienced shift?
2. What are the dynamics of *cultural policing* as a maintenance strategy among the Ogu?
3. How has *cultural policing* proven to be a reliable maintenance strategy of Ogu?
4. What are the other complementary strategies in the maintenance of Ogu?

1.7 Significance of the study

Existing works on Ogu, which have focused mainly on Badagry, have always acknowledged that the language is undergoing shift to Yorùbá and English. Although some strategies have been suggested to maintain the language, much attention has not been given to the unique maintenance efforts that the Ogu people, on their own, have been

making. By identifying an otherwise unacknowledged maintenance strategy that the researcher has designated *cultural policing* among the Ogu of Southwestern Nigeria, it has been proven that the people have adopted, among other things, a unique strategy in the maintenance of their language. At another level, the efficacy of *cultural policing* in language maintenance among the Ogu stands to encourage the conduct of similar research among other similarly endangered minority languages around the world. Therefore, the study holds the promise of enriching the literature and theory of language maintenance on a global scale.

1.8 Scope of the research

This research discussed the concept of language shift and how it affects Ogu. It also examined the patterns of shift across different generations as well as factors that precipitated the shift. The research mainly engaged in a detailed discussion of the concept *cultural policing* as a unique maintenance strategy among the Ogu. Basically the operational modes of those involved in cultural policing, that is, the "cultural policemen and women", were explored to determine the efficacy of the strategy. Other complementary strategies in the maintenance of the language were also identified and discussed.

1.9 The limitations of the study

This research faced several challenges that created some sort of difficulty and limitations in data collection. Besides having to collect data across relevant places within Nigeria, some data were also collected from respondents in diaspora. This mostly involved online interview schedules that were often difficult for the respondents to observe. Moving from one research field to another across western Nigeria was tedious as well as expensive. Resources were constrained since there was no research grant for the research. Again some of the informants who gave the researcher tip offs as well as research assistants had to be remunerated. Needless to say, lack of research funding posed the greatest limitation to this study. It was quite difficult getting female discussants to attend focus group discussions in certain locations, since many failed to turn up as scheduled. It was later discovered that the female folk felt that such discussions in the public sphere were better left to the men folk as a matter of cultural courtesy. This accounts for why the focus group discussions – especially the one held in Badagry – had mostly male discussants. As the dialects of Ogu

spoken in the three local government areas under study are quite different, we had a little problem translating responses in different dialects. This called for the recruitment of more research assistants who spoke the exact dialects of the respondents for a more accurate translation and this also gulped time and money. However, the researcher was still able to collect detailed and quality data for the analysis in this study such that the authenticity and value of this research has not in any way been watered down or compromised by the limitations faced in carrying out the work.

1.10 Summary of chapter

This chapter has given the background to the study by providing an expose on the language of study and the people as well as their history, culture and socio-economic activities. It has also discussed the linguistic situation in Nigeria as a whole and in Southwestern Nigeria in particular where the language of study is located with a view to understanding the peculiar linguistic situation that informed the study. Also captured in this chapter are the statement of the research problem, the aim and objectives of the research, research questions, significance of the study and scope of the research as well as the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter does a review of literature on relevant concepts such as bilingualism and language contact; language shift; language endangerment; language activism; language maintenance and professional policing. By relating professional policing to the peculiar language maintenance strategy among the Ogu, the chapter affirms a similarity between the non-violent policing strategies and the Ogu strategy of language maintenance. The chapter also does a review of the two theoretical frameworks employed in the research – Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) and Giles *et al*'s Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT). GIDS is employed in measuring the extent of endangerment of Ogu by situating it within the scale, while EVT assesses the vitality of Ogu people *vis-a-vis* their personal maintenance efforts.

2.1 Language contact and bilingualism

Trudgill (1992:45) defines language contact as situations where two or more groups of people who do not have a common native language and culture are in social contact with one another or come into such contact. When this happens, sometimes, both parties may resort to a common language that is not the mother tongue of any of the parties as means of communication. The contact between the Igbo and the Sesotho in Bloemfontein, South Africa resulted in the use of English, a foreign language for communication (Ideh 2010). Situations like this are common in urban centres aand they often give way for the language of wider communication to bridge the gap. As there has been need, in recent times, for people to move from one place to another, contact situations have arisen involving persons from different linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Deumert (2006) believes that movement of people brings about language diversification through geographical dispersion which results in inter-group contact and linguistic convergence.

Language contact can force a people to learn a new language often at the detriment of their mother tongue as they often shift completely to the new language (Holmes, 2008). Intermarriages, migration, education, natural disasters, politics, religion, economy, etc. are some of the conditions that bring diverse people from different linguistic backgrounds

together thereby resulting in language contact. Languages in contact can influence one another as is the case between Yoruba and Ogu in Southwestern Nigeria. The alveolar trill /r/ now found in Ogu is a result of its phonological contact with Yoruba, the language of wider communication (Senayon, 2012).

Bilingualism, which is usually the product of language of contact, is a situation where two or more languages are used by a country (societal) or a person (individual bilingualism). Defining bilingualism satisfactorily is difficult as the definitions given by scholars have been criticised. Oyetade (1990:43) claims that the problems with these definitions is that "they do not state how well the two or more languages should be known and how much use is to be made of the languages". It does not matter whether the individual has a native-like control of both languages or an average level of proficiciency. What is important in defining bilingualism is the fact that two or more languages are spoken. Barron-Hauwaert (2003:!29) is of the opinion that "The practice of alternate use of two or more languages by the same individual proposed by Weinreich (1953) and Mackey (1968) is a more realistic viewpoint. This takes into account the fact that a bilingual uses language in the appropriate domain or situation. One language may be used exclusively at school and another at home, for example".

Grosjean (2010) asserts that more than half of the world's population uses two or more languages in everyday life. This view is also supported by Lewis et al (2013) who claim that over 7000 different languages are spoken in roughly 200 nations. It then implies that majority of the world's population are bilingual. Therefore, the interaction and contact of two or more languages usually results in the non-dominant language shifting to the dominant one. This accounts for why Gorter (2008), asserts that minority language speakers are multilingual by nature, or by necessity, from a young age.

Bilingualism can be either endoglossic or exoglossic. Endoglossic bilingualism is the learning of two indigenous languages as is the case of Ogu people who have had to learn Yoruba as the language of the immediate environment. Dada (2006) cites another case of endoglossic bilingualism among the Akoko people who have had to learn Yoruba and are even shifting to it. Exoglossic bilingualism happens when an indigenous language and a foreign one are learnt. Bilingualism is a precondition for language shift to occur as an individual who is monolingual cannot face shift. Minority language speakers are often

faced with language choice. Due to the socio-economic privileges that accrue to speakers of prestigious languages, minority language speakers voluntarily or sometimes are forced to abandon their language for the dominant one. This brings about shift and language loss. The loss of a language is tantamount to loss of culture and identity. One cannot engage language shift and maintenance discourse therefore, without first engaging language contact and bilingualism.

2.2 Language shift

Language shift occurs when speakers of a language abandon their language and begin to speak another region-wide language which is usually more prestigious and dominant. The condition presupposes that there is the existence of a bilingual or multilingual setting for language shift to take place (Garret 2005:32; Cope and Eckert 2016:1). This is so even as Romaine (2006:385) is of the view that bilingualism and multilingualism are a normal and unremarkable necessity of everyday life for the majority of the world's population. The view is also shared by Grosjean (2010) as he asserts that more than half of the world's population uses two or more languages in everyday life. However, the interaction and contact of two or more languages more often than not results in one language shifting to another or others. Several factors contribute to making a people shift from their language to a more prestigious one; some of these are socio-economic, political, cultural and ideological. (Campbell and Muntzell, 1989; Fishman, 1991; Nettle and Romaine, 2000; Coluzzi, 2015). Majority of speakers of minority languages all over the world continue to shift to languages of wider communication, thereby losing their languages, culture and ethnic identity. Lasagabaster (2008:70) intimates that "Language may become a tool of hegemony, as the adoption of a particular language may well entail absorbing the cultural beliefs and values embodied in it".

Language shift is either forced or voluntary, as the case may be. Forced shift results when a 'small' linguistic group finds itself in contact with a more prominent or more prestigious linguistic community due to political boundaries, which is the case of the Ogu people of Southwestern Nigeria. By virtue of political and colonial mapping, the Ogu find themselves a minority group in the Yorùbá-dominated region of Nigeria. Today majority of Ogu people are bilingual if not plurilingual in Ogu, Yorùbá and English. A consequence of this is the widespread shift from Ogu to Yorùbá in almost every domain – both domestic and public – of communication and interaction (Ofulue, 2013). Harsh language policies can also force a people to shift to another language that the policies favour. In

many countries of the world that were colonized by Britain, English is the language used in education, government, the media and other official matters. In such countries, the indigenous languages of the people have given way to English, even in the post-colonial era (Posel and Zeller 2016).

English plays such a prominent role in the shift of the world's languages that some linguists have termed it a 'killer language' ((Mufwene, 2014). As Juan-Garau (2014) notes, the number of speakers of English as an additional language, surpasses the native speakers at present. Though many African countries like Ghana, Nigeria, etc. have tried, after independence, to enact their own indigenous language policies entrenching one or several of their indigenous languages as national language (s), success rate has been poor such that English has remained entrenched as official and even national language in many Anglophone African countries. A language policy can only guarantee positive results for a local language if the policy is enforced (Grenoble and Whaley 2006:28). Needless to say that language policies that are positive towards minority languages only end as 'paper work' and are usually not implemented. Shift to English in such countries has, therefore, remained as consistent as it has been persistent. Schaefer and Egbokhare (1999) present the situation in rural Bendel (now Edo State) in Southern Nigeria where Emai, an Edoid language spoken by about 12 communities in the northern part of the state, is being threatened by English as teenagers and children abandon their mother tongue in preference for a European language. Batibo (2005) blames language shift from indigenous languages in Ghana to English on the domineering influence of English as the official language of Ghana.

The case is not different in the Francophone countries of Africa where the assimilation principle of the French caused extensive language shift to French as well as to French culture and mode of government. UNESCO AD HOC Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003) reveals that the Menik language, spoken by less than 4000 people in Eastern Senegal is facing extinction as its speakers have shifted to French and other majority languages like Wolof in the country. Majority of the young people in African countries prefer English to their indigenous languages as fluency in English is a social class marker. Again African languages, especially the minority ones, and culture are usually stigmatized as anti-modern and so parents discourage their wards from speaking the so called 'inferior,' 'barbaric' and' bush' languages as a matter of prestige and economic survival.

Other factors that play a crucial role in child language acquisition according, to Baker (2011), include the language that parents use with one another, the environmental influences such as neighbours and friends, extended family members, mass media and nursery school. Colonization and globalization have been very instrumental to language shift. This means that European languages alone are not the harbinger of language shift. Many majority languages of Africa and Nigeria in particular enjoy national status and official recognition such that the speakers of the minority languages in their domains are forced to shift to them. As speakers of minority languages face marginalization and social depravation as well as feelings of inferiority and interiority complex coupled with psychological inadequacies, shift, for them is forced rather than voluntary. As mentioned in chapter one, the national status enjoyed by Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo in Nigeria is the major contributory factor to the massive language shift being experienced by the speakers of other minority languages to the 'big three' in Northern, Western and Eastern Nigeria.

Voluntary shift by speakers of a less recognized language to more prestigious languages is also common in the literature on language shift. Exogamous marriages where one party is from a less prestigious linguistic group usually precipitate language shift. Ogu men whose spouses are Yorùbá , more often than not, shift to Yorùbá and teach their children same. Yorùbá becomes the language of communication between parents, between parents and children and among siblings. Again children from such homes bear Yorùbá names and claim Yorùbá-speaking communities and towns as their ancestral homes, since they find it more convenient to be identified with such a privileged and prestigious linguistic group. This is not to say, as Igboanusi and Wolf (2009) claim, that endogamous marriages would be more preferable for Ogu people to reverse language shift. For many Ogu couples, the severity with which both spouses teach their children Yorùbá is even more glaring. Driven by the same inferiority complex and quest for socio-economic integration, an average Ogu couple is neither interested in speaking their language to each other nor to their children. This exemplifies what Schell (2008) refers to as *Colingualism* –the practice by people who, even if they share the same heritage language (L1) tend to communicate via the medium of the second language (L2) instead of the heritage language. This he claims is widespread among educated African families. Both exogamy and endogamy contribute to language shift among the Ogu. In fact, exogamous marriages between Ogu men and women from other ethnic groups apart from Yorùbá have proven in some cases to be more

productive in the maintenance of the language. When Ogu men marry women from other ethnic groups in Nigeria, they often make for the marginalization of the language by insisting on the speaking of Ogu in their homes. The spouses too, in their bid to be fully integrated into their new families, are often eager and willing to learn the language as against their Yorùbá counterparts, who often see it as condescending and degrading to learn or speak a less prestigious language than theirs. However, exogamous marriages involving Ogu men and women from other linguistic groups in Nigeria aside Yorùbá are not as common. Since the Yorùbá are the closest people to the Ogu by virtue of geographical mapping, it is natural therefore that they intermarry. So there are many homes in Southwestern Nigeria where either the husband or the wife is Ogu but in either ways, the shift is usually one way: from Ogu to Yorùbá.

2.2.1 Ogu and experience of language shift

The scholarship of language shift presupposes the existence of a bilingual or a multilingual setting (Cope and Eckert 2016). Grosjean (2010) asserts that more than half of the world's population uses two or more languages in everyday life. This view is also supported by Lewis et al (2013) who claim that over 7000 different languages are spoken in roughly 200 nations. It then implies that majority of the world's population uses two or more languages in everyday life. Therefore, the interaction and contact of two or more languages usually results in the non-dominant language shifting to the dominant one. This accounts for why Gorter (2008), asserts that minority language speakers are multilingual by nature, or by necessity, from a young age. In the case of Ogu, the setting fits into both categories, depending on which area is given prominence in analysis at every point in time. This is because Ogu communities are basically frontier communities which are mostly bounded by Yorùbá communities. Considered from this angle, there is a sense in which Ogu communities in Southwestern Nigeria can be appropriately described as bilingual in setting. Put differently, in maintaining their status as frontier communities, the language of Ogu people is in constant contact with Yorùbá, which is a privileged language in the Nigerian linguistic equation. If homogeneity is crucial to language maintenance (Brown 2008:1), in the instance of Ogu the frontier nature of its communities already poses a challenge. In not being able to maintain linguistic homogeneity on account of the spatial contiguity with Yorùbá , a case of bilingualism and shift is established. Again, Ogu people in their traditional domains prefer to adopt the scattered pattern of settlement whereby one

travels kilometers apart between two compounds of two-three houses each. Both in historical and cotemporaneous terms, this is a traditional practice to which the Ogu still hold tenaciously.

As a result of the Ogu not being able to form close knit communities that would aid and facilitate the use of their language in interpersonal relationships, they are disadvantaged compared to the Yorùbá, who have a reputation for settling together and founding villages that develop into towns and cities thus spreading their language. Besides, the privileging of Yorùbá in official terms as the language of education, commerce and politics also contribute in no small measure to the acceleration of the pattern of shift from Ogu to Yorùbá. This linguistic situation is thus best explicated in theoretical terms as justifying Fishman's notion of bilingualism and diglossia "whereby one language serves public, formal functions and another is restricted to private, informal domains" (Lynch 2011:15). Yorùbá serves as the language through which Ogu people have to daily conduct business and do a whole lot of other things. The public functions that Yorùbá serves thus automatically reduce Ogu to the language of private and informal domains. The potential danger in this for Ogu goes without saying, seeing that a language that does not enjoy the privilege of public functions is depleted in relevance and faces attrition.

Therefore, seeing how social mobility in Southwestern Nigeria is tied to an exhibition of a certain measure of proficiency in Yorùbá, Ogu as a minority language continues to experience shift to Yorùbá in the bilingual setting. To that extent, for the Ogu, proficiency in Yorùbá is analogous to the attainment of a form of modernity. Previous sociolinguistic and other forms of studies on Ogu acknowledge the fact of the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá in particular. Notable among such is the scholarship of Capo which since 1979 continues to explore various aspects of the language, especially in the area of phonology. While for instance discussing the variety of the language by way of determining its specific typology within the Greenberg family tree, he does not fail to stress the difficulty that arises from such exercise in view of the evidence of continual shift in the language to Yorùbá and English. Capo (1990) further explores the various shift patterns, even when his concern in the article is how to achieve some measure of standard orthography for the language. If considered an effort in concretizing the effectiveness of a suggested strategy, the work dwells more significantly on demonstrating how Ogu people are linguistically overwhelmed by Yorùbá and English orthographies and for which it is often difficult to determine how best to embark on the exercise of standardization.

Existing works on Ogu have always touched on the issue of standardization. The question of standardization cannot however be treated in isolation, as once divested of the spoken context that instigates suggestions of orthography, it becomes clear that the difficulty hinted in the anticipation of a standard orthography is a direct consequence of the shift in Ogu. This view is also shared by Apari (2014). The shift first manifests in form of impulsive code switching from Ogu to Yorùbá and in some cases, to English. The situation then speaks to Soremekun's (1986:7) findings when he reports about Ogu students in certain parts of Ogun State in Southwestern Nigeria who claim to be more fluent in Yorùbá than they do in Ogu, their mother tongue and supposed L1. Capo (1990) expatiates more on this when he explicates that such shift which manifests in naming goes to show how Ogu people tend to seek socio-political and economic integration into the Nigerian milieu which privileges Yorùbá over the other languages in Southwestern Nigeria. This view is also supported by Avognon (1994), who examined the degree of bilingualism of Ogu speakers of Badagry in twenty-one domains. Again Johnson (1994) reveals that language choice in Badagry is influenced by the multilingual nature of the border town. According to him, Ogu, Yorùbá , English and French are used depending on the speaker and the context of speech. Akere (2002) reveals that Yorùbá and Ogu have experienced some linguistic assimilation as a result of the contact between the two languages and their speakers in Badagry. One can extend the discussion on shift from Ogu further by adopting the nominal illustration of Durodola (2004) who cites the shift in terms of Ogu people answering Yorùbá names for socio-political benefits.

Adeniyi and Bello (2008) investigated language use in Agbalata market in Badagry and report that several languages –Yorùba, Ogu, Nigerian Pidgin, Igbo, Standard English and French – are used for bargaining depending on the parties involved. They also note that Ogu is not the major means of communication as well as decry the fact that young Ogu people do not have a good command of the language. Tadopede (2010) examined language choice and use among Ogu bilingual children from educated homes in Badagry and decries the declining use of Ogu resulting from lack of intergenerational transmission. In the same vein Ofulue (2013) carried out a cross-border study between language use in Badagry and Porto Novo and reveals that 'Gungbe', though is experiencing wide-spread shift, still enjoys some level of loyalty in the domestic front in both communities. Onadipe-Shalom (2013) however examined patterns of language use among the 'Egun' in

Badagry town in several formal and informal domains, school, work place, religious institution, market and home. She affirms that the language is undergoing shift as the people's attitude is more positive towards Yorùbá and English. Additionally she suggests strategies for maintaining the language which she feels lies in the hands of government and the native speakers. However she did not pay much attention to some informal and unconventional strategies that some elite members of the Ogu linguistic community are already making towards the maintenance of the language. These efforts, which resonate with what obtains in professional policing, is what this study has termed cultural policing. Herein lies the point of departure of this work from other studies on Ogu. Apari (2014) is preoccupied with issues of orthography which he explains will be a step towards Ogu language engineering.

Religion is another major factor that contributed to the shift to Yorùbá that greeted the Ogu people with the advent of colonialism and Christian missionary activities in Southwestern Nigeria. Before the advent of Christianity, Ogu people mostly worshipped their traditional deities as well as engage in 'Yoho', which is ancestor worship (Asiwaju 1979). However, with the activities of Christian missionaries many Ogu people bought into the new faith but not without its implications for language maintenance. The Christian gospel was first preached in Nigeria under the famous Agia tree in Badagry by Reverend Birch Freeman on September 24, 1842 (Adedayo 2010). The Christian missionaries, in their bid to spread the gospel, learnt the indigenous languages of the people and even went as far as writing Christian materials and literature in such languages. Several minority languages in the country were written for the first time with orthographies and scripts. In Ogu-speaking communities, as far back as the 19th centuries, Ogu was the indigenous language used in preaching the gospel. However, the turn of the 20th century witnessed a reversal of roles between Ogu and Yorùbá as an acceptance of the Christian faith meant shifting to Yorùbá since several converts were made to feel that Yorùbá was the language of God and that any other language was pagan. Christianity then became synonymous with being able to speak and read Yorùbá as the Christian texts were mainly written in that language. That period thus witnessed widespread shift from Ogu to Yorùbá as the Ogu people embraced the Christian faith in their numbers.

The period also witnessed the dropping of Ogu names by Ogu people for Christian or English names as well as the *Yorùbaization* of Ogu names. This of course had dire

implications for language maintenance since, in the traditional African setting, names are indicators/purveyors of ethnic identity. The translation of the English bible to Yorùbá by Bishop Samuel Ajai Crowther – which first appeared in print in the mid 1880s – in Badagry, an Ogu-speaking community, goes to show how missionary activities neglected as well as marginalized Ogu. According to Hair (1967:13) in Adedayo (2010), Crowther published, between 1850 and 1856, one book of the old or New Testament annually. Again this smacks of certain laissez-faire response to social dynamics on the part of Ogu people as they were not bothered that Crowther did not facilitate the translation of the bible into their language.

This is not to say, however, that there is not an Ogu version of the Bible, even if it is a Benin Republic translation with French spellings and orthography which is a bit difficult for Anglophone Nigerian readers. Nevertheless, the version is intelligible to Ogu speakers in Nigeria, who are in knowledge of the existence of this bible called *Biblu Wiwe* (*Holy Bible*) but hardly patronize it. Few of those who have it keep it as a cultural specimen used occasionally to excite, if not mystify younger ones on account of its uncommon impeccability and archaism rather than for worship. In many Ogu-speaking communities to date, it is not uncommon to find about 95% of church services conducted in Yorùbá. From the opening prayer to the sermon, the pastors, who are often native speakers of Ogu, minister in Yorùbá while an interpreter interprets in English. Even the worship songs, hymns and the choir ministration are usually 90% Yorùbá. Only about 5 % of the songs are in Ogu while the remaining 5% are in English and other Nigerian languages.

2.3 Language endangerment

Language endangerment is the immediate consequence of unmitigated language shift, a condition that eventuates in language attrition. As people from minority language groups, especially children and young adults, shift from their language to a language of wider use, the minority language loses its speakers gradually until only a few speakers are left. With their death, the language completely disappears. A language is said to be endangered when it is at the stage where there are only a few speakers left. UNESCO 2003 predicts that approximately 90% of the world's languages are in danger of disappearing, and according to Krauss (1992), half of the world's languages may disappear in the 21st century. This situation has become so worrisome that scholarship on language endangerment remains

one of the prominent sociolinguistic issues of focus in Nigeria and the world at large. The reasons why languages get endangered are not far-fetched. The same socio-economic, political and cultural factors that engineer language shift discussed above are what eventually lead to language endangerment and death. Grenoble and Whaley (2006: 17) present four types of language loss that eventually endanger a language:

Sudden attrition: Sudden loss of speakers of a language following from natural disasters, pandemics, war, etc.

Radical attrition: Such is caused by political circumstances

Gradual attrition: Slow but sure loss from language shift

Bottom-to-top attrition: Also called the Latinate Pattern: when a language use is reduced to religious and ritual purposes, having disappeared from homes

From the above, it is obvious that language endangerment is a gradual process but unfortunately speakers of minority languages usually are not aware that their languages are endangered until it is too late. An endangered language however may still be saved by rigorous revitalization efforts. Again Grenoble and Whaley (2006:18) present a six-way scheme to categorize languages according to their stages and levels of endangerment:

Safe: A language is considered safe if it is used intergenerationally by a large number of native speakers and is privileged in formal and informal use in various spheres.

At risk: A language is at risk when it is used and transmitted intergenerationally but with a very small number of speakers compared to other languages within the same region.

Disappearing: A language is disappearing when its speakers betray a tendency towards shifting to another language spoken within the same community.

Moribund: A moribund language lacks intergenerational transmission to children.

Nearly extinct: A nearly extinct language is left with only a handful of speakers in their old age.

Extinct: An extinct language is bereft of speakers.

Wurm (2003:16) does not differ in his own categorization of endangered languages; except that he uses slightly different terminologies. For him, there are five stages that languages go through before endangerment and then death:

a. Potentially endangered – children prefer the dominant language and learn the obsolescing language imperfectly
b. Endangered – youngest speakers are young adults and no/few child speakers
c. Seriously endangered – youngest speakers are middle-aged or past middle age
d. Terminally endangered/moribund – only a few elderly speakers left
e. Dead – no speaker left at all

Language endangerment, as seen from the three categorizations above, is a gradual process which may go unnoticed by the native speakers of minority languages until perhaps when it is too late for revitalization efforts to succeed. The Khoisan peoples of South Africa disappeared in just 300 years for reasons varying from disease to genocidal persecution to attitudes of intolerance and disdain. Though they fiercely resisted the onslaught, survival ultimately involved abandoning their cultural and linguistic identity thereby switching to Afrikaans and other local languages like Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, Swati, Xhosa, etc. (Childs 2003:2). Batibo (2005) reports the state of the languages in Tanzania. According to him, due to the predominance of Kiswahili and other dominant languages, most of the small languages among the more than 120 ethnic languages in the country are highly threatened, while at least five are presumed extinct. He also presents the situation in Ghana and Democratic Republic of Congo. Out of the 76 languages in Ghana, 8 are highly endangered while Boro is extinct. This is due to the dominating influence of English as the official language and other dominant languages like Asante, Twi, Fante, Akwapem, Ewe, Ga-Adangme and Dagbane. In Democratic Republic of Congo, there are 209 languages with French as the official language. The dominant languages are Kikongo in the West, Lingala in the Northwest, Luba-Katanga in the Southeast and Kiswahili in the East.

These languages, according to Batibo, are widely used as second languages or linguae francae in their respective areas. However about 15 of the languages are highly endangered or nearly extinct. Africa, which is the home of one fourth of the worlds languages, is the worst hit by language endangerment as she continues to lose her languages, especially the small ones, to languages of wider coverage although Grenoble and Whaley (2006) claim that a language may be "Safe" in one locality but endangered or nearly extinct in another. This means that language endangerment is often in stages and language shift, which leads to endangerment, may not happen in different regions of a cultural space at the same time, pace and frequency. Oyetade (2007) decries the

endangered state of the Akoko language in Ondo State. His study reveals that the natives are more proficient in Yorùbá than in their mother tongues, and that language use both at home and in the neighbourhood is Yorùbá. The situation is not different from what obtains in Northern Nigeria where Hausa has almost overwhelmed other minority languages like Ganawuri in Plateau State (Jubril 1990:116). Oyetade, (1990) reveals that Nupe is losing majority of its speakers in Kwara State. Batibo (2005:80) again notes that out of the estimated 485 languages in Nigeria, 70 are highly endangered while 45 are extinct or nearly extinct. This goes a long way to show that if reversal efforts are not put in place to maintain the minority languages of the world, extinction looms. In places like Africa, language rights (and human rights) have been ignored with the resultant disappearance of languages, cultures and even the people themselves (Sommer, 1992 and Brenzinger, 1998 in Childs 2003:2).

Language endangerment or loss is an embarrassment for linguists (Mufwene 2014) and indeed the world. In reaction to this, several committees have been set up to work out modalities to preserve endangered languages. Among these are "the Foundation for Endangered Languages at the University of Bristol, UK, and the International Clearing House for Endangered Languages at the University of Tokyo. UNESCO is involved in the preparation of an Atlas of the World's languages that are in danger of disappearing. Coupled with this are non-profit organizations that help to fund research into endangered languages with a view to saving them. Some of them are the Endangered Languages Fund (New Haven) and Terralingua Partnerships for Linguistic and Biological Diversity (Hancock, Michigan). Ligbet Rausing Charitable Fund has given a large grant to the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) to set up an Academic Project on Endangered Languages" (Newman 2003:2). "At the 15th International Congress of Linguists held in August 1992 at Laval University, Quebec, the Comite' Permanent International de Linguists (CIPL) put language endangerment on top of the agenda" (Janse 2003: xiv). "With financial support from UNESCO, CIPL is now actively involved in the organization and coordination of the survey and study of some seriously endangered languages of the world. This includes fieldwork, collecting and recording appropriate language materials and documentation, linguistic research and other activities. Important publications include the *UNESCO Red Book of Endangered languages"* (Wurm 2001 in Janse 2003: xiv).

2.4 Previous works on language maintenance

Language maintenance arises when a linguistic group chooses to continue to speak its language in the face of all odds, be it pressure from a more prestigious language or more. A language is maintained when its speakers use it in every domain and pass it on to their children; that is, intergenerational transfer. Lewis et al (2014) define language maintenance as the effort to arrest and reverse the process of shift. According to them when language shift occurs, one potential response is to engage in language maintenance as a language that is facing shift or endangerment needs to be maintained in order to prevent its eventual extinction. Language endangerment hardly arises when a language is being maintained by its speakers. According to Holmes (1992:64), '… nothing benefits a country more than to treasure the languages and cultures of its various peoples because in doing so, it fosters intergroup understanding and realizes greater dividends in the form of originality, creativity and versatility'. However, it has not always been the case that maintenance of minority languages that were endangered was considered important by linguists and other stake holders in the scholarship of language maintenance. Lewis (2014: 673) claims that:

> Until relatively recently, the idea of responding to language shift by engaging in language maintenance would not have been given much serious consideration. During the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century, the accepted view was that the decline of weak, marginal languages should be welcomed and even encouraged. This view stemmed from the fact that the languages tended to be seen as primitive creations

Again he asserts thus:

> However, during the second half of the twentieth century, as many minority groups began to mobilise politically, this logic was challenged and the welfare of languages prone to shift came, increasingly, to be recognised as a subject that could not simply be dismissed (ibid.).

Speakers of minority languages owe it a point of duty to maintain their languages no matter their statuses in their countries. Several linguists have suggested various ways by which languages can be maintained. Fishman (1991, 2001), in his renowned Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), emphasizes the importance of intergenerational transfer of languages to children to sustain the continued existence of the language as well as language acquisition and use. For him, fostering the specific language's acquisition and use is often viewed as fostering one's own personal (in addition to the culture's) triumph over death and obliteration through living on in one's own children and grandchildren. Clyne (2003:22) notes that once the use of a language diminishes significantly in the

home, intergenerational transmission, a key factor of language maintenance, is compromised. The role of personal family efforts cannot be overemphasized in language maintenance especially in the case of minority languages that are faced with pressures from more prestigious majority languages (Schaefer and Egbokhare, 1999; Piller, 2001; Onadipe-Shalom, 2013, Juan-Garau, 2014, Senayon 2016a). Also within the family setting, it is advised that minority language maintenance is more effective where there are no siblings as the child will have no siblings to converse with in whatever the dominant language is. This view is contested however, by Smith-Christmas (2014) as he stresses the role of extended family members in language maintenance.

Linguists have also suggested that children from minority language communities be allowed to live with their grandparents – who should be native speakers of the language, especially grandmothers, and interact with them regularly as part of strategies to maintain the language (Ishizawa 2004). It is also suggested that speakers of minority languages, as a way of maintaining their language, should live together in close-knit communities for easy interaction and contact. This is because living far apart from one another is a contributory factor to language shift and loss as is the case of Tamil speakers in Melbourne (Holmes I992:64). Holmes cites the example of Chinese people who live in China Town areas of big cities in America and the fact that they are able to maintain their mother tongue because they live together and interact with one another, thereby maintaining their language. Again frequency and degree of contact with the homeland, especially for migrants, constitutes another factor in language maintenance as regular visits home assists in acquiring proficiency in the home language (McCabe 2016). For instance, Greek migrants see a trip back to Greece as a high priority for themselves and their children. Most Greek New Zealanders regard a trip back to Greece as essential at some point in their lives, and many Greek girls take the trip with the express aim of securing good Greek husbands (Holmes 1992:65).

Advocates of minority language maintenance are of the view that a combined use of both majority and minority languages in teaching in elementary and secondary schools will help boost the learning of these languages. However, Fishman (2001:417) warns that a ‘narrow education framework within which language maintenance retrieval and revival activities have been grounded is doomed to failure’. Again he warns that school acquisition of a language is not enough to guarantee recovery.

Still on education as a maintenance strategy, Potowski (2004) calls for dual immersion programmes for students in such a way that the students be immersed in the minority language for large portions of the school day with the expectation that they will become equally proficient in their first language (L1) and in their second language (L2). In as much as this will encourage students in maintaining minority languages, it is not certain that success rate will be high as before long, the students may as a matter of necessity shift to the language of wider education. Again it is not stated at what stage in the child's education that he should be introduced in the dual immersion programme. Research has proven that children acquire languages better and easier at their tender ages. The bottom line is for minority language speakers to develop a positive attitude to their language and teach their children to speak it with pride. If such children grow up speaking their language, it is less likely that they would lose it when they go to school. After all, they will return home after school hours and continue speaking the language at home, given that the native language is the language of communication at home. In support of this view, Carli et al (2003:871) suggest that as a strategy for maintaining their language, members of minority-language groups should show pride in their 'mother tongue'. They also call for 'the ecology of language metaphor' which implies a multilingual language policy, which is able to promote plurilingualism and build on language evolution and language environment in order to create inter – and intra-linguistic variety.

Wurm (1999) is of the view that the possibility of stable bilingualism of speakers of non-dominant languages is a solution allowing the non-dominant languages to continue to exist and safeguard their speakers' human rights to their own languages thereby helping them to maintain their feeling of ethnic pride and identity. Wurm is also of the view that positive government language policies can go a long way in maintaining dying languages. He cites the example of some Aboriginal languages in Australia that had been endangered as a result of harsh government policies. Speakers of these languages are even referred to as 'the lost generation'. In the 1970s, government policies became positive towards the Aborigines and their languages. This brought about a strong re-awakening of a feeling of Aboriginal ethnic identity and pride, with their renewed interest in their languages and their maintenance. The role of positive language policies towards minority language maintenance cannot be over-emphasized; however, it is in the hands of the speakers of a threatened language to maintain it. Blench (in Batibo 2005:107) cites two Chadic

languages, Lopa and Laru of Lake Kainji which have managed to maintain themselves despite the small number of speakers. Needless to say, the argument that languages with small number of speakers are less likely to be maintained by their speakers is not absolute (See Heine 2014). Even when some countries – like Nigeria, Namibia, and Senegal have enacted supportive language policies that promote minority languages, such policies are usually not implemented as they exist on paper only. In reality the languages concerned are denied the respect, attention and value that they need. Consequent upon this is the need for speakers of minority languages to develop a positive attitude towards their language, reawaken their ethnic pride and speak their language with pride, no matter how small their numerical strength is. In the light of the above, Batibo (2005:105) summarizes Leopold Auberger's 'Proficiency resistance model' thus:

- a strict diglossic use of the minority and dominant language;
- a written mode of the minority language to enhance the oral mode;
- an emotional attachment to the minority language, resulting in sensitivity to correctness and purity in its use;
- a successful process of learning the minority language with a sustainable level of proficiency;
- a process of reinforcement of the community by the settling of other speakers of the language from the main source of origin.

Again Batibo (2005:106) cites Blench's guidelines on language maintenance as follows:

- absence of an adjacent culturally dominant group;
- endogamous marriage practices;
- maintenance of traditional religion/cultural pride;
- existence of an autography;
- government oppression and neglect;
- remoteness;
- access to media;
- demographic expansion.

All the above are strategies in the literature for maintaining minority languages in the face of serious threats from prestigious languages.

2.4.1 Language maintenance and the case of Ogu

While various attempts have been made at engaging issues around language shift and strategies for language maintenance with respect to Ogu in particular, available literature still leaves more room for further explorations. For instance, as has been said so far, scholars, who have carried out studies on Ogu have affirmed the widespread shift that the language is undergoing in several domains. The emerging subtext is that previous literature on Ogu, tends to merely give prominence to the extent of the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá and English. Such scholarship also establishes the multilingual setting of Ogu people as the basis for the amenability of the language to shift. Even when some studies have suggested reversal strategies in the maintenance of the language much attention has not been paid to efforts that some Ogu people informally, consciously and unconsciously, have been making towards the maintenance of their language. Against this backdrop, this research sought to gather and analyze data in validation of the threatened status of the language, examine maintenance strategies that are in the literature *vis-a-vis* Ogu and draw attention to a new maintenance strategy which is practised by the Ogu and its implications for global language maintenance. While keeping in mind some of the various strategies already articulated by scholars on the subject, the value of this research lies in the specific attention it has paid to the strategic place of the unique maintenance strategy that is working for Ogu which the researcher has termed *Cultural Policing*. The only maintenance strategy in the literature which is close to cultural policing is language activism; but it is not quite like *cultural policing* as the *modus operandi* of both strategies are uniquely different in their own separate ways. To conceptualize *cultural policing*, it is my intention to consider first the normative assumptions of language activism, in order to show how they depart from those of *cultural policing*.

2.5 Language activism

Language activism involves an organized and meticulous agitation and canvassing for the recognition and use of minority languages. Sinfree (2012) argues that some 'small' minority languages flourish and others fail unless speakers of these languages articulate their aspirations and needs with respect to the survival of their language. Language activists, who are also called language militants, are usually at the forefront of the agitation against the marginalization and subordination of minority languages. Part of the stance of language activists is for minority languages to be used in education. As

Canagarajah (in Leeman et al 2011) puts it, one key challenge of language learning is for learners to retain their sense of self while also appropriating new discourses and subjectivities. Again Leeman (2011) asserts that the failure of elementary and secondary schools to recognize or value the languages that learners bring to the classroom can contribute to the depletion of student's psychological well being as well as to language loss. In this regard, language activists advocate that minority languages be given a place in the educational sector mostly as a medium of instruction rather than just a subject in the curriculum. It is also suggested that as a way of resisting the subordination of the minority language in school, students should be immersed in after-school classes in the language.

Agitations for the use of minority languages in the media form another platform for the activities of language activists as the media play a major role in the sensitization of the public on issues that are crucial to the effective working of society. Part of the reasons that majority languages gain ground over and above their minority counterparts are the vast coverage given them in the media. In a survey carried out by Zabaleta et al (2010), the activities of journalists from ten European minority-language communities was examined. The study revealed that journalists, apart from their professional functions, can be language activists, carrying out pro-language functions. Majority of them do adhere to the sound values, standards and practices of professional journalists but consider that they also have an additional journalistic role before the community in terms of nourishment and defence of their language. They therefore affirm a link between their profession of journalism and language empowerment (ibid.). In the words of Eisenlohr (2004), language activists and linguists have begun using new technology in projects aimed at revitalizing the practice of lesser used languages.

Language activism usually involves group work with people coming together in associations and organizations to champion the cause of their language. Such groups are recognized by the government as most of their agitations are aimed at the government to be more positively disposed towards their language. They advocate the use of the minority language in targeted public spheres like educational institutions, the media, religion, government, etc. Some of their agitations yield positive results as well as dividends where their agitations are well articulated and strategic. Kriel (2010) discusses the activities of political activists who formed an association in South Africa that fought for the recognition and use of Afrikaans. The group, which called itself Genootskap Regte

Afrikaanders (GRA), among other things, wrote a dictionary of Afrikaans as well as other elementary grammar books in a bid to standardize the language. The GRA fought against the threat posed by Anglicisation to Afrikaaner identity and Afrikaaner interests. The organization agitated for the recognition of Afrikaans as a language of South Africa and so be used in schools, churches, parliament, everywhere, etc. Leerssen (2006:571) in Kriel (2010) sees the GRA's demand that 'our' language replaces 'theirs' in the public institutions as a desire on the part of the GRA to 'suffuse' the public sphere with a sense of national identity.

Although language activism goes a long way in language maintenance efforts, the focus of language activists is on suppressing the threatening language rather than on rekindling the interest of the speakers of the language in their language. They therefore employ a rather firm and forceful undertone to their agitations, especially to alter governmental language policies that work against the interest of their language and constitute a threat to their group identity. Focus is usually more on the usage of the threatened language in the public domain rather than on the domestic front. In a sense, that is why language activism still has a long way to go if speakers of a minority language must use their language. Efforts must thus be channelled towards reawakening the interest of minority language speakers in speaking their language at the home front most especially in the area of intergenerational transfer of the language. Communities are, first and foremost, made up of families and if the different individuals that make up the family speak the language, then of course the language is maintained in the community. The ultimate goal of every agitation for reversing language shift and language maintenance is for speakers of minority languages to speak their language and this is best achieved by a positive attitude of the speakers towards the language, recognizing and accepting it as their means of ethnic and cultural identity.

2.5.1 Language activism and Ogu language maintenance

The Ogu of Southwestern Nigeria have not really witnessed forceful and aggressive language activism. Apart from the works that make a case for the endangered status of the language and call for revitalisation efforts, very few people have taken it upon themselves to agitate for the recognition of the language officially. In the television and radio stations in the two states in Nigeria where Ogu is spoken, only one or two slots are devoted to Ogu

and that is mainly the news translation which is usually between three and five minutes whereas Yorùbá takes the lion's share of slots and then English. Rather than advocating against the non recognition of the language and the people, the Ogu seem to have accepted their fate and found some sort of fulfilment in shifting to Yorùbá. However, in Badagry in Lagos State, some groups have instituted the Badagry Carnival. It is aimed at promoting the cultural heritage of the people. Celebrated yearly, the carnival brings together prominent Ogu sons and daughters from all walks of life. It also serves as a forum for the people to rub minds on the way forward for their people, especially their status in a predominantly domineering Yorùbá political terrain which concedes little or no recognition for the Ogu. Against this backdrop, some Ogu sons and daughters, who by virtue of higher education and enlightenment, have come to realize the value of linguistic and cultural identity, now use the carnival as a forum to promote their language, and encourage young people to take pride in speaking it. Parents are also encouraged not to base the teaching of their children Ogu on envisaged economic benefits. This speaks to what Tuominen (1999) calls utility–maximization, where parents count on the benefits that accrue from speaking the majority language to raise their children in it especially if their own heritage language has little or no status. Ogu music and cultural troupes perform, displaying the rich cultural heritage of the people. This carnival has made its mark as a platform for language activism of some sorts.

In Ere of Ado-Odo/Ota LGA in Ogun State, two groups are worthy of mention which have also been in the vanguard of language activism among Ogu people: Ogu Concern Forum and Toniyon Educational Movement. The first group is concerned, among other things, with an enlightenment campaign towards the realization of Ogu cultural renaissance. In view of this, the group does not allow deliberations in any other language apart from Ogu. English could be allowed occasionally but Yorùbá is absolutely forbidden. This is because, for them, the shift from Ogu to other languages is most common with Yorùbá. The group also summons meetings with all the Ogu in Ado-Odo/Ota LGA from time to time, educating them on the need to be proud ambassadors of Ogu culture by speaking the language with pride and teaching their children too. Made up of Ogu elite, their status is further strengthened by the credibility of their group and their various developmental activities for which the community responds positively in the area of cultural and linguistic renaissance. Though founded in Ado-Odo/Ota LGA, the influence of this group is felt in

the other LGAs covered in this research as the group establishes a bonding with other Ogu communities in Ipokia and Yewa South Local Government Areas. Toniyon Educational Movement, though primarily concerned with educational development, also gives priority to cultural renaissance by encouraging pupils and students to grow up as proud speakers of Ogu. Again here is a group that draws followership and participation from all the other LGAs where Ogu is spoken in the state. They also assist their young ones to acquire formal education by giving them scholarships and bursaries as well as supply writing materials.

The third group is a virtual group that utilizes the innovation of information technology on the social media of Face book called *Gugbe, Let's Promote our Language.* The activities of this group again give cogency to Sallabank's (2010:19) advocacy for the incorporation of the cyberspace in giving visibility to minority languages. This on-line group has thousands of members, who, on a daily basis, respond to issues as posted by members. Such issues range from naming to cultural assertion and marginalization of the ethnic group within the Nigerian nation. A telling hallmark of this group is its campaign for the promotion of Ogu both nationally and internationally. While *Gugbe, Let's Promote our Language* has been rested for some time on Facebook, it has now been succeeded by *Online Forum for Ogu People* with the same mandate. In respect of this, members participate from all over the world and they are united by one goal: the projection of Ogu identity through a decisive effort in keeping the language alive. While language activism emphasizes state agency, cultural policing stresses native-speaker to native-speaker agency.

2.6 Literature related to professional policing

Villejoubert et al (2006) used the term 'Hindsight bias' in professional policing to describe the "I knew it all along" feeling that people often experience when certain events happen. Such people would say that they had always known that such incidents would happen or not occur. Such feelings have been claimed to bring about a bias in their interpretation and explanation of events. Quoting Fischolf (1975), Villejoubert et al assert that hindsight bias "refers to our tendency to believe the past was more predictable than the future". The police have found the hindsight bias very effective in detecting criminals and other criminal tendencies even before they happen.

Another key strategy often employed by the police in unravelling criminal cases is investigative interviewing. The concept of investigative interviewing as engaged in

professional policing came up as an alternative to interrogation which was always associated with the use of force and brutality (Williamson 2006). This claim is reiterated by Schollum (2005) who confirmed that in England's and Wale's police training material, the term "interrogation" has been abandoned in favour of "investigative interviewing". Professional police employ this strategy as a fact-finding way of gathering information when investigating crime. Often it is time consuming and demands a lot of patience and tact. It may involve asking the suspects questions in a subtle way or interviewing informants, who may supply clues to unravel the case. Acting on tip-off sometimes helps the investigator with invaluable information.

Ratcliffe (2008:54) explains that intelligence-led policing is a situation in professional policing where police get information from members of the public who are also referred to as outside agencies. Such informants help in providing vital links that assist the police to crack cases, especially difficult ones. This explains why the strategy is otherwise referred to as *partnership strategy*. Some cases may never be unravelled if there is no assistance from members of the public who are not members of the police force. Sometimes intelligence-led policing can help in crime prevention as the police get to know beforehand that criminal activities are in the offing before they are even carried out. Such information is usually referred to as tip-off. The police is said to be acting on tip-off when they respond to such information from members of the public who believe that the task of maintaining law and order should not be left in the hands of the police alone.

Confession is a statement that a person makes, admitting that they are guilty of a crime. It could also be a statement admitting something that you are ashamed of or embarrassed about. Kassin and Gudjonsson (2004:1) argue that confession has played a prominent role in religion, in psychotherapy, and in criminal law. In professional policing, however, confession is often extracted by coercion or compulsion through the pressure of torture or its psychological equivalent which makes such statements unreliable and sometimes unacceptable. Kassin and Gudjonsson (2004:5) affirm this when they assert that "Confession is typically excluded if it was elicited by physical force; deprivation of food, sleep or other biological needs, threats of punishment or harm, etc." In response to this, Brooks (2005) advises that acceptable confessions have to be made voluntarily. It is pertinent here to mention that it is in order to avoid forced confessions that in professional policing, interrogators are compelled to read out *Miranda warning* to their suspects.[7]

[7] *Miranda warning* is the warning the police issue to suspects upon arrest, telling them of their right to remain silent until the period of formal interrogation.

Criminals sometimes give in to self confession as a result of a feeling of shame and guilt. Blum (2008) explains that shame is a painful emotion resulting from an awareness of inadequacy, which is associated with dishonour. He again asserts that "Shame per se is not a destructive state. It actually serves a constructive role, which is necessary for human development" (Blum 2008:96). The work of the police is made easier when suspects, on their own, confess to the crime.

2.7 Theoretical framework

2.7.1 Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS)

Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale **(**GIDS), first developed by Fishman (1991), is an eight-point graded scale drawn to assess the extent of threat to the existence of a language as a result of sustained language shift. The scale emphasises the intergenerational transmission of threatened languages – especially minority languages – as the invaluable panacea to reversing language shift and ultimately mitigating language extinction. Ordered from stage 8 to stage 1, the highest point of the scale represents the most threatened language in need of Reversing Language Shift (RLS) efforts while the lowest point represents the least sociolinguistically disadvantaged language. The scale is reproduced below:

Stage 8: Most vestigial users of Xish are socially isolated old folks and Xish needs to be assembled from their mouths and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults.

Stage 7: Most users of Xish are a socially integrated and ethno linguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age.

Stage 6: the attainment of intergenerational informal oralcy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement

Stage 5: Xish literacy in home, school and community, but without taking on extra-communal reinforcement of such literacy

Stage 4: Xish in lower education (types a and b) that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws.

Stage 3: Use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside of the Xish neighbourhood/ community) involving interaction between Xmen and Ymen

Stage 2: Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in the higher spheres

Stage 1: Some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence)

Source: Fishman (1991, 87-109)

Xish: any particular threatened language

Xishmen: speakers of the threatened language

Yish: any particular dominant language

Drawing from the scale, it is obvious that any language in stage 8 is almost extinct and RLS efforts may not yield many results. By the time the few isolated old folks that speak the language are dead, Xish dies with them. Stage 7 is an equally scary stage as most users of Xish are beyond child-bearing age. However a language in this stage can still be revived by conscious and determined reversal efforts. Stage 6 is the most crucial stage of GIDS as this is the stage where Xish is transmitted intergenerationally and by implication the presence or not of adult speakers of the language. Successful RLS efforts are most pertinent in this stage since it is this stage that determines whether a language will survive or face attrition. Fishman emphasises the key role of the family in the intergenerational transmission of a language within the family setting as well as in the neighbourhood and community. This stage is implicational in the GIDS as it precludes stages 7 and 8, given that any language that is passed on from one generation to another will have adult speakers. Languages in stages 5 and 4 enjoy usage in official domains and are less likely to face endangerment. However, their users still need to maintain the present position of the language through concerted maintenance efforts. Stages 3, 2 and 1 indicate languages that enjoy greater official recognition and wider user coverage as well as privileged political recognition and as such less likely to face language shift by its users.

GIDS comes into play when there is language shift and reversal efforts are needed to revive the language. Most of the minority languages of the world are in stages 7 and 8 as a lot are already extinct and others are in different stages of attrition. Reversing Language Shift as a theory works hand in hand with GIDS in saving threatened or endangered languages. GIDS assesses the extent of shift that a minority language has suffered to be termed threatened and in dire need of reversal efforts while RLS propounds reversal strategies. Reversal efforts as proposed by Fishman (1991) include the importance of language acquisition, learning and education. However he warns that a "narrow education framework within which language maintenance retrieval and revival activities have been grounded is doomed to failure" (Fishman 2001:417). Though use of a minority language in education plays a key role in reversing language shift, Fishman again warns that teaching

a threatened language in school as an RLS programme is not enough to bring about a reversal of attitudes, it goes beyond that. Focus, rather should mainly be on the intergenerational transmission of the language so as to encourage language loyalty as well as guarantee continuity.

As popular as it is, GIDS has been criticised as being overly linear and that official recovery programmes often do not work (Bowerman and Levinson, 2001). Again the scale has been said to be implicational such that if a language community is found to be operating at any particular stage, then all lower stages (those with higher numbers) should also be found to exist. Thus, if the language community is transmitting the language intergenerationally (stage 6), then the presence of adult language speakers (stages 7 and 8) is implied. "GIDS does not fit all languages RLS strategies as successful RLS for one language may be death or extermination for other languages since RLS is not an isolated event affecting a single language" (Spolsky and Shohamy, 2001:374).

Again Fishman (1991:396) agrees that the GIDS is a framework that represents a 'heuristic theoretical stance, rather than a fully proven verity'. This explains why a number of other scales/models measuring the state of language endangerment and vitality have been developed by other theorists. Notable among some of the most recent models are Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) by Lewis and Simons (2010), the Catalogue of Endangered Languages (ELCat) by Google's endangeredlanguages.com, Language Endangerment Index (LEI) by Lee and Way (2016), *Ethnologue* by Lewis, Simons and Fennig 2015), and UNESCO's Atlas by Moseley (2010). With the exception of EGIDS, which directly builds on the theoretical assumptions of GIDS, others listed are united by their application of a quantitative approach to the measurement of vitality and endangerment of languages. However, as the discursive focus on the vitality and endangerment of Ogu regarding its shift and maintenance is not concerned with quantification, this study has chosen to stick to Fishman's GIDS. In the subsequent section of this chapter, a further discussion is provided on the relevance of GIDS to the shifting stage of Ogu and the efforts being made towards its maintenance primarily through *cultural policing*.

2.7.1.1 Ogu in the GIDS perspective

GIDS is an efficient tool for assessing the status of Ogu in Southwestern Nigeria. As a minority language spoken by just a few local government areas in both Ogun and Lagos states, its existence, as earlier stated, is being threatened by Yorùbá, the prestigious language with an estimated 20 million speakers in Southwestern Nigeria. The language has continued to experience shift among its younger generation to Yorùbá such that it is in dire need of RLS efforts. These efforts represent "an attempt...to adopt policies and to engage in efforts calculated to reverse the cumulative processes of attrition that would otherwise lead to the contextually weak language-in-culture becoming even weaker" (Fishman 1991:81). Using the eight stages of the GIDS, a discussion is provided below on the extent of shift in Ogu, which warrants maintenance efforts.

GIDS stage 8: Any language at this stage is spoken by only a few "socially isolated old folks and the language needs to be assembled from their mouths... "Ogu is clearly not in this stage as there are still many adults in their prime who still have native competence in the language. For that matter, it cannot be said of Ogu that it is almost extinct such that RLS efforts cannot possibly help to revive it. The population of adults (especially those aged between 30-40) that speak the language is still above average. Ogu thus is below stage 8 of the GIDS. However, if we take a look at some Ogu families especially in urban centres where neither parents (especially with inter-marriages) nor children can speak Ogu, this stage may be applicable as the language is likely to go into extinction with time.

GIDS stage 7: Again it can be said of Ogu that it is also not in Stage 7 of the scale as deduced from the analysis above. The language still has speakers within child-bearing age, except that it is not being transmitted to the children. Most users of Ogu are "a socially integrated and ethno linguistically active population" but not beyond child bearing age. Any language in this stage would need reversal efforts as supportive measures to revive it. The case of Ogu is still redeemable as reversal efforts can bring about a reversal of attitudes which in turn will lead to the language's maintenance.

GIDS stage 6: This is about the attainment of intergenerational informal oralcy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement. Fishman asserts that this stage is an especially crucial one for reversing language shift. It involves the intergenerational transmission of a language from adults to children within the home, neighbourhood and

community contexts. The survival of any language is determined at this stage by transmission as its absence – mainly as a result of language shift – ultimately results in language death or extinction. Most of the minority languages of the world usually are found wanting at this all-important stage and Ogu is no exception. Yorùbá is the language mostly used at home between parents and children and among siblings. In fact, majority of Ogu people speak Yorùbá with pride. Some derive joy in speaking English but no motivation for Ogu. It is not uncommon to find out that adults, who spoke Ogu in the main as children, had substituted their childhood patronage of Ogu for Yorùbá and in some cases English. Again, the situation is even more poignant when some Nigerian children grow up to be just monolinguals in English, thus underscoring Ohiri-Aniche's (1997:75) call that "...we need to pay attention to the damage being done to the psyche of Nigerian children who now are wholly neither 'European' nor Nigerian while also giving thought to the social malaise that this confusion of identities is endangering". The speaking of Yorùbá is the situation in most Ogu communities at the moment and if reversal measures are not applied, the language may slip into stage 7 of GIDS. That Ogu lacks intergenerational transmission puts it in the class of endangered languages. It is not uncommon to find Ogu youths and children who are only monolingual in Yorùbá. Some are even ashamed to be associated with the language and the people and go to the extent of outrightly denying their identity. This of course has grave implications for the language and the culture of the people. There is therefore need for a reversal of attitudes in order to mitigate this trend and save Ogu from the scary prospects of attrition.

GIDS stage 5: Xish literacy in home, school and community, but without taking on extra-communal reinforcement of such literacy. Ogu does not enjoy much patronage at home let alone school and community, which is a conglomerate of homes. The situation of Ogu is even worse in the school as Yorùbá is the language of instruction for the first three years of primary education contradicting the National Policy on Education (NPE) which stipulates that every child be taught in his mother tongue in the first three years of elementary education. Ogu is neither a medium of instruction nor a subject of study even in Ogu-speaking communities. Complicating the situation is the fact that Ogu, so far does not have a standard orthography and as such written materials on the language are very few, making Yorùbá literature that which is available to Ogu children. Even in church, the Yorùbá bible is usually read. Yet this is not to say that there is no Ogu version of the bible,

even if it is a Benin Republic translation. Nevertheless, the version is intelligible to Ogu speakers in Nigeria. Ogu speakers are in knowledge of the existence of this bible called *Biblu Wiwe* (Holy Bible), but hardly patronize it. As noted earlier, few of those who have it keep it more as a cultural specimen used occasionally to excite, if not mystify younger ones more on account of its uncommon impeccability and archaism than for worship. Again the autography is that of the Republic of Benin that is more in line with French orthography as Benin is a French colony. This again makes the version unattractive and difficult to read. What is more, most church services in Ogu-speaking communities are conducted in Yorùbá.

GIDS Stage 4: Xish in lower education (types a and b) that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws. The agency of socialization process of children cannot be overemphasized (Targamadze and Zuoza 2011). As stated earlier, Ogu is not on offer as a subject both in elementary and secondary schools in communities where it is spoken; neither is it used in teaching other subjects. Clearly, this is contrary to the Nigerian National Policy on Education which stipulates that an indigenous language predominantly spoken in an area should be used in teaching pupils in their formative years – especially the first three years of primary education. Ogu is definitely found wanting in this stage as Ogu children in elementary schools are taught in Yorùbá and later English. Even when some Ogu children 'mistakenly' speak Ogu at school, they are often jeered at by their peers and penalised by their teachers. Ogu is referred to by the Yorùbá – with disdain – as an esoteric language that lacks form and substance. It is usual of them to say a person is speaking 'Egun' – the corrupt form of Ogu – when they don't understand what the person says. There has not been any consideration of Ogu in the formal education of children in these local government areas. Besides, secondary school students in Southwestern Nigeria are required to offer Yorùbá as a compulsory subject in the School Certification Examination. This way, the motivation to do well in school examinations also becomes another reason for the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá by Ogu people. Invariably, parents tend to admonish their children to speak good Yorùbá all the time in order to achieve competence in the language because of Yorùbá's status as a compulsory subject for all students, irrespective of their aptitude. If Ogu is taught in schools just as Yorùbá and English, the level of pride in speaking the language by the people can equate if not exceed the pride with which they speak Yorùbá and English. Again as earlier stated, the orthographic

development and standardization of the language are crucial to the maintenance efforts. In so doing, Ogu must be described as an entity with features whose articulation will not be confused with those of English and Yorùbá as has been the case so far (Capo 1990). It also presupposes that both the grammar and the written literature of the language must be developed and this crucial role has to be undertaken by Ogu intellectuals and academics

GIDS Stage 3: It has to do with the use of Xish in the lower work sphere (outside of the Xish neighbourhood/ community) involving interaction between Xmen and Ymen. Using the GIDS to assess Ogu, it is evident that the language does not fall into stage 3. Ogu is not used in the lower work sphere outside Ogu neighbourhood where its speakers interact with Yorùbá speakers. A language that is not used at the home domain is less likely to be spoken outside the home let alone in work places. Yorùbá is the major language of communication in the western part of Nigeria and this includes Ogu-speaking areas. The prestigious status of Yorùbá makes it attractive to the Ogu who see it as the language of power which they speak with pride. This they do so without considering the implication of their shift on their ethnic pride and identity. Ogu continues to lose its speakers to Yorùbá at the home domain, at the community level and even in public spheres.

GIDS stage 2: This stage locates Xish in lower governmental services and mass media but not in the higher spheres. In Southwestern Nigeria, the home of Ogu and Yorùbá, government and private business transactions are conducted in English and Yorùbá to the exclusion of Ogu. Needless to say that Yorùbá and English are for the most part used in the public sphere in matters having to do with governance and communication such as radio and television, among others. In view of all these, Ogu is assigned a minimal role in the public domain in the state as Ogu people constitute a minority. Survival—social, economic and political—therefore rests on the acquisition of Yorùbá and English. An exclusive close-knit interaction in the public domain among the Ogu is no longer possible as the people have to mix more often with other people speaking Yorùbá and English. The media stands to play a vital role in the maintenance of a threatened language. The situation of Ogu, however is such that due to its minority status, it does not enjoy much media coverage. For instance, there are six government-owned electronic media stations in Ogun State and all of them are located in Abeokuta, the state capital. An examination of their weekly programme slots reveal that Yorùbá constitutes about 63%, English, 33% and

Ogu, 4% of their programmes – mainly news.[8] This statistics are symptomatic of the general trend of the media in Southwestern Nigeria. As Sallabank (2011:19) contends, "there is need to necessarily extend the mandate of the visibility beyond the basic suggestions of Landry and Bourhis which prioritize the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs and public signs on government buildings". This way, she explains further, it will be possible to utilize the vital agency of the media among other things.

GIDS stage 1: In this stage, there is some use of Xish in higher level educational, occupational, and governmental and mass media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence). Judging from the above analysis, it is evident that Ogu is grossly lacking in this stage. Only few African languages have attained this stage on the scale. Adegbija (2001) claim that in Nigeria, it is only Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo that are partially used in higher education, but mainly as subjects in the curriculum for those who wish to study them. Ogu does not enjoy patronage at lower levels of education, government and mass media, let alone higher level. The GIDS then is an effective tool for measuring the extent of language shift being experienced by Ogu, seeing that it is high up in the scale. The language is in dire need of reversal efforts to maintain it in order for it to evade endangerment and ultimate death.

2.7.2 Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT)

Having used GIDS to determine the shift level of Ogu, an application of the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT) is necessary to assess the extent to which *cultural policing* has helped to increase the group vitality of the people thereby reversing language shift. The Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory, first developed by Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977), is a framework calculated to assess a linguistic group's ability to hold its own in an inter group situation. Their definition of the theory goes thus: "that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and collective entity within the intergroup setting" (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977: 308). According to them, demographic, institutional and status factors combine to affect in one direction or the other the overall strength of ethnolinguistic groups. An ethnolinguistic group is more likely to survive as a distinctive group in a multicultural setting if its vitality is high as it is more likely to maintain its language and not be assimilated by the higher linguistic group. However a linguistic group

[8] See Esther Senayon, M.A. project submitted to the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, 2012.

with low vitality is more likely to get assimilated by the higher linguistic group since it will not be able to assert itself as a distinctive and collective entity in a bilingual or multilingual context. "Given the rise of ethnic revival movements across the world in the latter part of the 20th century (Fishman, 1999), the group vitality framework was developed to analyse more systematically the relative socio-structural position of language groups in contact" (Bourhis 1979:2).

Factors such as the numeric distribution of group members; the number of group members *vis-a-vis* the speakers of the other prestigious language in the territory; their birth rate, their marriage pattern – whether exogamy/endogamy and their immigration and emigration patterns make up the demographic variables. Demographic variables are part of the structural variables that are likely to influence the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups. An examination of Ogu in the light of these variables will show that Ogu speakers, about 1.5 million in Nigeria, are numerically disadvantaged compared to their Yorùbá neighbours, who constitute about 22 million out of the estimated 150 million people in Nigeria. The difference in the numerical strength alone has caused a sort of intimidation on the part of Ogu people so much so that their low vitality has pushed them to embracing the language of prestige. Group members are not usually concentrated in their territories as they have inter mingled with the Yorùbá – especially the Awori stock – who presently are fighting to usurp landed property owned by the Ogu because of their minority status. Coupled with this are exogamous marriages, which usually result in Ogu spouses getting assimilated to the more attractive linguistic group of their partners. The desire to dust off their inferiority complex finds expression in the giving of Yorùbá names to their children and encouraging them to speak the language. Such children then grow up to resent their language and their people and even deny their identity if so interrogated.

Institutional control factors have to do with whether a linguistic group is informally and formally represented in the various institutions that make up a community or state. This includes the extent to which the group asserts its ethnolinguistic interest in different state and private activities. Such activities include education – both primary and secondary-mass media, the world of business, finance, sports, religion and culture. Ogu is lacking in all these areas, as the group has not been able to assert itself as a distinctive entity in the midst of the Yorùbá, the more prestigious linguistic group in Southwestern Nigeria. In private mass media outfits in Ogun state for instance, there are no Ogu programmes at all

while the government-owned media outfits devote only 3% of their programme slots to Ogu. The situation is not different in Badagry LGA. As stated above, despite the national policy on education's stipulation that a child's mother tongue be used as the medium of teaching in his first 3 years of primary education, Yorùbá is still the medium of teaching in public primary schools in South western Nigeria, even in Ogu-speaking communities thus supporting what Igboanusi and Lothar (2004) describe as "oppressing the oppressed". Again at secondary school level, all students take a compulsory Yorùbá subject irrespective of their linguistic background. This has contributed to language shift among Ogu children in no small measure. The same is the situation with other areas of informal interactions and activities. In formal situations and activities, Ogu is discriminated on every side as it is neither the language of government and administration nor the language of sports, business transactions, etc. Ogu speakers too do not have positions of control in these areas afore mentioned thus contributing to the group not being able to hold its own as a distinctive entity in the multilingual setting in Western Nigeria.

Bourhis (2000) posits that contributing to institutional control factors is the presence of quality leaders who can head the informal and formal institutions representing their ethnolinguistic groups. This means Ogu activists and charismatic leaders who succeed in their own language and cultural survival within multilingual settings. In this regard there are now some Ogu language activists who employ several strategies in the struggle for the maintenance of the language. Their activities are geared towards instilling the spirit of language loyalty in fellow Ogu speakers as well as mobilise them to fight in favour of their language and its cultural survival. The groups have also been agitating for the inclusion of the Ogu in matters of politics, government, administration, legislature, media, etc. in both Ogu and Lagos states, in both formal and informal representations.

Status factors have to do with the level of social status enjoyed by a linguistic group in an inter group setting. This however is dependent on the level of institutional support that the language already enjoys, as a high institutional support will invariably bring about high social status and low institutional support entails low social status. Low social status can affect the psyche of members of a minority group, which in turn can affect the group's collective vitality and the will to agitate for the survival of their language and culture. Ogu suffers as a result of the poor social status accorded it in Southwestern Nigeria. Its speakers are often quite ashamed to be associated with it as the mere mention of the

speaker's identity usually elicits jeers and derogatory remarks from speakers of the prestigious language. The language is associated with illiteracy, slavery and economic depravity and so are its speakers. The low status of Ogu stems from both poor demographic and institutional variables. As a minority group in the region, the group suffers low ethnolinguistic vitality as speakers are unable to behave as a distinctive collective unit in the face of pressures from more powerful ethnolinguistic groups in the inter group setting. Such exhibition of low status finds expression in the shift to Yorùbá language and culture and in the adoption of Yorùbá names by Ogu speakers.

It is not uncommon to find Ogu speakers who answer names such that cannot be linked to their identity. Some even claim to be members of some other local government areas that are predominantly Yorùbá in order to enjoy the rights and the privileges accruable to members of such LGAs. However, as stated earlier, the Ogu language groups mentioned above are out to correct this anomaly and instil in Ogu people loyalty to their language as well as the ideals in being proud of their identity and culture. These individuals are working hard to mobilise the Ogu to behave as a distinctive collective entity even in the face of the challenges of being a minority in a bilingual setting.

According to Giles et al (1977), it is a combination of demographic, institutional and status factors that contribute to the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups in inter group settings. However it is not always the case that a linguistic group's vitality is absolute in these three respects all the time. For instance a language could have average demographic vitality in one community, low vitality in status in another community and lowest vitality in institutional support in yet another. It cannot be said of Ogu however that it has high vitality in any of the three variables. In some Ogu communities in Ogun State however like Tube, Sagbo, etc. speakers still behave as a distinctive collective entity. This is because these communities are across the Lagoon and can mainly be accessed by canoe. The geographical location of these people has made it easy for them to avoid mingling and interacting with the Yorùbá such that they have been able to dodge linguistic and cultural assimilation to some extent. Their loyalty to their language is still high compared to other Ogu communities that have been overwhelmed by Yorùbá. The same cannot be said of people from the Ogu communities across the Lagoon who cross over and mingle with the Yorùbá. Many of such have completely lost their identity to Yorùbá. This is not to insinuate that there are no Yorùbá in Tube, Sagbo, etc. There are but in the minority and so are unable to exert any linguistic influence on the people.

The ethnolinguistic vitality framework in one way or the other complements Fishman's GIDS as some of the main tenets of the GIDS – e.g. intergenerational transmission of the language and the presence of diglossia – are implied in the vitality framework. While the vitality framework can be enhanced by the Reversing Language Shift (RLS) framework, it is also the case that the RLS model can also be enriched by including in its analysis the full range of factors used to assess the relative vitality of language groups (Bourhis 2001:1). However Ehala (2011) claims that ethnolinguistic vitality theory and its accompanying survey instruments (the subjective ethnolinguistic vitality questionnaire) alone cannot account for the language maintenance and shift observed among ethnic minorities. Socio linguistic survey instruments that can account for language use, choice, preference and attitudes should be added to complement it.

It is with the GIDS and the EVT that lie the theoretical framework with which we assess language shift and reversal strategies for Ogu language maintenance. The activities of the Ogu cultural police team have influenced the vitality of Ogu. Although the language does not enjoy group vitality at present, the vitality of the individual members of the cultural police team is gradually imparting the vitality of the Ogu community as a whole. The ability of Ogu individuals to hold their own in inter-group situations is very vital to language maintenance. What the cultural police do is work on the vitality of their kinsmen with the express aim of improving on the vitality of the group. A linguistic group's ability to behave as an active collective entity depends on the emotional attachment of its members to this collective identity (Ehala 2011). It is this emotional attachment to Ogu that the cultural police team tries to instil in their individual kinsmen by working on their psyche. This is in consonance with Ehala's argument that "... emotional attachment to one's ethnic group is the key aspect that influences individual ethnolinguistic vitality; the more a person is emotionally attached to his/her ethnic group, the more likely that person is to participate in group actions". Ogu cultural police member's high emotional attachment to their language is the motivating factor to denying kinsmen.

Ehala (2011), revisiting the ethnolinguistic vitality theory classifies ethnic groups as 'hot' and 'cold' based on the strength of the emotional attachment of members to their group. Ogu communities belong to the 'cold' group but the 'hotness' of the cultural police team is helping to mobilising them into a 'hot' one thereby increasing the group's vitality. It is envisaged that as more Ogu people key into the activities of the cultural police, Ogu will

enjoy high ethnolinguistic vitality despite its minority status in Southwestern Nigeria. Much as all these are so, the approach in this study has privileged qualitative analysis in the discussion of the maintenance efforts among the Ogu through the deployment of *cultural policing*.

2.8 Summary of chapter two

This chapter did a review of relevant literature on concepts such as bilingualism and language contact; language shift; language endangerment; language maintenance; language activism and professional policing. It identified the gap in the literature on language maintenance, which the present study hopes to fill through a discussion of the place of *cultural policing* in the maintenance of Ogu. The chapter also discussed the two theories – Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) and Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT) – on which the study is hinged. The next chapter is devoted to the discussion of the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter, apart from containing the techniques and the methods of carrying out the research, lays out the research design, which includes the study area, population sample; sampling procedure, research instruments and data analysis procedure or method of data analysis. It also considers the reliability and validity of data as well as other ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

This study employed the explorative design. The adoption of the explorative design is premised on the fact that it is effective when a research problem has received little or no empirical attention. As the maintenance strategy of cultural policing has little or no foundational information, the explorative technique is more pertinent to the aim and objectives of this study. Explorative research usually operates on small sample sizes as against the survey design. For the purpose of this research, only the qualitative approach was employed. The qualitative approach involved observation and face to face interviews like key informant interviews, indepth interviews and focus group discussions. Data collected from existing documents were also subjected to qualitative analysis.

3.2 Area of study

The study covered Southwestern Nigeria in general; however the precise study area were the three local government areas in Lagos and Ogun States where there is predominant presence of Ogu people-Badagry Local Government Area (in Lagos State), Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area and Ipokia Local Government Area (in Ogun State). Ogu is spoken in some other areas in both Lagos and Ogun States; but it is only in the three areas under study that there is a significant presence of its speakers, though Ogu remains a minority language even in the local government areas where they are concentrated.

3.3 Population of the study

In order to achieve the aim and objectives of this study, the target population were all Ogu speakers from the three local government areas living in and outside Nigeria who have either been involved in language shift or language maintenance. Such population therefore covered young and old; male and female; educated, semi-educated and illiterate, etc. The research population also included people from the different levels of the social strata.

3.4 Population sample

Considering the financial difficulty inherent in reaching out to all Ogu people, coupled with time constraint, only fifty-three (53) people constituted the sample population. Twelve people were involved in Key Informant Interviews (KII), another twelve people participated in Indepth Interviews (IDI) while twenty-nine people were involved in three Focus Group Discussions (FGD), one group in each LGA under study.

3.5 Sampling technique

The study employed the multi-stage sampling technique in line with the objectives of the research. The first stage of sampling was the selection of Southwestern Nigeria as the study area as that is the domain of Ogu in Nigeria. Then followed the selection of Ogun and Lagos States out of all the states in Southwestern Nigeria and then the selection of the three local government areas in the two states where the Ogu are predominant, although they are minimally present in other LGAs in both states. The selected LGAs are Badagry LGA in Lagos State and Ado-Odo/Ota and Ipokia LGAs in Ogun State. This was then followed by the purposive selection of informants for the KIIs, IDIs and discussants for the FGDs.

3.5.1 Inclusion criteria

1. The person must be a native speaker of Ogu.
2. The person must be a native speaker of Ogu either from or residing in the three LGAs under study.
3. The person must have the ability and the willingness to give consent.

3.5.2 Exclusion criteria

1. Any person that is not a native speaker of Ogu is excluded.
2. Any Ogu who is not from the communities in the three LGAs under study is excluded.
3. Inability and unwillingness to give consent is an exclusion criterion.

3.6 Method of data collection

The study employed a mixed method approach where different methods of data collection were used to collect data. The employment of this approach was premised on the nature of the phenomenon under study. The research therefore sought to assess the activities of Ogu

cultural policemen and women by having face-to-face interviews with twelve key informants, who are themselves members of the cultural police in order to confirm the place of their intervention in the maintenance of Ogu. Three other members of the policing individuals live outside the country. Their interview was mainly through email and phone conversations. Twelve other people who had been policed were also involved in indepth interviews where their encounters and experiences with the police were recounted. Twenty-nine individuals also from across the three LGAs under study were involved in three focus group discussions where their views and perceptions of the activities of the cultural police were highlighted to find out if they had actually enhanced Ogu language maintenance. In all, fifty narratives of actual policing cases and their effects evolved from all the interview sessions.

3.6.1 Justification for the triangulation of methods approach

The triangulation of methods approach was employed in this study in order to have an all-round reliability and validity of the results of the different instruments of data collection - observation and face-to-face interviews involving KII, FGD and IDI. Therefore the essential need to make up for the lapses of one instrument against the others necessitated the triangulation of methods approach employed in this study in order to validate the different data collected. This resonates with Igboanusi and Lothar's (2015:12) submission that triangulation facilitates the validation of data results from different sources.

3.7 Instruments of data collection

The researcher employed four instruments of data collection in the course of collecting data for this study. The main instrument of data collection was participant observation as the motivation for the study was borne out of the researcher's personal observation in a pilot study that was carried out during fieldwork for her Master's dissertation. The other research instruments included face-to-face interviews like Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant Interview (KII) and Indepth Interview (IDI). How these different instruments were used is discussed in 3.7.1-3.7.4.

3.7.1 Observation

The basic instrument of data collection employed in this study, as mentioned before, was observation. For over a period of ten years, the researcher has been observing the maintenance efforts carried out by certain Ogu people towards their language and culture

during yearly and other visits to her husband's community. The motivation for this study was thus borne out of the pilot study conducted during such visits where she became familiar with the linguistic and cultural terrain of the Ogu people. Data collection has occurred from time to time especially as the researcher has always enjoyed the privileges of an unsuspected ethnographer, being a member of the community by marriage. Notes and electronic recordings of personal observations thus constitute the bulk of data collected. Data from six cases of participant observation were discussed and analysed in the study.

3.7.2 Key Informant Interview (KII)

Key Informant Interviews were conducted with men and women who have been in the forefront of the agitation for the maintenance of Ogu using policing strategies. The reason for the deployment of this instrument was to ascertain the modus operandi of the cultural police, their driving force and personal accounts of cases of their operations over the years as well as their results and the implications of their unique maintenance strategy for Ogu language maintenance. Twelve informants-eight men and four women of different ages and high formal educational qualifications – four each from the three local government areas under study – were interviewed in English as the researcher is not a fluent speaker of Ogu. Semi-structured guided questions were employed to elicit information while such data were recorded on notebooks and electronic recorders. Research assistants, who are fluent native speakers of the language, were also deployed to assist the researcher, who, though not a native speaker of Ogu, is a member of the community by marriage.

3.7.3 Indepth Interview

Twelve indepth interviews were also conducted with twelve informants, four from each LGA under study. The informants were eight men and four women who had been policed by the cultural police team in one way or the other. Their intimate personal experiences shed more light on the modus operandi of the cultural police and their impact on the policed. Semi-structured guided questions were also used to elicit responses. The interviews were conducted in English as the researcher is not a native speaker of Ogu.

3.7.4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Three focus group discussions – one for each local government – were held across the three LGAs under study. The group discussion at Ipokia LGA was held on the 3rd of January, 2016 at Idi-Iroko. It comprised 7 discussants who were all male aged between 35

and 46. The session lasted for two hours. The focus group discussion at Badagry LGA was held in Javie on the 28th of February, 2016. It comprised twelve discussants – eleven male and one female – aged between 16 and 40. The FGD at Ado-Odo Ota LGA was held at Obakobe on the 4th of July, 2015 and it comprised ten discussants made up of seven male and three female aged between 16 and 78. The discussion lasted for two hours thirty minutes. Each session of the discussion had an average of eight discussants. The sessions were meant to elicit discussants' impressions of the operations of Ogu cultural policemen and women. An interview guide containing semi-structured questions was also used to gather data. The intimate personal experiences and opinions of discussants were meant to test the efficacy of cultural policing for Ogu language maintenance. The researcher and other skilled moderators, who were native speakers of Ogu, anchored the various FGD sessions in Ogu while electronic recorders and notebooks were used in recording the data.

3.8 Method of data analysis

The research employed only the qualitative method of data collection, collation and analysis. Qualitative data from the FGD, IDI and KII were recorded in notes and electronic recorders and later transcribed. The transcribed responses were furthermore subjected to content analysis in order to identify recurring themes that were relevant to the aim of the study. It is important to state lastly in this section that the adoption of cases fashioned after conventional policing investigation, explains why each case study, especially on KII and IDI, is cited in full in the analysis chapters. This is to enable full understanding of the linguistic investigation of the respondents involved in *cultural policing*. The approach follows after a similar method by Uwagbo (2013) "Language and Identity in Oru Refugee Camp, Ogun State" and Ajayi (2016) in his study, "(Im)Politeness Strategies in Police-Suspect Discourse in the Criminal Investigation Department, Iyaganku, Ibadan."

3.9 Validity and reliability of instruments of data collection

As stated earlier, pilot tests had been conducted before the actual research in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the data from the present study. This allowed for the correction of lapses that were noticed as well as the effecting of relevant changes and alterations in some of the semi-structured questions and interview guides. Again the researcher's supervisor examined the research instruments to ascertain their appropriateness, validity and reliability. Useful corrections, suggestions and comments were given which came in handy in the actual process of collection of data in the field.

3.10 Ethical consideration

The researcher was careful to observe the ethics of fieldwork while collecting data. Semi-structured questions as well as the questions in the interview guide were carefully worded to avoid ambiguity and inconsistencies. The researcher explained the reason for the research and ensured that the consent of all participants in the various forms of face to face interviews and discussion sessions was sought before the actual conduct of the interviews. The researcher, together with the research assistants, was also careful not to ask leading questions that would influence the responses of the respondents.

3.11 Summary of chapter

This chapter laid out the research design and methodology of the study. It also produced a step by step explanation of how the researcher gathered and analyzed data to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. Among the items in the research design are the method of data collection and collation; the research instruments; the study area; sampling procedure; the population sample, etc. The chapter also examined the reliability and validity of the research instruments and ethical considerations in fieldwork. The next two chapters are preoccupied with a discussion of data collected for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and discussion of data collected from the field. Specifically data from the main research instrument – participant observation, which entails the researcher's personal observation for a period of ten years – are presented and discussed in the form of cases. Such cases are categorized into short term and long term *cultural policing* for the maintenance of Ogu and are discussed accordingly. The chapter also provides answer to research question two as well as analyzes data from Key Informant Interviews, which is the second research instrument.

4.1 Participant observation

The motivation for this study, as has been stated earlier, resulted from the personal observation of the researcher for a period of ten years. Being married to a member of the Ogu linguistic community, the researcher has been paying regular visits to the husband's community where she observed that first, Ogu language had been undergoing widespread shift to Yorùbá in the main and then English. Secondly she observed that over the years, some highly educated and well-placed Ogu sons and daughters had developed, albeit mostly unconsciously, a unique maintenance strategy which aroused the interest of the researcher. As a linguist who is concerned about the fate of minority languages that are threatened by larger and more prestigious languages, she immediately noticed this unusual effort being exercised by some Ogu people to maintain the language. This brought about the motivation to study further the *modus operandi* of those involved in this endeavour.

In the course of observation, the researcher noticed that some Ogu individuals carried with them a certain aura and charisma that can at best be associated with men of professional policing as their presence simultaneously brings about some sort of linguistic order similar to what happens when law enforcement agents are noticed around any community. This linguistic order is expressed in the spontaneous shift from Yorùbá by Ogu people back to Ogu in a spontaneous show of loyalty and patriotism to their language and culture. These persons, whom I refer to as *cultural policemen and women*, are individuals who are highly educated and well placed in society and have the interest of

their language and the rich socio-cultural heritage of their people at heart. Having realized the danger in standing aloof and watching Ogu disappear, these linguistic marshals have decided to handle the maintenance of their language by themselves. Being a minority language that is "doubly discriminated" (Fishman J.A in Hornberger and Putz, 2006), agitations for government interventions for the maintenance of the language have not yielded much results. This is not uncommon since speakers of minority languages globally are often neglected and marginalized. Edwards (2010:15) notes that "it is understandable that some speakers of disappearing languages, more than others, will rail against the process of attrition". The uniqueness of the operation of the cultural police team lies in their informal adoption of various policing approaches such as suspicion, investigation, questioning, tip-off, intelligence, etc.

Usually when the Ogu cultural police members suspect that a certain individual is an Ogu who is hiding his identity by claiming to be Yorùbá – which is often the case with Ogu people – they try to find evidence to confirm their suspicion. Such evidence, as have been discussed in previous chapters, can be in the form of the peculiarity of their names, tribal marks, their speaking of Yorùbá with an accent, etc. Sometimes, suspicion can arise from a tip-off after which follows investigation and then proof. When their suspicion is confirmed, the police appeal to the denying kinsman's sense of ethnic identity and encourage him to take pride in his language and culture by identifying with his people which is ultimately expressed through speaking the language. He is also encouraged to engage members of his immediate family and others to speak it too. It must be noted that the cultural police members go about their linguistic reformatory task without any form of coercion, organization or laid down *modus operandi*. Though they are aware that for their language to survive decisive measures have to be taken, they however are not forceful as the professional police. They persuade rather than coerce by virtue of their exhibition of loyalty to the language. They respect their people's right to freedom of speech and expression and are careful not to trample on the fundamental human rights of fellow citizens. The manner in which they police the policed often elicits the spirit of camaraderie rather than anger or hostility. These policemen and women are also Ogu people and by implication, brothers and sisters of the policed – using the African context of brotherhood. Several Ogu citizens have, through this informal and cordial approach by their kinsmen, been encouraged to return to the speaking of their language, which they had abandoned for

Yorùbá. One other critical issue to their success is that these members of the Ogu cultural police are generally highly educated and equally highly placed in society. Having attained such educational and professional feats in spite of their minority status, they destabilize the belief about shift to Yorùbá for social mobility as well as political and economic empowerment. They thus offer by virtue of their approach an alternative attitude of identity affirmation through a display of unapologetic loyalty to the language. Not only do they speak the language in public places, they also make it the language of communication in their homes instead of Yorùbá and English. It is this attitude that makes their *cultural policing* for the maintenance of Ogu productive. Some of the case studies witnessed by the researcher are discussed below:

4.1.1 Case 1

In the case study discussed here, the researcher was having her hair fixed in a hair dressing salon when the following conversation ensued between the hair stylist, popularly known as Iya Seun (Seun's mother), and another customer who was awaiting her turn. The customer was with her four – year old son who was trying to fiddle with the stylist's hair instruments.

Customer: Peawhanji, will you leave those rollers alone, you will soon mess them up!

Stylist: Peawhanji, listen to your mummy and stop littering the floor with my rollers!

Customer: [Surprised]: Iya Seun, how come you pronounced my son's name so correctly? It is not a Yorùbá name and yet you are a Yorùbá woman given what people call you – Iya S□eun. (Observation and Suspicion)

Stylist: [Grinning] eh…eh I just know how to pronounce the name. (Hesitation)

Customer: Ah my sister, tell me the truth! Where are you from? You are the first person I have ever heard pronounce the name this correctly. (Questioning)

Stylist: Well…eh…eh (Indecision)

Customer: You must be an Ogu; for only a native Ogu can pronounce this name correctly. In fact, I am sure that you are my sister. Ah see my blood o! What state are you from? (Questioning Continued)

Stylist: Well, my sister I am Ogu but I just tell people that I am a Yorùbá from Lagos State. You know these Yorùbá people, if they know that you are Ogu, they will ridicule you by calling you 'Egun *lasan lasan*.'[9] (Confession)

[9] "Ègùn lásán, làsàn" means "an ordinary Ogu"; another way of saying an Ogu person is a nonentity.

Customer: Oh my sister, don't mind Yorùbá people. Be proud to speak your language and let them know your true identity. There is nothing like a man having an identity. So which means your children too don't speak Ogu? (Subtle persuasion)

Stylist: You know my husband is Yorùbá, so we speak Yorùbá and my daughter answers a Yorùbá name, Seun but she has an Ogu name, Senami though we seldom use it. (Argument and justification)

Customer: (In a very gentle tone) There is nothing wrong in teaching your daughter Ogu. After all, she has Ogu blood in her and it is a plus for her if she understands both her father's and her mother's languages. My son here can speak Ogu fluently and that is the language we use in communicating at home. We are proud to be Ogu and so should you too eh! (Persuasion)

Stylist: *Mi bayi* (Thank you) my sister. I will try my best henceforth. (Remorse)

Customer: Jewhe *bayi*! (Thank God!)

Stylist: [Calling out to Customer's son] Maupeawhanji, *to vi, wa yi bisikiti*! (Maupeawhanji my son, come and have some biscuits). (Reformation)

Stigmatizing minority languages and the culture of their speakers as anti-modern is a major contributory factor to language shift (Tufi 2013). Ogu people suffer inferiority complex and other psychological pains resulting from years of being told, on a daily basis, that they are barbaric and uncultured. Their language has been termed by the Yorùbá, to be a sort of esoteric language that cannot be understood by any other linguistic group. To make matters worse, Ogu people's late embrace of western education has put them in a disadvantaged position compared to their Yorùbá neighbours, who are famous for their quest for western education. In order to avoid mockery and public ridicule, which can be quite demoralizing, several Ogu people, especially the youths, shift to Yorùbá thus obscuring their cultural identity.

The conversation above is an indication of the maintenance efforts being put in by concerned Ogu sons and daughters to reverse language shift. The lady called 'Customer' above is what the researcher has designated a cultural police woman because of the peculiar style she used in achieving her goal which is not different from what obtains in professional policing. Due to the fact that Ogu people, on their own, are aware of the negative attitude of their people towards their language and their tendency to hide under Yorùbá identity, they are often at an alert to notice peculiar behavioural patterns and language use among people around them. *Customer* observed the uncommon impeccability with which *Stylist* pronounced her son's name and that

immediately aroused some sort of suspicion about her true identity. Observation is one of the tools of professional policing. She then began to ask questions in a friendly way which was in no way harsh or rude so as to put off the 'suspect'. In the process of 'questioning', she was watching out for 'clues' that would act as 'proof 'to further confirm her suspicion. Through her subtle encouragement as well as correction of wrong linguistic attitude, she was able to bring the suspect to 'confession', 'remorse' and 'reformation'. Reformation is expressed in the stylist owning up to her true identity and speaking the language. Note her use of the child's full name at the end of the encounter whereas his mother only used the short form. That was evidence of renewed loyalty to Ogu. Before leaving the salon, customer was able to extract a promise from the stylist of continued patronage of the language even with members of her immediate family, the children especially. She also assured the stylist of regular visits to her as behoves kinsmen explaining that such visits would further encourage and support her in the effort to patronise Ogu after long years of abandoning it. The conversation did not end without customer encouraging her to join in the maintenance of Ogu by watching out for her fellow kinsmen who were still wallowing in the doldrums of ignorance and talk them to reformation. Stylist, by agreeing to do this, enlisted into the Ogu *cultural police team.*

4.1.2 Case 2

The data below is another case of participant observation. The researcher was in a commercial bank to carry out some transactions and was waiting her turn when the person in front of her tendered his deposit slip to the cashier, who wore a tag showing his name as Oluwasegun Gbenga, a Yorùbá name. Upon taking a look at the deposit slip, the cashier, to the consternation of the other impatient people on the queue, started asking the man a series of questions and the following dialogue ensued:

Cashier: Are you from Badagry?

Customer: Why do you ask?

Cashier: Because of your name

Customer: What about my name?

Cashier: It looks like the name of people from Badagry.

Customer: How do you know that the name is from Badagry? Are you from Badagry?

Cashier: [Stammering] Eh...eh... Y-e-s... but I am a Yorùbá .

Customer: Oh! I put it to you that you are an Ogu and you are my brother. Why are you hiding your identity?

Cashier: [Apologetic] It is not my fault; I was born and bred in Lagos. My parents only told me I am Ogu but I have never been to my home town. My parents answer Yorùbá names and so do I.

Customer: It is a pity! Do you speak any Ogu?

Cashier: A little because my parents sometimes speak it to us, but they speak more in Yorùbá. I like to speak the language but any time I try to reveal my identity, my Yorùbá friends laugh at me and call me derogatory names like "Egun lasan lasan". So I stopped telling people I am Ogu.

Customer: You are a young man and you must learn to live up to your true identity because when the chips are down, you will discover that you are neither Ogu nor Yorùbá. Your language is your identity. So insist on your parents speaking more of the language to you.

Cashier: [In smiles] *Thank you Sir. I will do just that!*

The entire conversation took only a few minutes as the cashier was conscious of the other customers on the queue who had become visibly impatient and had to end the conversation. Here naming is important. Both Oluwasegun and Gbenga are some of the most adopted Yorùbá names by Ogu people. As mentioned earlier, language shift among the Ogu commonly manifests, among others, in the adoption of Yorùbá names. The researcher however did not get to know the name that triggered the somewhat interview since the cashier did not call out the name. He had only taken a look at the slip and recognised the name as an Ogu one. The name struck the chord of nationalism in him which had long been seeking expression.

Several minority language speakers who have abandoned their languages perhaps would not do so if someone had given them a little moral encouragement. Though the cashier had grown up under a Yorùbá identity, the natural tendency of a man to identify with his own linguistic group found expression in him risking his job to engage in a somewhat frivolous conversation with a customer in the middle of serious business hours. The customer's parents, though Ogu, refused to transmit the language to their son attesting to what Schell (2008) refers to as Colingualism (See Chapter 2 of this work). "Once use of a language diminishes significantly in the home, intergenerational transmission, a key factor in language maintenance is compromised" (Clyne 2003:22). This case study can better be explained as a case of "double policing" as both the cashier and the customer were

policing each other. The cashier thought he had found evidence to 'nail' a suspect, not knowing that in questioning the customer, he had inadvertently given himself away to another Ogu cultural police. Both acted on the power of observation, which is what makes their mode of operation comparable with what obtains with professional policemen and women. That the cashier was able to connect the name on the withdrawal slip with Ogu adds credence to Wetife's (2008) submission that the police, by their power of observation, must be able to notice unusual things, events and persons. It is the same power of observation that enables the customer to connect the cashier with Ogu despite the fact that he answered a Yorùbá name. Both acted on suspicion, started questioning, found evidence to prove and validate their argument and in the end a cordial relationship was established which would, in no doubt, have implications for Ogu language maintenance.

Part of the brief of the Ogu cultural police is to help such people as the cashier, who seem to have lost their identity, to regain their bearing by developing confidence in themselves and in their ethnic identity. Of course, a cordial relationship ensued from that chanced meeting and chances are that any time *customer* visited that bank he would look for the cashier and speak the language with him. In fact, that first meeting would have ended in both of them continuing the conversation in the language had time permitted.

The submission of Giles et al (1977) is that language maintenance is influenced by the ethnolinguistic vitality of a linguistic group. Although Ogu does not enjoy a high ethno-linguistic vitality from its speakers as a collective entity in inter-group settings, some of its vibrant speakers have developed a strategy to improve on the vitality of the language by encouraging their kinsmen to develop a positive attitude towards it. The case study just discussed is an example of how a few individuals, who are loyal to their language can help to improve on the low vitality of the language by informally, but firmly striking on the chord that binds people to their culture, which often manifests in the desire to speak the language. Borland (2006) argues that factors that contribute to language shift are in two categories – facilitating and motivating factors. The actions of Ogu cultural policemen and women can be said to be driven therefore by motivating factors".

4.1.3 Case 3

During one of the visits to her husband's family and community, the researcher made another important observation. It was New Year's Day and as is the custom of Ogu people,

many sons and daughters living in the city had returned home with their families to celebrate with their old parents and other relatives. It is usually a period of family reunion with much pomp and pageantry. The period also witnesses the arrival of Ogu people even in diaspora returning to their roots and sharing their experiences with others. It was on a cool evening when many visitors came to the researcher's family house to enjoy the New Year meal. As is often the case with many Ogu communities, general conversations were going on in Yorùbá. Then there arrived yet another visitor, whose presence changed immediately the linguistic atmosphere of the whole setting. Everyone, both old and young alike, began to speak Ogu with varying degrees of fluency. While the middle-aged and the old could switch completely to Ogu, the youth and the children struggled to speak passable Ogu, code mixed often with Yorùbá. The intriguing part of the incident was that everyone made efforts to speak the language. The researcher then wondered at the personality of the visitor, who was probably in his thirties and seemed highly educated. Further enquiries about the visitor revealed that he could at best, be called a cultural police as he had been in the forefront of sensitizing his people on the need to maintain their language by speaking it. Living by example, he had continued to speak the language, together with his wife and children, to the amazement and admiration of the entire community that had witnessed other Ogu children who left the village for the city return, speaking Yorùbá with pride. They were humbled by the fact that such a highly educated and well-placed son of theirs could still identify with his people and their language with pride. He was a source of inspiration to the youth, who no longer have complete command of their language, and a sort of check to adults, who are no longer facilitating intergenerational transfer, which, according to Fishman (19991) is the core of language maintenance.

In as much as it is a natural phenomenon for languages to die, some speakers of some of such languages, more than others, will "rail against this process" (Edwards 2010:15). The researcher, on further investigation, discovered that there are more of such eminent individuals among the Ogu, whose language loyalty and patriotism is gradually rubbing off on others. The Ogu cultural police are close to, but not quite what some other language scholars refer to as language activists, advocates, militants, supporters (Eisenlohr, 2004; Kriel, 2010; Zabaleta et al 2010; Leeman and Rabin, 2011; Sinfree, 2012), etc. However, the Ogu cultural policeman is distinct and unique in his application of policing strategies in language maintenance. Again, he differs from the others mentioned above in the sense that he does not operate in a formal group or organization and sometimes does his job

without realizing that he is doing so. He is more interested in reversing language shift through a native speaker to native speaker approach, than in suppressing or killing the 'killer' language.

The Ogu cultural police believes in speaker-motivation for language maintenance than in government/state agency, as it lies in the hands of speakers of threatened languages to save their languages from eventual attrition (Ndhlovu 2010). What the researcher found quite fascinating about the personality of the cultural police in this case is that he didn't have to utter a word to the people before everyone knew they had to do some sort of "linguistic adjustment". His presence alone exuded Ogu cultural nationalism just like the kind of social order that heralds the entrance of a professional policeman. The people in that gathering reacted that way not out of fear or coercion but in support of the ideals that the cultural police stood for which they admitted was for their benefit in the long run. They saw in him evidence that being bilingual in Yorùbá and Ogu – which is often the case with the Ogu – should not necessarily find expression in language shift. The Ogu can be literate in Yorùbá and still maintain their L1 with pride. This is the stance of the cultural police, which endears him to his people and causes them to follow suit. Ishizawa (2004) advises that regular visits to the ancestral homeland helps language maintenance as a language is more likely to be spoken in its native land than elsewhere; but here the reverse is the case as it is the regular home visits of the cultural police that bring about language maintenance for the folks in the ancestral homeland. This I call *reversed language maintenance.*

Some people may want to claim that the activities of the cultural police are a violation of the fundamental human rights of citizens to freedom of speech. The case, however, is not so as the police relate with their kinsmen by informal cordiality and persuasion. The people are not actually happy speaking another man's language as their shift is predicated on social and economic survival. Their tie to their language finds expression in their ambivalent attitude to matters that border on ethnic nationalism. The fact that they are able to switch back to Ogu at will – though with varying degrees of proficiency – speaks to the possibility that the Ogu perhaps are still loyal- no matter how low the level of loyalty is – to their language. What cultural policing does is stir that fragile chord of linguistic loyalty that binds the speaker to his culture in order to encourage him to develop a stronger bond.

4.1.4 Case 4

It is pertinent to reiterate the fact that the researcher's personal observation of the unique way that the Ogu people have masterminded the task of maintaining their language on

their own formed the motivation for this study in the first place. In this fourth case, the researcher was travelling from Badagry in Lagos to Delta State in a commercial bus when an unusual and touching event occurred. The bus was stopped by immigration officers as part of their routine check to fish out illegal immigrants in the country and repatriate them. Since that route is close to the boundary between Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, it is suspected that illegal immigrants infiltrate the country from there so that there is usually stop-and-search along the route. The Nigerian Immigration officers took a cursory look at the passengers in the bus and pointed at a particular woman, whom they had suspected to be an illegal immigrant, and asked her to identify herself. The woman, already scared to death at being singled out in the bus, explained in semi-intelligible Yorùbá, that she was a Nigerian from Pota in Lagos State.[10] The officers and some of the passengers burst into mocking laughter as the officers told the woman that there was nowhere called Pota in Lagos State.

They further claimed that her unplaceable Yorùbá dialect and peculiar accent proved that she was lying. This, the other Yorùbá passengers confirmed, was true. As the poor woman was trying to prove that she was not lying, the officers barked at her to alight from the bus. That was when suddenly a National Youth Service Corps member in uniform, occupying the back seat, who had been quiet all along, challenged the officers as to what crime the woman had committed to warrant such embarrassment. The officers however, would not listen to the corps member but insisted on the woman coming down from the vehicle. The corps member, enraged, spoke in Ogu to the woman – to the surprise of the woman herself, fellow passengers and the officers – asking her not to venture out of the bus. He then explained to the officers that he was from Lagos State and knew the village the woman had mentioned. He chided the immigration personnel that they should be ashamed of themselves, considering that as immigration officers they didn't know much about Nigerian border communities. He added further that they ought to know that, that part of Lagos State where the incident happened was dominated by Ogu people. The officers, greatly enraged, tried to force the woman out of the bus and then another shocker happened. A gentleman in the front seat with the driver, who had not uttered a word all through the fracas, suddenly bellowed to the officers to leave the woman alone and in like manner asked the woman in Ogu to remain seated in the bus. He also claimed he was from Lagos State and from the same community as the woman. While he and the corps member spoke to the woman in Ogu to remain calm and not venture out of the bus, they explained

[10] Pota is a community in Badagry Local Government Area.

to the officers in English that Lagos State is home for both the Yorùbá and the Ogu and that the woman should, on no account be made to feel guilty for not being fluent in Yorùbá

While the argument continued, their superior officer, who had been attending to other vehicles, wondered what the commotion was about and came down. Everyone narrated their side of the story and the superior officer, having noted the boldness and decisiveness with which the passenger in the front seat had spoken, must have suspected that he was highly placed. He had probably concluded in his mind that if they did not let go, they might be in for trouble, and so allowed the vehicle to continue the journey with apologies. The woman was still in shock at the sudden turn of events. She could not believe that she could be saved by the interventions of the corps member and the other passenger in the front seat who turned out to be her kinsmen. She thanked them with an emotion-filled voice for their timely interventions, which had delivered her from being repatriated to a country she was not from. Her case was like that of a man being led to the gallows and suddenly a saviour arose from nowhere and set her free. Regaining her composure and beaming with smiles, she stuck to the strangers, now turned kinsmen, as if she had known them all her life. Then the front seat passenger reprimanded the driver and the other passengers, who had ridiculed the woman, against the uncivil nature of their action. He also acknowledged the fact that it was the woman's inability to own up to her true identity with pride that contributed in subjecting her to such amount of ridicule and maltreatment. Throughout her ordeal, she never mentioned that she was Ogu but only from Lagos State which many people – including the Yorùbá – erroneously believe is a Yorùbá – only state.

The passenger in the front seat and the corps member, whom I call cultural policemen, stressed the value in every individual identifying with their language, culture and people no matter the status of their language rather than hiding under the identity of another people, who will disown them the moment their true identity is discovered. The woman, fascinated that such highly placed kinsmen of hers could own up to their Ogu identity with pride as well as being able to speak the language, was encouraged to speak the language. This found expression in her continuing her conversation with her 'kinsmen' in Ogu throughout the journey. Of course, everyone apologised for his or her misbehaviour and the remaining part of the journey continued in a jovial and relaxed mood.

The incident narrated in the previous paragraph is just one of many incidents that often happen along Badagry-Lagos Expressway in Lagos and Sango-Idiroko Express Way in Ogun State, considering that both highways lead to The Republic of Benin. Being routes

that link the Nigerian borders with Cotonou in the Republic of Benin, it is suspected that illegal immigrants from Benin often flood Nigeria through these routes. Such illegal immigrants are believed to end up as miscreants and join sects like Boko Haram to disrupt law and order in the country since they are often jobless and homeless. During such routine stop-and-search actions, any individual, whose features do not look Nigerian, especially if the person is extraordinarily dark and has uncommon tribal marks, is asked to provide evidence that he is Nigerian. If he is unable to give satisfactory evidence especially being fluent in Yorùbá, he would be asked to alight from the vehicle while the driver asked to drive off and continue with his journey. The "illegal immigrant" would then be repatriated to The Republic of Benin.[11] Several Ogu people have found themselves forcefully taken to Cotonou, a strange land, under the allegation that they are illegal immigrants.

The case of the woman in the bus would have been like that had her kinsmen not come to her rescue. What compounded her case was that firstly, she could not speak English, secondly she could not speak correct Yorùbá and thirdly she could not speak French. Some Ogu people in Nigeria speak French as a matter of necessity since they live around the border between Nigeria and Benin. The situation speaks to the illusion of colonial boundaries in Africa because for most people divided by the artificial boundaries, adherence is impossible. They interact with their relations across the borders as if the national boundaries did not exist.[12] Needless to say, people coexist without boundaries. Ogu is one of the majority languages in Benin Republic while French is the official language. Yorùbá in Benin Republic is spoken by a minority group and it is quite different from the Yorùbá in Nigeria. It is therefore little wonder that the Ogu in Nigeria are often mistaken for illegal immigrants. The anomaly here is the use of fluency in Yorùbá as a yardstick for determining who is Nigerian or not, as if every Nigerian in the Southwest must be proficient in Yorùbá.

The discrimination and misrecognition meted out to Ogu people is one of the contributory factors to the widespread language shift going on in Ogu communities in Nigeria. Unfortunately for the Ogu who have shifted to Yorùbá, they are often disowned by the same Yorùbá, when the chips are down. The woman in the bus did not receive any support from any of the Yorùbá passengers. Rather she was ridiculed and mocked at by them. But

[11] The quotation marks are so applied to the phrase because some of such people are actually not immigrants but Ogu in Nigeria.

[12] An elder of a border community between Nigeria and Benin Republic once famously observed that it is common practice for people in Nigeria to make their "eba", a cassava meal, while they cross the border to Benin Republic to procure the soup with which to eat the eba. This is because both the people in Nigeria and those in Benin Republic are relations, in spite of the border difference.

for the timely intervention of the corps member and the other passenger, she would have been thrown out of the bus by the Yorùbá, who were already very angry that her refusal to come down from the vehicle on her own volition was delaying their journey. It is usually in situations like this that many Ogu regret identifying with the Yorùbá. This realization has made some educated and enlightened Ogu elite to reverse language shift by speaking the language themselves and encouraging fellow Ogu to do same in a most unique way. Much as globalization consolidates the treatise of capitalist modernization as a driving ideology for shift from regional and minority languages (Coluzzi 2015), *cultural policing* by some members of the Ogu-speaking communities in Nigeria has proven that loyalty to the minority native language can be achieved.

The corps member and the other quiet passenger occupying the front seat both fall into the class of the Ogu cultural police. Sitting inside the bus and watching the argument unfold before them, they immediately became vigilant, suspecting that the woman in question might be one of their kinsmen who were fond of identifying with the Yorùbá but whose accent often gave them away. They did not react immediately the argument started because they needed to have some clues and any evidence if possible. The woman's mention of Pota in Lagos State, together with the fact that the Yorùbá she spoke did not resemble any known Yorùbá dialect, were the final clues that gave her away to her relatives. For obvious reasons, an Ogu speaker is more likely to detect an Ogu accent than any other person. For the driver and the other Yorùbá passengers, it was their inability to place the woman's so-called dialect of Yorùbá that was their worry as there is no known Yorùbá dialect that has the voiced labio-dental fricative \V\ and the voiced alveolar fricative /Z/, which Ogu people often insert in Yorùbá words. Again Ogu lacks the alveolar trill /r/ in its sound inventory and so its speakers usually replace it in Yorùbá words with the alveolar lateral /L/ e.g 'iresi' (Yorùbá term for rice) – 'ilesi' (Ogu). These are some tips that give the Ogu away to their fellow Ogu, and make them objects of ridicule to the Yorùbá under whose identity they like to hide.

It is worth noting that the stranger and the corps member did not ask the woman if she was Ogu before speaking to her in the language, to her utmost surprise. As they listened to the woman's flawed Yorùbá, they knew she was their own and gave her support. Language thus plays the dual role of conveyor of identity and marker of identity. Just as it is the duty of the professional police to save lives and property, so also is the resolve of the Ogu cultural police to maintain their language since languages do die like humans if they are not maintained. The threat the woman faced and the subsequent rescue by her kinsmen

taught her a lesson for life that it pays to identify with one's people and language by speaking it. There have been cases where some Ogu people, who speak Yorùbá, strongly denied their identity even when confronted by their kinsmen who had suspected their true identity. The focus of the Ogu cultural police is not to suppress the intruding language as reversing 'language shifters' (Fishman 1991) do, but to get their kinsmen to appreciate their ethnic identity since ethnic identity is often accompanied by an increased interest in language maintenance (Janse 2003).

4.1.5 Case 5

I would refer to Case 5 as a case of double policing, a situation where the police personnel was also being policed. The researcher was having a Multilingualism and Language Planning (LIN 372) class with her students at the University of Ibadan Distance Learning, Lagos Centre and the topic was Language Shift, Endangerment and Maintenance. The class listened with rapt attention as I discussed the three concepts and their implications for language planning in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general. I then used the Ogu people of Southwestern Nigeria as a case study of language shift and the near-endangered state of the language. I went about the lecture providing copious illustrations from Ogu. At that point, an Ogu student in the class, whom I did not know was Ogu, began to suspect my identity. As it was an interactive session, I began to ask questions about minority groups and endangered languages trying to find out if the class could speak their mother tongues. The Yorùbá students claimed that they could speak their mother tongue but members of other ethnic groups in the class could speak Yorùbá, because of their long stay in Lagos, to the detriment of their mother tongues. A particular student told me he could speak Yorùbá, was from Lagos State but not a Yorùbá. Immediately I became *suspicious.* Asked where exactly he was from in Lagos State, he said Badagry but his name was Yorùbá. I then asked why his full name was Yorùbá yet he claimed he was not Yorùbá. To this question he would not respond. Noticing his hesitation and not wanting to spend the remaining lecture time on frivolous questions – as they may have seemed to the class – I asked him to see me after the class. It was then that he confessed to me that he was Ogu and that his middle name was Asogba. Although he could make a few sentences in Ogu, he was more comfortable passing for a Yorùbá since he could speak the language fluently. Again, passing for a Yorùbá has made him enjoy some favours at his place of work which would have been denied him had his true identity been common knowledge. Despite hiding his true identity, he confessed that deep down in his heart, he had not been a happy person knowing that he had lost touch with his roots.

What was more startling about the encounter was when he told me that when

he saw my name among the list of course facilitators, he *suspected* that I was Ogu even without having met me and that he came to the class with the excitement that he was going to meet a kinsman. However when I showed up in class, he was no longer sure. Here are his very words:

> As soon as you entered the lecture room and I saw your complexion, your features and heard your accent (observation) I concluded that you were not Ogu but probably married to an Ogu. Then I noted the way you talked about Ogu language shift, evidence of which is their inability to speak the language; bearing of Yorùbá names; hiding under Yorùbá identity, etc. and concluded that you were not only married to an Ogu but grounded in the language and culture of the people (clues). I then felt embarrassed and stupid seeing that a stranger could be more proud of my language and people than I, an indigene. I resolved immediately that I would see you after the class to have a chat and further confirm my suspicions but luckily you found me out on your own and asked me to see you after the class. (A 28- year old company driver from Badagry LGA).

Our chat after the class took the form of *investigative interviewing which* Schollum (2005) also refers to it as questioning in professional policing. He further revealed that the passion with which I had talked about Ogu people and the endangered status of their language was what made him to confess in class that he was not Yorùbá as otherwise he would not disclose his true identity. Agreeing to the need for the language to be preserved by young people like him speaking it, he regretted his past action (*reformation)* and promised to make amends by returning to the patronage of the language and encouraging other Ogu youths like him, whom he claimed were very many in Lagos, to do same. I have remained in contact with him ever since, first as my student and more importantly as my 'brother-in-law' and I can confirm he has kept his resolve as we usually speak passable Ogu whenever we talk on phone. This is another unique style of operation of the Ogu cultural police - keeping close contact with their reformed kinsmen in order to continue to supply the much needed moral support that would enable them to grow into fluent, confident and proud users of their language.

4.1.6 Case 6

This sixth case under observation was the final determining incident that led the researcher into carrying out further research on the activities of Ogu cultural policemen and police women investigating how their efforts have contributed to the maintenance of Ogu. The incident happened during fieldwork while collecting data for her Masters dissertation.

I had gone out, together with my research assistant, to administer copies of a questionnaire in an Ogu community in Ado-Odo/ Ota Local Government Area. As soon as the people saw my research assistant, who was from the community, everyone started speaking the language. During my pilot study, I had noted the widespread shift from Ogu to Yorùbá from the domestic sphere to the public domain. Yorùbá was the language spoken at home between parents; between parents and children; among siblings; in the markets; in churches, schools and other public places. Even during traditional ceremonies like child naming, burial and marriage, Ogu was hardly used. That again aroused my curiosity so much so that I decided to go back to the field to assess the manner and extent of shift. When I started collating data from the questionnaire I was shocked to observe that to all the questions that were meant to establish the fact of shift and the extent, almost everyone responded that there was no shift and that they all spoke Ogu, with pride, in both the domestic and public domain. I was taken aback as the responses were a complete deviation from the real situation on the ground. I had to rely on my second research instrument, observation, to validate my claims.

In my determination to unravel the mystery behind the ambivalent attitude of the people, I discovered that the personality of my research assistant instigated the contradictory response. He can best be described as a cultural police in view of his cultural and linguistic loyalty in most of the communities in the area prior to his recruitment as my field assistant. Put differently, I found out after the questionnaire had been administered that prior to the fieldwork, my research assistant had already developed a reputation for urging people, through various platforms, to cultivate the habit of speaking Ogu everywhere. Needless to say, he was known for deploring the Ogu's preference for Yorùbá and English, contending that such attitude tended to compromise the dignity of the identity of the Ogu. It was with this consciousness of cultural morality, embodied in my research assistant, that most of the respondents found themselves responding to the questions. Therefore, his cultural *policing reputation* influenced responses to indicate that the LGAs studied were predisposed to speaking the language. It then dawned on me that certain Ogu personalities carry in them an aura of linguistic patriotism which causes people around them to reverse to their language whenever they see them. It is not intimidation of any kind as these individuals, sometimes, are even younger than their policed kinsmen – like the research assistant – but are able to gain the respect and admiration of their people because they represent their interest. They are icons by virtue of their level of education and their placement in society. What is more, they are models, since they do not only encourage the people to speak

their language but demonstrate this by doing so. Their people see them as the messiahs who will assist them in their task of socio-economic emancipation. Therefore, if these icons, who are seen as the light and hope of their people, advise them to appreciate and assert their language, ethnic identity and cultural autonomy, they willingly do so.

Ogu cultural policemen and policewomen are propelled by altruistic motivations which give credence to the argument by Edwards (2010) that collective capacity for self affirmation is a function of numerical strength. Again Ehala (2011) argues that the emotional attachment to one's ethnic group is the key aspect that influences individual ethnolinguistic vitality. The more a person is emotionally attached to his or her ethnic group, the more likely that person is to participate in group actions. The ethnolinguistic vitality of minority language groups therefore is premised on the level of emotional attachment to their language. People shift from their heritage languages because they feel that there is nothing to gain from speaking them. However, with the efforts of the Ogu cultural police, Ogu people are beginning to develop emotional attachment to Ogu as the marker and purveyor of their identity. Such emotional attachment to Ogu by its speakers has found expression in the reversal to the patronage of the language.

The job of the cultural police team has been made easy and accelerated by the frequent occurrence of violent ethnic conflicts between the Yorùbá (the Awori stock) and the Ogu people in Ogun State over landed property. It has now dawned on Ogu people that the Yorùbá do not see them as kinsmen despite all their efforts to identify with them. The importance of speaking their language is becoming clearer to them by the day. One way by which the Ogu in the wake of the conflicts now assert themselves is through reversal to the language. While this validates the assertion that inter-ethnic crisis encourages speakers of minority languages that have shifted to other languages to shift back to their native languages (Ioratim-Uba 2009), Ogu cultural police men and women have played a key role in enlightening their people on the need for the linguistic reversal in view of the initial shift to Yorùbá .

The six cases observed by the researcher as discussed in the preceding paragraphs formed the bedrock on which this research is hinged. The researcher sought to find out more about the activities of this unique set of Ogu sons and daughters, who, by their sheer personality and the use of policing strategies, are able to bring about the maintenance of Ogu, which, for many years has been experiencing shift to Yorùbá mainly and then English. Key

informant interviews were then conducted with some selected "members" of the cultural police team in order for them to relate their intimate experiences on the job as well as their *modus operandi*. Data thus collected are discussed under long and short term cultural policing. However, a discussion of the concept of cultural policing will be first engaged in order to get a better understanding of the dynamics of its operations.

4.1.7 The concept of cultural policing

The term "*cultural policing*" is not the application of force. This clarification is needful in view of the tendency to associate professional policing with the use of force and violence in its operations. Palmer et al (2012) are of the view that Policing is one of the most basic and essential avenues for improving the quality of life in all nations; rich and poor; modern and traditional; large and small; as well as peaceful and strife-ridden. The term is therefore used in this context to refer to those soft and subtle, non-violent, non-forceful strategies that Ogu people have applied and are still applying in the maintenance of their language. More specifically, it is about the strategies adopted by an elite and influential group among the Ogu-speaking communities in a bid to reverse the widespread shift being experienced in the native linguistic milieu. The vitality of this strategy consists in the knowledge that here is a group of individuals that has shaken off the ethnic bias of inferiority and marginalization and has become greatly successful in educational, intellectual and material terms.

The attitude and intervention of the Ogu elite along the line of *cultural policing* for language maintenance are significant in the way they destabilize the iconic assumption about the unlikelihood of minority heritage language use in homes of highly educated people (Karidakis and Arunachalam 2016). The strategies, as employed by these Ogu elite, are akin to strategies that the police all over the world use "in order to maintain law and order, public peace and safety in the society" (Momoh 2010:136). It is germane to this study that the term "maintenance" is crucial to the principles and practices of the police just as it is to linguists. As discussed earlier, the maintenance of Ogu has been compromised by both its speakers and the government, as the speakers continue to shift to Yorùbá and deny their identity. Speakers of minority languages face the dilemma of maintaining their cultural and ethnic identity and the socio-economic as well as political benefits that accrue from identifying with the privileged languages. Members of the Ogu

cultural police team, who are involved in the maintenance of Ogu by using policing strategies, follow Alderson's (1979:2) submission that "the police have a duty to themselves as a group and to the public (and particularly to the interested public) to begin to question the principles and practices which are historic and traditional and to venture forth with comments of their own, which will help to inform and stimulate the debate which at present rages around them". In a similar vein, the Ogu elite question the practice of shifting to Yorùbá at the excuse of lack of material gains in speaking their language. The principle of abandoning one's language due to threats from a more prestigious language constitutes part of what the cultural police debunk as they sensitize their people towards a cultural renaissance.

The essence of an individual's existence lies in being part of a cultural and linguistic group as this is what identifies him and gives him a sense of belonging. Once a language is lost, its speakers lose their identity and pride. Ethnic origin is of far more benefit to a member of a linguistic group than any other socio-economic benefits that follow from identifying with another linguistic group. The Ogu cultural police are able to achieve their goal by appealing to their people's sense of ethnic pride and dignity. Being well-placed people in society, they lead by example as they speak the language themselves and teach members of their immediate families to do the same. They address their people in the language, refusing to join in the practice of speaking the dominant language, and stress intergenerational transmission. In as much as material benefits do act as attraction to language maintenance, in the case of the Ogu, ignorance and lack of education are contributory factors to the widespread shift being experienced in Ogu communities. The people are encouraged to take pride in speaking their language and identifying with their people both at home and abroad. There is no gainsaying the fact that government has a crucial role to play in the empowerment of Ogu and its speakers. However due to their minority status, and the domineering presence of the Yorùbá , political agitations may take a longer time to yield results. The Ogu cultural police are of the belief that the situation facing their people is one that needs immediate native-speaker interventions. As Ndhlovu (2010: 41) puts it, "No one or group of people can maintain a language better than the speakers themselves". Seeing the risk of endangerment looming over their language, the Ogu cultural police have appropriated the task of sensitizing their people on the cultural risk involved in the non-maintenance of their ethnic language and origin, which finds

expression in their language. Ericson and Haggerty (1997:8) posit that the police believe that “the world can be made more secure by ever more perfect knowledge of risk”. So also do the Ogu cultural police believe that Ogu language shift can be mitigated if the people are made to realize the risk involved in losing their language.

The notion of maintenance and sustenance, to say nothing of survival has always prompted the application of the term “policing”. In other words, beyond the formal references to the term in the context of human security in relation to community and statehood, the term has often found other outlets of use in other contexts during which what is prioritized is the necessity of maintenance. This understanding for instance informed the production of terms and intellectual outputs such as *Policing Democracy* (Ungar 2011) and "environmental policing" (Mwanika 2010). In the case of Ungar's intervention, the concern in the application of the term is the sustenance and development of democratic ideals in previously dictatorial societies in Latin America. On the other hand, "environmental policing" indicates an awareness of the compromise and vulnerability of the environment in the face of human and non-human induced disasters. Invariably the environment needs to be policed as a strategy against disruption, which means an espousal for its protection and maintenance against a drift towards an apocalyptic termination or expiration.

In the context of this study, however, the term *cultural policing* refers to certain strategic activities aimed at maintaining and preserving the language and culture of Ogu people. As language loss is tantamount to cultural annihilation, there is need for languages that are threatened, to be policed so that their speakers can understand the inherent values in the maintenance of their linguistic and cultural heritage. As explained above, the Ogu cultural policemen and women have saddled themselves with the task of preventing their ethnic identity and pride from being compromised as they look out for Ogu sons and daughters who have compromised their identity in order to find favour and certain privileges that are enjoyed by large linguistic groups. They therefore employ the tool of subtle persuasion in carrying out their activities. Their mode of operation is unique in the sense that they employ strategies that are similar to those used by the police in maintaining law and order. Their main modus operandi is the identification of Ogu speakers who have abandoned their language and hiding under the identity of Yorùbá. The procedure of identifying these speakers can be labour-intensive, needing quite a deal of patience and endurance. This

aligns with Mawby's (1999:9) position that "Policing seems to be labour-intensive to almost the same degree in every country". Once the identity of the Ogu speaker is established, the cultural police then use subtle and persuasive words in their interaction with denying kinsmen. In the process, they arouse their sense of cultural patriotism and ethnic dignity inherited by being born into the linguistic group. Their persuasion is like the proverbial saying that "One cannot run away from one's shadow".

"Policing as a set of activities and processes is something that may be performed by a variety of professional or ordinary people" (Crawford 2008:148). The activity of policing is one that can be carried out by anyone depending on whom and what is being policed. Policing, according to Crawford (ibid) may take the form of individual and collective efforts. Sometimes civilian members of the citizenry work hand in hand with the professional police to maintain law and order especially in the area of information that may assist the police in arresting criminals. However, in cultural policing among the Ogu, denying members of the linguistic community are not forced; neither are they arrested, yet the cultural police through their subtle strategies bring members to the realization of the need to maintain the language.

4.1.8 The Ogu Cultural police and the dynamics of their operation

The Ogu cultural police operate by using some or all of the policing strategies listed below:

1. Observation
2. Suspicion
3. Information
4. Intelligence
5. Tip-off
6. Investigation
7. Questioning
8. Clues
9. Proof
10. Persuasion
11. Reformation

Generally, the strategies above can be subsumed under four main modes of operations.

This way, the strategies are principally categorized as ranging from the use of tip-off, to "partnership strategies intelligence" (Ratcliffe 2002), to "hindsight bias" (Villejoubert et al 2006), and to "investigative interviewing" (Williamson 2006).

Sheptycki (2002:7) is of the opinion that policing relates to terrain and population and that "it is a set of practices that seek to order human populations that inhabit or pass through a given territory by simultaneously maintaining control of the space and of the people who inhabit it". In line with this therefore, the dynamics of the operations of the cultural police are such that they reflect the operational strategies used in the police for maintaining order, although the concern of *cultural policing* as used in this study is the maintenance of language and linguistic space. However, issues such as force, arrest, torture, violation of human rights, etc. are excluded as it is not the intention of the Ogu cultural police to force or threaten anyone to speak their language.

Usually in the carrying out of their day-to-day informal activities, the cultural policemen run into individuals that they suspect to be Ogu speakers who are hiding their identity. Observation is often the first strategy employed in the course of identifying those who have shifted from Ogu to Yorùbá in the main. This is then followed by suspicion. In some instances, running into 'suspects' is purely by chance as the cultural police may not have the intention of looking out for such suspects. Such chance meetings may happen in a cab, a place of worship, in work places, schools, hospitals, clubs, restaurants, markets, etc. Suspicion usually happens when, in the course of interacting with people, the cultural police identify a particular speaker's peculiar accent as indicating his Ogu identity. For instance, someone may be speaking Yorùbá with a particular accent that would give away their Ogu identity to a native Ogu speaker. It is a fact that some Ogu speakers do speak Yorùbá with such an accent that even makes the Yorùbá ridicule them. This unique accent is easily identified by Ogu speakers especially in the area of pronunciation. It is an established phonetic fact that Ogu does not have the alveolar trill [r] in its sound inventory and as such its speakers often substitute it with the alveolar lateral [l]. For instance, while speaking Yorùbá , an Ogu speaker may say 'Mo fe la amala' instead of 'Mo fe ra amala' (I want to buy amala).

The next reaction of an Ogu cultural police as soon as he suspects an individual to be an Ogu is that he warms his way into becoming friends with the person and subtly gets into a

conversation that would have features of questioning. In the process, he gathers more information as evidence and proof. He then introduces himself as a proud speaker of Ogu and thereafter carefully explains the joy and pride in identifying with one's cultural and linguistic origins by speaking the language. The language employed in this conversation cum questioning is usually persuasive and emotional as it is targeted at the listener's sense of ethnicity. It is not always the case that the 'suspect' would take it easy with the cultural police, seeing that in some instances, the 'suspect' may see it as an encroachment into his privacy as well as his fundamental right to freedom of speech. In some other instances, the suspect may tell the cultural police that he does not stand to gain any special privileges by speaking the language. For such individuals, Ogu does not 'put food on their tables' so why the bother? These are some of the challenges that they face. Not withstanding this, as a 'cultural' police, whose interest is in the maintenance of his cultural heritage, he is not deterred as he continues to persuade the suspect to appreciate his language and people even if he has to explore his bilingual linguistic competence. Some encounters like this may take days, weeks and even months and demand a lot of patience, energy and willpower of the cultural police to achieve the desired results.

Ultimately, the "suspect" accepts to return to his roots and identify with his language and people. This is the reformation stage and the job of the cultural police is somewhat complete. For some other encounters, the time of suspicion to reformation may take only a few minutes because some suspects to whom the cultural police have given enough evidence to confirm their identity, often own up easily and regret their actions. They blame their unpatriotic attitude towards Ogu on ignorance. Having been well educated on the inherent benefits in preserving their language, they promise to change their ways and speak the language together with other members of their families. The Ogu cultural policemen or women are able to achieve this task of persuading Ogu speakers to patronize their language mainly because they are well-placed in society and are not ashamed to identify with their people and the language. They are an epitome of the proud Ogu personality, who though is marginalized and unrecognized, still holds on to his ethnic and cultural heritage. They educate members of their families to be proud speakers of the language both at home and abroad. Seeing that they are highly educated and of high standing in the community, other speakers of Ogu, who hide their identity, are encouraged by the way the cultural police showcase their linguistic and cultural heritage. More often

than not, previously denying members of the linguistic community are willing to tow this line of linguistic pride upon encountering the cultural policemen and women.

Ogu cultural police usually use information and intelligence as part of the dynamics of their operations. Intelligence here could be information gotten from another person about the suspected identity of another individual. Such chanced information could come unconsciously from interactions with the informant as the cultural police, who, as is characteristic of police generally, is alert and vigilant. He begins his investigation looking for clues and evidence that he might use to nail the "suspect" beyond doubt about his true identity. Such clues might be facial scarification or tribal marks, certain Yorùbá or English names that are in fact Ogu names that have been Yorùbáized or Anglicized, etc. When such names are stumbled upon by an Ogu cultural police they are invaluable clues as to identifying their kinsmen. It has been noted earlier, that many Ogu people bear Yorùbá names in a desperate bid to identify with Yorùbá people. Some who are originally given Ogu names grow up to find any Yorùbá name that somewhat resembles their Ogu names but not in any way having the same meaning and begin to answer such names. Perhaps the similarity in sound and syllable structure between Yoruba and Ogu names may account for this ease in the Yorubaization of Ogu names. It is not uncommon therefore to find Ogu people bearing such Yorùbá names as listed below:

Adétúnjí (Royalty reincarnated) for Setonji (Destiny's appointed time)
Títílopé (Eternal gratitude) for Titengbe (Significant)
Béwàjí (Risen with beauty) for Peawhanji (Victory over battles)
Dáìísí (The spared one) Thasi (In Tha's hand)[13]
Jídé (The reincarnated one) for Jidenu (A thing of hope)
Adamitunde (My matchet has returned) for Athanmitonde (Not by our power)
Omowùmí (I desire a child) for Maumeh (A God-sent person)
Adansere (A playful bat) for Athasede (Not by my power)

The above are just a few of the Ogu names that are often Yorùbáized and as such bearers of such Yorùbá names are often suspected to be Ogu speakers under cover. Another style is for some of the Ogu to Anglicize their Ogu names. For instance, an Ogu name like Dekon could be changed to Deacons, Potuetho to Pot and Akodegbe to Accord. Some can choose to change their names to their exact Yorùbá version e.g Senayon – Tèmiádára;

[13] Tha is an Ogu serpentine deity.

Owhenayon-Abíódún, Sefrimi-Rántími, etc. Names like these often lead Ogu cultural policemen to their targets.

When an Ogu cultural police meets such suspects, he could introduce himself by his own Ogu name and immediately that often strikes a chord in the heart of the suspect, which is exactly the intention of the police when he employs that manner of introduction. He then watches the reaction of the suspect and then takes it up from there. The suspect often is mellowed into revealing his identity and takes a decision to return to his roots. The questioning thereafter may continue in Ogu and both enjoy the richness of the language as well as its cultural heritage. The entire procedure does not end without the now reformed suspect enlisting into the Ogu cultural police by becoming a police too and helping in maintaining the language, sensitizing his likes into embracing the language. Using himself as an example, his personal experience is a motivating factor in winning others to his side.

Policing in general terms, according to Palmer et al (2012), is a moral profession with unflinching adherence to the rule of law and human rights as the embodiment of human values. The Ogu cultural police are law-abiding citizens of the country who are also knowledgeable about the rights of the citizens and so do not in any way violate other people's fundamental human right to freedom of speech. This explains why the dynamics of their operations are purely informal and friendly. The relationship between the police and the suspect is the type that operates among kinsmen embodied by the cultural ties of brotherhood. More importantly, the caveat of morality in the definition above applies to the Ogu cultural police in the sense that they are able to mobilize a certain degree of outstanding cultural morality for themselves. It usually manifests in the level of their pride and loyalty to Ogu cultural heritage. This credential is besides their high educational qualifications, so much so that denying members are convinced about the seriousness of the Ogu cultural police's brief as linguistic gatekeepers.

Brogden and Nijhar (2005:2) are of the view that "Policing is determined by strategies, tactics and outcomes based on community consent". Cultural policing, as practised by the Ogu people, is unique in the sense that policing strategies and tactics are used in language maintenance procedures and it is approved by the Ogu communities who are happy that such cultural renaissance is going on. The attitude of the Ogu community in Southwestern

Nigeria towards cultural policing reveals the fact that minority language speakers still hold their languages dear to their hearts and need just a little sensitization and prodding to resist language shift. Though marginalized people shift to more privileged languages, they still know deep down their hearts that they do not belong to those linguistic groups. They live with the emotional pain and pressure that go with the loss of ethnic identity but are often unable to do anything about it. Little wonder then that the activities of the cultural police open their understanding to the fact that they can still do well in life without denying their language and their people.

The activities of Ogu cultural policemen and women find validation in what Crawford (2008:160) refers to as "policing by communities", a situation where individual civilian members of the community participate in policing "as social ties and informal social control constitute the bedrock of local order" The maintenance of Ogu language has been taken up by these policing individuals with the aim of preserving their cultural heritage via policing strategies. Wetife (2008), explains that the discharge of police functions consists of advising, controlling, directing, monitoring and reforming people. This the Ogu cultural police do in the course of carrying out their duties consciously and unconsciously. Their major reformation tool is the power of persuasion and advice, which sometimes translate into negotiation and mediation in winning over fellow Ogu to their side. In this regard they differ from the professional police who often use force to elicit information and confession from suspects, although they deny the use of torture during interrogation.[14]

Again Ogu cultural police are not unaware of the advice of Wetife (2008) that policemen need to exercise a great deal of discretion in carrying out their activities. In some cases, therefore, the Ogu cultural police have to take their time to observe, strategise and decide on how best to handle particular individuals who may pick offence with the sheer idea of being policed. This is where a large dose of discretion is applied in order not to jeopardize the essence of their actions and spoil the good work that they have started. If they are at a loss as to how to handle certain tricky situations, they seek the advice of fellow cultural police who may proffer subtle and logical strategies to use. In this case, networking is part of their operational strategies as one cultural police can link up with his fellow police for intelligence, information and evidence. They may serve as informants for one another and may even investigate a case based on tip-off. In some cases, the tip-off could come from

[14] The police now use questioning in place of interrogation to reduce the forceful nature of eliciting confessions from suspected criminals.

non-Ogu speakers who are aware of the activities of the cultural police by virtue of the fact that they are their friends, neighbours, colleagues, etc. Such non-Ogu informants have witnessed the *modus operandi* of the cultural policemen and women having been in the environment of policing.

They are also conversant with the traits and character that may raise suspicion about the identity of an individual. For instance, they could say to an Ogu cultural police: "There is a classmate of mine who has an odd Yorùbá name and some funny tribal marks and speaks Yorùbá with an accent. He says he is from Lagos State and claims to be Yorùbá but I suspect he is 'Egun'. Maybe you could check him out".[15] The informant in this case could be a fellow student and friend or roommate with the Ogu cultural police. Acting on this tip-off, the policeman or woman begins investigation so as to gather more proofs to nail the true identity of the suspect. After this, he may arrange a friendly and cordial meeting with him. In the course of interacting with and questioning the suspect, the police follow the advice of Afonja (2008) that a police officer must cultivate a keen sense of observation. This keen sense of observation tells the police whether it is wise to let his intentions known to the suspect on that first meeting with him or choose to delay it till another time. Meanwhile, he maintains the cordial relationship with the suspect whom he is soon able to win to his side with the power of persuasion.

An Ogu cultural police could identify a suspect based on facial scarification. In Western Nigeria, especially among the Yorùbá , different groups are identified by specific marks on their faces. The Ogu too have their unique facial scarification, which tells the specific families and clans that they belong. Such marks for both the Ogu and the Yorùbá could range from just a single or several vertical or horizontal strokes either on the forehead or on one or both cheeks. Facial scarification is not peculiar to Western Nigeria alone but a phenomenon that is common to the whole of Africa. Apart from language, it is another mark of ethnic identity and culture. Generally, people, who are conversant with the different marks, are able to tell who is who. A person can run away from his language by shifting to a more prestigious language, but if he has tribal marks on his face he cannot hide his identity from those who know him. Facial scarification is a sure way of making its carrier know that he cannot run away from himself as the marks, once given, are permanent and tell the world who a person is. Ogu people, who pretend to be Yorùbá, are often times identified by their kinsmen who recognize the marks on their faces. The marks

[15] Even when the language and the people are Ogu, they are generally referred to as Egun by the Yoruba.

are part of the evidence to raise suspicion in the Ogu cultural police as per the identity of such individuals.

The Yorùbá too are conversant with their peculiar tribal marks such that when they see an individual, carrying a different set of unique tribal marks claiming to be one of them, their suspicion is aroused and if such persons are friends with Ogu cultural police, they may draw their attention to the situation. This could then lead to further investigations on the part of the cultural police as he gathers more proofs to nail the real identity of the 'suspect'. Once the true identity is confirmed, the police use the usual strategy of persuasion to bring the suspect to confession and reformation and of course enlistment into the Ogu cultural police team. Neyroud (2008:715) opines that policing is about police officers doing the right things for the right reasons. So long as what the Ogu cultural police do is for the preservation of their language, their activities are appreciated by the people as they realize that their shift to Yorùbá, though born out of ignorance, is a step in the wrong direction.

Literature about ethics in professional policing focuses on covert policing and the use of force. According to Mawby and Wright (2008:711), the police is portrayed as "using deceptive means, which can intrude on the rights of citizens, to detect crime and prosecute offenders notably through electronic or physical surveillance or the deployment of informants". This adds credence to the activities of the cultural police who, unlike the professional police, do not apply force or deceptive means but subtle persuasion in executing their goals. They are in tune with Waddington's argument (in Waddington and Wright (2008) that the coercive core of policing, the deployment of the use of force, sits uneasily with the concept of service. This is why Wetife (2008) advises that persuasion, negotiation and mediation be used to settle disputes as opposed to brutal force.

The informal use of policing strategies for language maintenance by some Ogu language loyalists is not strange, as there exists in the literature that public participation in policing complements professional practice with special benefits (Fitzgerald et al 2000; Neyroud 2001 and Putnam 2000). This fact is buttressed by Crawford (2008:148) in his definition of policing as "a set of activities and processes that may be performed by a variety of professional and ordinary people". Civilians do assist the police in their investigations especially in the area of supplying information. Tiley (2008:375) explains that "Intelligence-led policing involves effectively sourcing, assembling and analyzing

intelligence". Tiley again asserts that among other things, the police have the objective to contribute to liberty, equality and fraternity as well as help create trust in communities. The motivation for the method of operation of the Ogu cultural police stems from the desire to liberate their people from the marginalization and psychological inadequacy they suffer as a result of their minority status within a prestigious linguistic group as the Yorùbá. They seek linguistic equality and fraternity between them and their neighbours. For them, charity begins at home, as an individual who does not appreciate and cherish his language should not expect another person to do it for him. This finds expression in the leadership example of the cultural police as they speak the language with pride wherever they find themselves even at the expense of being ridiculed. To crown it all, they involve members of their families in the speaking of the language.

Surveillance as used by the professional police has been yielding positive results for the Ogu cultural police. As a policing strategy, it involves the "tracking down of certain targeted individuals or group of individuals whom the police regard as suspects, whether known or unknown and making arrests as well as traffic stops and sweeps of area" (Manning 2010: xiii). However though the Ogu cultural police use this strategy, they do it in a quite different way, as they are not police in the real and formal sense of the word. Surveillance, for them, is a way of identifying their kinsmen and not arresting criminals in the real sense of criminality as in individuals who have contravened the law. Arrest for them is the point where they are able to come face to face with the suspect with a stance of brotherhood and comradeship and are able to bring them to confession and reformation. It therefore goes without saying that here is a set of people who is not out to send people to jail or in any way cause trouble in their community or other areas of their operation. Patrolling and tracking usually take place as they go about their daily private activities. So it is not the case that these cultural police wake up every day and go about tracking down Ogu people who have hidden their identity by shifting from speaking Ogu to Yorùbá. Sometimes tracking happens spontaneously, while in some other cases the police act on tip-off from informants.

Police must have the power of observation: they must be able to notice unusual things, events and persons (Wetife, 2008). The Ogu cultural police, with their keen sense of observation are able to notice unusual things, happenings and people that lead them to tracking down suspects. Because they have the survival of their ethnic identity and the

maintenance of their language at the back of their minds, they follow any lead that may help them to achieving their mission and desire. In some instances, elements of food culture peculiar to the Ogu become another way by which these policemen and women get the lead to carry out their brief. Since they wouldn't want anything to frustrate their efforts, they exercise a great deal of caution in the way they carry out their activities especially as they are not formally licensed by government to carry out their operations. These are men and women, who, on their own desire not to sit back and let their language die. They therefore decided, in their own informal way, to sensitize their people about the dangers inherent in losing their linguistic and cultural sense of belonging.

It therefore stands to reason that language activism is substantially about agitating with the state for the formal adoption of a minority/endangered language for use in the public and formal domain. On its part, *cultural policing* departs from language activism in the very sense in which it affirms the agency of informal use by native speakers of a minority or endangered language to the point of boosting its compromised vitality. Those involved are themselves native speakers with social and political privileges anchored in high educational qualifications. Their loyalty to the language becomes a moral edge that nudges others to reconsider their linguistic and cultural stance and begin to speak Ogu with pride. Inevitably, while language activism affirms government/state agency for minority language survival and maintenance, cultural policing espouses native speakers' agency.

It has been established through the literature review that existing literature on Ogu mainly focuses on establishing the fact that the language is experiencing shift to Yorùbá and English. Though such literature suggest maintenance strategies, mention has not been made of the informal native speaker to native speaker approach which I have termed cultural policing. Again hegemonic global maintenance strategies abound in the literature, but so far none has discussed the use of policing strategies in language maintenance. Yet the operationalization of *cultural policing* in this study should not be surprising, considering that "language shift is such a complex social practice that it cannot be satisfactorily explained by the use of preconceived, deductive analytical frameworks (Forsman 2015: 37). As will be illustrated in the analysis chapters, the strongest yield on language maintenance has been through cultural policing, which is why the strategy cannot go unacknowledged. This is precisely because while most of the normative recommendations for language maintenance emphasize state agency, they have not proven

to be as productive in the maintenance of Ogu as much as *cultural policing* has done.

4.2 Data Discussion from Key Informant Interviews (KII): long term cultural policing

Long term *cultural policing* refers to the duration of time from when cultural police members suspect the Ogu identity of a certain individual, to investigation that leads to the clue that finally reveals the true identity, to the time the "suspect" owns up and gets reformed. Some of such cases can take from a few months to sometimes a year or even more. Twelve key informants, four from each of the three local government areas under study, were interviewed by the researcher. The key informants were people, male and female, who had been in the forefront of the linguistic reawakening and emancipation of Ogu people. They have been using professional policing strategies in bringing about the maintenance of their language, which, before their activities started, had been heading for attrition. Some of the key informants interviewed recounted some cases that fall into the long term category. The cases are further discussed under the following policing sub-headings:

a. Hindsight Bias
b. Investigative Interviewing
c. Intelligence-led Policing/ Tip-off
d. Self-Confession

The cases are discussed under the headings above based on how they relate to the specific policing strategies that they resonate with. Discussing the case studies this way, further adds credence to the claim that the Ogu people are able to maintain their language using strategies that are applied in professional policing. This makes the term, "*cultural police*" quite appropriate for the description of these individuals and *"cultural policing"* for their activities.

4.2.1 Hindsight bias: the "I knew it all along" phenomenon

Ogu cultural police often employ hindsight bias in their judgement of the identity of kinsmen whom they suspect to be one of them. Somehow they feel that some individuals may be their kinsmen even without knowing why. This feeling is like the proverbial saying that blood is thicker than water. Eventually they discover that such persons are actually Ogu and they are not surprised seeing that they had known it all along. The case study presented and discussed below shows evidence of hindsight bias:

4.2.1.1 Case 7

In one of my key informant interviews, Mrs Povi, a 35-year-old civil servant from Ado-Odo/Ota LGA, Ogun State, revealed her application of the "I knew it all along" (hindsight bias) strategy. She explained that her motivation for reverting to Ogu was the realization that she had been losing her Ogu identity, which she had discarded for Yorùbá since her days in elementary school. On getting to the university, she discovered one or two of her kinsmen who were proud of the language by speaking it everywhere. She regained confidence in herself and followed suit. When she started work as a civil servant, she further realized that the Yorùbá people that she had been trying to identify with still treated her as something loathsome. They didn't see her as one of them but a stranger. She still was denied certain benefits that were supposed to accrue to her as a supposed Yorùbá. According to her, on one or two occasions when she visited her community, she discovered that some of her kinsmen, who had had similar experiences, had been telling their people the need to return to the patronage of their language. She then decided to start speaking the language. When she got married – to an Ogu – she insisted on the language in her matrimonial home. She also embarked on the task of fishing out her likes and encouraging them to return to the patronage of the language. Having undergone shift to Yorùbá before, she knew exactly how to fish out fellow Ogu who pretend to be Yorùbá. Here are excerpts from the interview with her:

Researcher: How do you identify your fellow Ogu who pretend to be Yorùbá?

Mrs Povi: That's easy! I noticed for instance that a certain 'Yorùbá' (who later turned out to be Ogu) neighbour of mine always cast furtive glances at me each time I interacted with my husband and my kids in Ogu. I sensed that the glances were not just for admiration or interest but something deeper than that, maybe probing. I had a strong feeling that she was Ogu and perhaps understood the language.

Researcher: Is that enough for you to suspect the woman's identity?

Mrs Povi: There were occasions when she commended me on the pride with which my children and I spoke Ogu. She was particularly impressed that my kids could speak the language in a neighbourhood where everyone spoke Yorùbá and English. I observed her particular interest in my family, which was not exhibited by any other neighbour and this got me interested in carrying out further investigations.

Researcher: So what further investigations did you carry out?

Mrs Povi: I decided to question her. I told her that I had noticed her interest in my family and asked if she was Ogu. She denied even knowing about a linguistic group called Ogu let alone being one. So I left her alone. Not long after that, her husband, who was often away, came around and saw me interacting with my kids in Ogu. He exclaimed that he was Ogu and that he never knew that an educated and enlightened woman like me could speak Ogu with so much pride. He confessed that he and his wife were Ogu and that their eight children could not speak Ogu. He expressed his shame at having been hiding his identity, together with his wife and blamed her for their children's inability to speak Ogu. For him, it was not his fault as his job always took him away from home and he felt that his wife, who was always at home with the kids, should have been teaching them the language. He there and then took a resolve to go back home and make amends.

Researcher: Were you not shocked to discover that the same woman, who had denied hearing the word, Ogu, was actually an Ogu?

Mrs Povi: I was not particularly surprised as I already had my suspicions – I had known it all along. Her husband only confirmed my suspicion. You know, later in the evening of the same day, the couple came to my house and the woman apologised for her earlier attitude. She confessed that each time she had seen my kids and me interacting in Ogu she grieved in her heart that I was doing what she couldn't do. She had portrayed herself for too long in that area as a Yorùbá woman so much so that she didn't know how to change it. She added that she was particularly grieved that her children understood no word of Ogu and both parents are Ogu.

Researcher: Amazing! So how did it all end?

Mrs Povi: happily of course! I encouraged them to believe that it was not too late for them to return to Ogu for it was better late than never. They were most grateful for the model they had found in me and resolved to patronise Ogu at the domestic domain, no matter how difficult it might be.

Researcher: Have they been making any effort in that direction?

Mrs Povi: Oh yes, we are neighbours and I see them do so. My presence is helping though. I even speak Ogu to the children too and we all now relate as

kinsmen.

Researcher: So how long did this whole encounter that you just narrated last?

Mrs Povi: Well let me say about a year.

Researcher: Thank you for your time.

Mrs Povi*:* It is my pleasure.

The pattern that the Ogu cultural police team follows is often the same with that of the professional police. Usually it starts with observation and then suspicion. Then investigation follows and confirmation which often resonates with the hindsight bias. Once there is enough evidence to prove the fact, then the police questions the 'suspect'. In doing this, a lot of tact, as well as discretion, as advised by Wetife (2008), is employed in order to handle the questioning in such a way that the suspect does not feel offended. Like some professional policemen and women, Ogu cultural police members sometimes get insulted in the course of their operations. However, they don't pick offence since they are driven by their loyalty to their community. More often than not, their cases are usually success stories as their denying kinsmen give in to confession and reformation. What is more noteworthy is the willingness and readiness of the reformed kinsmen to join the cultural police team.

The case discussed above is one of what I designate as *long term policing*. It takes a long time for some of the cases to get resolved. The two parties above were neighbours for a long time during which the Ogu cultural police had been observing and looking for clues. Sometimes it could take years to wrap up a case while at other times it might take a few hours or just minutes. The wrapping up of this case was made easy, so to speak, with the self-confession of the suspect's husband. Note that the cultural police never had anything to do with the woman's husband. She hardly ever saw him but on his own, he began to confess out of a feeling of shame and guilt. Sometimes even in professional policing, suspects confess, on their own – without any questioning or prodding – to the crime out of guilt, shame or remorse (Blum 2008).

4.2.1.2 Case 8

Earlier, I established that some *cultural policing* cases might take a long time, from a few months to several years. In the case discussed here, we see another instance of long term policing with the hindsight bias of "I knew it all along". From Key Informant 2, a 43- year old male high school teacher from Ado-Odo/Ota LGA comes this narrative. The hindsight bias comes to play in this case very clearly. The informant had been observing the attitude and behaviour of his neighbour while he was an NCE student in their off-campus

hostel for a while and sensed that the fellow was Ogu. However, on casual interaction, the other student kept denying his identity very strongly. The cultural police however refused to be discouraged knowing that some day, he would find a clue that would nail the student being policed. More than a year had elapsed before the student finally gave himself away. One morning, the cultural police was preparing a particular delicacy that was peculiar to Ogu people in the hostel. The cultural police had noticed the unease and restlessness that his neighbour began to exhibit the moment the peculiar aroma of the native beans delicacy called *sanpiti* pervaded the air. The police noted that the fellow student became restless, going in and out of his room, walking past and greeting him severally. He took particular note of this unusual behaviour that day because he already had suspicions about his identity and so was all out for further evidence to prove his case. On this particular day, the informant added that he refused to go for his morning lectures.

The final straw that broke the camel's back was the suspect's eventual exclamation, recognition and acknowledgement of the fact that the aroma of the food was one that he was familiar with and part of as he said in Yorùbá: 'E ti se kini wa yi leni!'(You have prepared our meal today!). Note his use of the plural possessive pronoun 'our' in referring to the beans on fire. Though the policed student refused to identify with his people by language, he unknowingly revealed his identity by his culinary delight. Food preferences are highlights of markers of identity (Shapin 2014; Graves 2015; Tibère 2016). For some people, whose heritage language is not a core value symbol, other markers of identity such as culture, expressed in dressing, food, religious beliefs, etc. come into play. This knowledge is of paramount importance to the Ogu cultural police, who are aware that they need more than language to identify their run-away kinsmen. They therefore look out for other markers of identity like tribal marks, dialectal accents and peculiar idiolects, among others. That is why indeed they are cultural police because they interrogate all aspects of culture, although the maintenance of Ogu is their paramount target.

The confession of the suspect in the case above did not arouse much surprise on the part of the cultural police because of the "I knew it all along" feeling that he had already entertained within him. That hindsight bias kept him going throughout the long term it took him to wrap up the case and it eventually paid off. In professional policing, such mindsets often prove worthwhile in determining criminal cases and suspicious characters. This usually results from certain traits in such characters that make them prone to suspicion and further monitoring and intelligence gathering. The hindsight bias is tended

towards believing that the past was more predictable than the future (Villejoubert 2006). The incident described above led to the realization on the part of the policed student, who had been denying his identity, that one cannot run from one's shadow. Put differently, one's language is part of one's identity and that it takes individual speakers of a minority language to increase the language's vitality by speaking it. The policed student was reported to have reverted to speaking Ogu following from that encounter with his kinsman who was a proud speaker of the language. Realising that owing up to his language and his true identity had not made him less of a human being than his Yorùbá counterparts, he resolved to be proud of his Ogu cultural heritage wherever he found himself and of course encouraged others to do so.

4.2.2 Investigative interviewing

Several strategies that are employed in professional policing constitute the tools of the Ogu cultural policemen and women. The place of investigative interviewing in questioning can neither be ruled out in police investigations nor overemphasised and so is it in *cultural policing* for the maintenance of Ogu. Ogu cultural police members often employ the strategy of investigative interviewing when they need to place the real identity of an individual. It is not every individual that they come across within their day-to-day activities that they interview. It is only individuals whom they suspect to be their kinsmen, especially those portraying cultural traits of the group, but deny being members. For the Ogu cultural police, investigative interviewing is done jovially and cordially in a friendly environment. Their mission is language maintenance and they speak with their suspects as kinsmen. For some Ogu people who hide their identity, they need infallible evidence for them to own up and confess. For the police to have such foolproof evidence, they need to carry out investigative interviews in such an informal manner as not to make the suspect suspect that he is being investigated. Such investigations may lead them to interviewing other informants who may help with additional information that would assist in concluding the case.

4.2.2.1 Investigative interviewing – case 9

In this case, my third key informant, a 36- year old male pharmacist and PhD holder from Ipokia LGA, practising in the United States of America, narrated via E-mail how investigative interviewing helped him to unravel a particular policing case he had handled way back as a doctoral student in South Africa. Here are excerpts of the interview:

Researcher: *Can you recount any particular experience you had while trying to encourage your kinsmen to speak Ogu*?

Well I met this guy called Raffiu. Both his surname and first name are non-Ogu. We had first met at a Sunday service in a branch of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Cape Town. After we had interacted and he told me he knew a cousin of mine, Dr Gbenupo, it occurred to me that he might be a gentleman I had learnt about from my cousin earlier. I assumed immediately that he was Ogu. So one afternoon at lunch time, I decided to call him from my office. He was actually on a six-month pre-doctoral research visit to the University of Stellenbosch where I was also based for my doctoral research. I spoke Ogu to him and he responded in Yorùbá. His response suggested that he understood the language. I tried to pretentiously apologize for assuming he understood Ogu. He could not accept the apology because he indeed understood the language. We communicated in English for the rest of the phone conversation.

We were to meet again the following Sunday since he would be attending the same church as I. Before that Sunday, I had called my cousin, Dr Gbenupo, to ask about Raffiu, if he was indeed Ogu. I narrated my phone call experience. He assured me that he was not only Ogu but a fluent Toli speaker. 'Na mi de? (How are you?) was my 'rude' greetings to Raffiu seated among the pastors (he being in the pastoral cadre and had to sit among the pastors in the church). He responded in Ogu. The other pastors already knew me as Ogu and were surprised that Pastor Raffiu spoke the language. It turned out to be compliments for him and for me, my phone conversation with him was the last time we communicated in a language that is not Ogu.

The excerpt above represents one of the typical strategies employed by the Ogu cultural police in carrying out their maintenance efforts. The pharmacist suspected that the stranger was an Ogu because his name reminded him of someone his cousin had talked about but he was not sure; so he had to go on investigative interviewing. Using tact as one of his policing tools, he spoke in Ogu to Rafiu and watched out for his response. He responded in

Yorùbá but that did not deter the cultural police. He went on further investigation by asking questions about the true identity of Raffiu-*investigative interviewing.* He discovered that Raffiu was not just Ogu but also a fluent speaker of *Toli,* one of the well-known dialects of the language. Acting on that intelligence, he did not bother to question him further on his next encounter with him. He spoke in Ogu to him and then apologised for assuming that he understood the language. That was tactful. His inability to accept the apology gave him away and further confirmed that he was Ogu. Then the final clue/evidence was the pharmacist's confirmation from his cousin that Raffiu was indeed Ogu.

His next encounter with him was confrontational: "Na mi de?" Greeting him in Ogu was his way of saying: "My brother, your game is up, come off it!" It is instructive to note that the hindsight bias also comes to play here as the cultural police was propelled by the "I knew it all along" feeling that he had had about Raffiu being an Ogu. He too, realising that he had been uncovered, had no choice but to respond in Ogu and warm up to his "brother". The suspect's first name and surname are not Ogu, which is common, as explained in previous chapters, with many Ogu people. The population of Yorùbá speakers in Nigeria perhaps has been swelled by Ogu people, hiding under Yorùbá identity and in the process aggravating their minority status. For many of the Ogu 'suspects', they would be owning up to their Ogu identity for the first time upon their encounter with their cultural police kinsmen. In the case being discussed, Raffiu's parley with the Pharmacist had been on for close to four months before he eventually owned up. On further discussion with his cousin, he learnt that Raffiu had been carrying on as a Yorùbá for a very long time. His wife is Yorùbá and his children bear Yorùbá names. After encounters with the cultural policemen and women, many reformed suspects usually take the decision to return to the patronage of the language. Some do this by emphasizing their children's Ogu names and downplaying on their Yorùbá names. While Raffiu gave Yorùbá names to his first two children, he would give an Ogu first name to his third child, all because of his continual interaction with Ogu cultural policemen and women around him. The exchange of intelligence between the pharmacist in South Africa and his cousin in Nigeria also speaks to international policing (InterPol) as another strategy employed by Ogu cultural police members.

4.2.2.2 Investigative interviewing- case 10

The case examined here involved the wife of an Ogu cultural police, a lecturer in one of the foremost universities in Nigeria, who had keyed into her husband's passion for the maintenance of Ogu. The cultural police also lectured in the same university with the 'suspect'. She had known him to be a Yorùbá colleague of hers for several years and had no reason to suspect that he was not who he claimed he was. He was, moreover, a former national president of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and was quite popular. Their first encounter was at an event that brought both parties together–an ASUU meeting – to nominate those to represent the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) branch at a national meeting in Abuja. For the first time in her five years of working in that university, someone just raised his hand in her nomination, pronouncing the name the way a native speaker would. She was taken aback, for in all her years in that university no one had ever pronounced her Ogu family name that correctly. In fact she claimed that she had gotten so used to the wrong pronunciation of her name as the norm, so much so that when she heard the correct pronunciation, it was rather striking. She returned home and told her husband about the incident. The husband, being an Ogu and also a member of the Ogu cultural police team, immediately became suspicious of the lecturer's true identity. He suspected that he was either an Ogu man or had lived in an Ogu community for a long time. A long period of investigation and investigative interviewing then began. Here are excerpts of the interview directly from the husband:

Researcher: *What steps did you take thereafter to carry out your investigation*?

Immediately after this, I went to see the lecturer to confirm my suspicion. But it wasn't easy initially. I had to start by befriending him and showing a lot of interest in his background. Thereafter I was able to engage him directly on the matter. He did not immediately admit to being Ogu. He was like "Well I can say I am three-quarters Ogu". That was the response I got from him the first time I raised the issue with him.

Researcher: *During your first encounter with him, how did he react to your curiosity*?

He looked at me with suspicion and interest, not knowing what my motive was at that time. During subsequent visits to his apartment, however, he became more relaxed with me and began to open up on his background as

an Ogu man, although he was known by all as a Yorùbá man. His first name and family name was and still is a household name among unionists and Nigerians in the industrial circle.

Researcher: *How long did it take thereafter for him to open up to you*?

As soon as he confirmed that my intentions were genuine, he opened up completely showing me documents to confirm that indeed he is an Ogu man, just as I am. He, for instance, showed me a document about his father's affidavit sworn in a law court in the 1950s in Lagos to the effect that he was an Ogu man and not Yorùbá. According to him, years later in the 1960s his father's testimony was used against him in Lagos as he was denied scholarship for high school. He said that experiences like that made many otherwise famous Ogu families in the Lagos of the 50s and 60s shy away from identifying themselves as Ogu. He also said further that he watched many notable Ogu families in the city of Lagos change their names from Ogu to Yorùbá. He then spoke about his childhood in Lagos in the 50s and 60s when Zangbeto, an Ogu security masquerade, was everywhere unlike today. In those days he said, stubborn children were often threatened with discipline by Zangbeto, showing how entrenched the cultural practices of the Ogu were then in certain parts of Lagos city.

Researcher: *What were the other actions he took to convince you about his Ogu identity*?

He quickly showed me a document written by his father confirming that he was Ogu. We also talked about family members who were in Lagos and other places. In fact, his family is a popular Lagos family that has almost lost its identity because of the desire to belong to the Yorùbá Lagos families.

Researcher: *How has his confession to being Ogu strengthened your Ogu linguistic affirmation*?

This has further motivated me to express myself in Ogu especially to Ogu-speaking people and to fish out my denying kinsmen.

Researcher: *What are the other things you have observed in the course of your interaction with him*?

We shared other innate traits and convictions that completely made me feel at home with him. I was also surprised that he thereafter offered to give a keynote lecture on this whole experience someday at the annual Badagry Day celebration.

The scenario above points to the peculiar way that Ogu cultural police operate. We can see suspicion, tip-off, investigative interviewing, confession and reformation all at work in this case. This is another case of long term policing as it took a while before the policed could warm up to the police. Once the assurance that the police meant well was established, the suspect got really talking. For the past sixty-five years, the suspect's family had lived under a Yorùbá identity. That also meant speaking the language from generation to generation. No doubt, some members of that family must have died under a false identity while others live knowing in their minds that they are Ogu but unable to claim it. They enjoy some socio-political benefits from the new identity but suffer psychological trauma.

Following from the confession of the ASUU ex-chairman, it can be deduced that many Ogu people were forced to deny their identity due to economic and political exclusion. They were denied job opportunities, admission to schools and scholarships, etc. What was worse, they were rarely represented in the politics and government of either Lagos or Ogun States where they belong although the Akran of Badagry now enjoys some political recognition in Lagos State. To date it is still a fact that no Ogu has ever been governor of Ogun State. The best they have had has been a female deputy governor, married to a Yorùbá, who represented more of the interest of her husband's people than her marginalised kinsmen. It is as if the Ogu are not a part of the two states. Again most of the roads in Ogun State that lead to Ogu communities to date are in bad shape and most times completely unmotorable during the rains. This is further confirmation of their marginalised status.

Faced with this scenario in the 50s and 60s, several Ogu families had to shift to Yorùbá for socio-political survival. One basic way of doing this was the leaving of Ogu communities for Yorùbá cities and the changing of both surnames and first names to Yorùbá as well as obliterating every link with the ancestral homelands. Yorùbá was often transmitted to the children who grew up with the belief that they were Yorùbá except events happened

later in their lives that proved otherwise. This speaks to Romaine's (2000) submission that language shift results from socio-economic depravation coupled with marginalization. If socio-economic survival is tied to the dominant language, then as Edwards (2010: 54) puts it, "the maternal language may find its own domains of use steadily shrinking'. Shrinking domains of heritage language use is what eventually translates into language endangerment. Fishman (1991) refers to this stage in his famous intergenerational disruption scale as stage 6 as any language that has attained this stage is obviously not experiencing intergenerational transmission. Such was the case of Ogu for many decades until the cultural police took up the challenge to reverse Ogu language shift.

4.2.3 Intelligence-led policing/tip-off

Acting on tip-off is an integral part of the strategies that Ogu policemen and women employ in fishing out their suspects. Immediate family members, close friends, neighbours and colleagues of members of the Ogu cultural police are often attracted by their passion for the maintenance of their language and the linguistic emancipation of their people to the extent that some find themselves keying into the passion without knowing. Such persons from time to time would give *information* to the police about suspicious persons. Acting on such tip-offs the police would start investigation. Eventually the identity of the suspects is revealed through the help of subtle questioning and encouragement that boost the morale of the suspects.

4.2.3.1 Case 11

In the next case I discuss here, my key informant, a thirty-eight year old female school teacher from Ipokia LGA, revealed how she acted on tip-off received from a non-Ogu informant. The piece of information led her to a denying kinsman of hers and she was able to persuade him to embrace the language again with pride. She explained further that the playing of Ogu music at the naming ceremony of the baby of a neighbour's friend was the tip-off that she acted upon that led her to the real identity of a man whom everyone had known and related with as Yorùbá for several years. Here is an excerpt from the interview:

Researcher: *Have you had any cause to encourage your kinsmen to speak Ogu at any point in time*?

Yes, you see a female neighbour of mine recently attended the naming ceremony of a friend of hers and came back to tell me excitedly that my traditional Ogu music was played at the ceremony. However, she said

she wondered why that happened when her friend and the husband were both Yorùbá. She couldn't place the reason for Ogu music in a naming ceremony in Ibadan.

Researcher: *Did you ask your friend how she knew that the music that was played at the party was Ogu*?

Well I did ask how she knew that it was Ogu music which was played at the ceremony and she said that she had become used to Ogu music from hearing me play them in my house. She also explained that she had heard me play that particular track at a ceremony in my house.

Researcher: *What do you think made the woman to report the incident to you?*

This neighbour of mine has always known me for my loyalty to my language and culture. She had often teased me with the passion with which I handle anything Ogu. Again she knows that I am always interested in identifying and relating with my people.

Researcher: *So what did you do after getting the tip-off*?

Immediately I asked her to describe the venue of the ceremony for me which, to my surprise, was not too far away from our house. I rushed down there to attend and see things for myself for I already suspected that the man of the house was one of my kinsmen who hide under Yorùbá identity. Again I needed more clues and proofs before going into action.

Speaking further on how she was able to unravel the case under discussion, the Ogu cultural police member explained that the meal that she was served at the ceremony was the final proof of the Ogu identity of the celebrant.

When I got to the naming ceremony, I was asked by a waitress what I would like to eat. I asked to know what was on the menu and was told rice, amala and corn meal. Corn meal! I was shocked as that was the last thing I had expected. I asked to be served corn meal. It was served with a special Ogu soup made from fresh palm seed oil and bitter leaves which is the exact soup that goes with the cornmeal. Then I was certain I was in the home of a full-blooded Ogu man.

We find here again a case of food, which is another determinant of culture and group

identity (Tibère 2016) serving as the clue to unravelling the case above. Investigation led to further discovery of concrete proofs to the true identity of the celebrant as the dish in question is a delicacy that is not associated with the Yorùbá. It was therefore rather out of place for a man, who claimed to be Yorùbá, to serve an Ogu delicacy at his child's naming ceremony.

Researcher: *So what followed next, I mean how did it end*?

> After the meal, I went in to see the celebrant and on entering the living room where they were seated with friends and relations from home, I greeted them loudly with the Ogu greeting meant for such a ceremony. The father of the baby had no choice but to respond in Ogu having been caught red handed, so to speak. His relations from home were around and so he could not continue with his disguise. Everyone greeted me warmly and wanted to know from what particular village I hail.

My informant was asked how he handled the task of bringing his kinsman to reconciling with his language again and throwing away his disguise. She explained that he didn't have any difficulty since she had made a great impression on him during the ceremony by her speaking of Ogu. More excerpts of the interview:

> I made it a point of duty afterwards to pay regular visits to the family where I kept on encouraging them to continue with the patronage of Ogu with pride wherever they went since they owed no one any apologies for being Ogu. My brother assured me that he would thence forth be a proud speaker of Ogu and stop claiming Yorùbá .

Researcher: *Can you tell me the name the baby was given*?

> [Grinning]Hm! This is another area where I am always angry with my people. They like giving their children Yorùbá names and so people will hardly know that they are Ogu. Do you know that the baby was named Oluwaseun Senapon? And the surname is Adebiaye, another Yorùbá name? Apart from the middle name, which is Ogu, tell me, how will anyone know that the child is Ogu when she grows up? Afterall, we all know that first names and surnames are more recognized than middle names. Most middle names exist only on paper and are hardly ever heard.

The response of my informant above adds further credence to my earlier submission of Ogu language shift being evident in the people bearing Yorùbá names. In many African cultures, especially in Nigeria, names are sacred as they identify an individual as belonging to a particular ethnic group. Names are markers of identity and party to the maintenance of a language (Langin-Hooper and Pearce 2014). As people bear names in their language, they indirectly tell others that they identify with that language, thus keeping the language alive. Tip-off can come also from other family members who have keyed into the ideals of their cultural policing parents. The essence of the emphasis on Ogu people bearing Yoruba names stems from the fact that it is the first pointer to language shift. Then of course, the shift is also evident in the language they speak.

4.2.3.2 Case 12

The next case under tip-off involves another key informant, Mrs Azinmagba, a 42-year old civil servant and a cultural policewoman from Ipokia LGA whose son supplied the tip-off that helped to locate her kinsman and win him over to the community's side. The boy, a ten year old student of a high brow secondary school in Southwestern Nigeria, came back from school on a certain day and gave his mother an item of information that turned out to be invaluable. Acting on this tip-off, the mother sprang into action. Here are excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: *Has there been any time that you encouraged your kinsmen to speak Ogu*?

> Well I remember a particular incident! My son came back from school one afternoon and told me that his religious studies teacher, after marking his assignment, stared at the name on the exercise book and asked him what state he was from. When he told him Ogun State, the teacher explained that the boy's name was not Yorùbá to which the boy agreed that he was Ogu. Then he claimed that the teacher suddenly started singing an Ogu song, which my son was familiar with as we often sing it during morning devotions in our house. In fact, the boy said that he sang along with the teacher. I then asked him if the teacher was an Ogu but he wasn't too sure since his name was Mr Adeniji and he always spoke Yorùbá with other colleagues.

Question: *What did you do after that information*?

> Immediately I suspected that the teacher was Ogu; for, it would take an Ogu to recognise an Ogu name and even sing such an Ogu song

> that perfectly. I then asked my son to get the teacher's phone number so I could talk with him, which he did. I booked an appointment with him. When I eventually talked with him, I discovered that he was one of those kinsmen of mine that hide under Yorùbá identity. I then encouraged him to embrace Ogu again. He confessed to me that since the day he spoke with my boy and noted the way the boy owned up to his Ogu identity with pride at such a tender age, he felt ashamed of himself for hiding his Ogu identity. For him, he was touched that my son could even sing Ogu songs seeing that he lives in the city. Again the calibre of the school the boy attends shows that he was from an elite family and he already had a mastery of the language. He commended his father and me for a job well done.

Asked if that incident alone was enough for the teacher to change his attitude towards Ogu, Mrs Azinmagba had this to say:

> Well the incident made a great psychological impact on him and he resolved to change his attitude towards the language and his people. He even promised to encourage his family, especially his children, to speak the language as he would start speaking it to them. He believed that since his kids were still in the language acquisition age, the situation could still be remedied. As for his wife, he was not optimistic about her agreeing to switch to Ogu since the entire family had already joined her in speaking Yorùbá. My son reported that he always spoke Ogu to him whenever they ran into each other in school. I have also maintained close contact with the family.

Ogu cultural policemen and women are able to encourage their denying kinsmen to return to the patronage of the language by example. Even before meeting the student's mother, the teacher was already challenged by the ten-year old boy's competence in the language that he, as a grown man, was already losing. His resolve to return to the language is the ultimate desire of the police in their bid to reverse language shift. As denying kinsmen return, they often key into the vision and enlist into the cultural police formation. That way, many families are embracing Ogu again and gradually the people are becoming aware of the need to maintain the language individually and collectively. McEntee-

Atalianis (2011:154) maintains that with a high ethnolinguistic vitality, members of minority language communities are likely to secure not only their languge but also their cultural identity. The more a person is emotionally attached to his/her ethnic group, the more likely that person is to participate in group actions (Ehalla 2011). This position is also held by Edwards (2010) that the mobilization of numerical strength is critical to the maintenance of cultural identity.

4.2.4 Self confession

The Ogu cultural police team has found the act of self confession playing out in the course of their maintenance activities. Some of my key informants revealed that sometimes they find some of their kinsmen confessing to their true identity without any form of coercion on the part of the police. Some, according to them, confessed even when the police had no reason whatsoever to even suspect their identity as it often comes as a surprise to them when such confessions are made. Further inquiry revealed that these self-confessions are the results of long years of accumulation of shame and guil,t which eventually can no longer be endured as psychological torture can sometimes be worse than physical pain. In my next case study, a key informant of mine, shares his experiences with self confession.

4.2.4.1 Case 13

This case involves one of my key informants, a university professor working in the United States of America. He explained how he discovered that an intimate Yorùbá friend of his was Ogu after over forty years of friendship. This is another case of long term policing, which though was done unconsciously, is further proof of self-confession.

> The gentleman in question and I were classmates in secondary school from 1969-1973. He relocated to the U.S. sometime between the late 70s or early 80s. The first time we met after 1973 was 2006 or so at our reunion in Orlando, although we had spoken on phone since 1996 or thereabouts. He hosted our reunion last year. And as we were making "miliki" in his house, he went upstairs and returned with a cassette for me as a loan because he had had it for generations. It was one of Letriki's old numbers which I also have. I was flabbergasted that someone like him would listen to my "village

> music". It was then he told me that he is Ogu. All I said was "Really?" I have known him for close to 50 years without the slightest link to Ogu. Meanwhile everybody in my class knew and knows me as Ogu- root and branch. (a 60-year old male informant from Ado-Odo Ota LGA living in the USA).

The informant above was asked what he felt was responsible for his friend's revelation of his true identity after successfully hiding it for forty-nine years. Here is his response:

> I think his "coming out" was more psychological rather than any other thing. It could be that he was overwhelmed by the extent to which I have claimed and embraced my identity as an Ogu. And how, in spite of being defined as one "without a cultural genealogy," God and our ancestors have granted me little blessings. He is not a hungry man, in fact he is the wealthiest in our set, but he is weightless on my scale-"e ma do gotho, e ma do nukon", "gbeto vonu". (he is neither of enviable prospects nor of formidable pedigree, he's not of consequence)

This is a case of what I term 'unconscious policing' as the cultural police in this case had no intention of fishing out the suspect. However, his patronage of Ogu, with pride, over the years unconsciously – from Nigeria to the USA – sent some signals to his so-called Yorùbá friend, who eventually gave in to shame and guilt and confessed to his true identity. His personality and carriage here is what contribute to the reaction of his friend. Many eminent Ogu sons and daughters have been playing the role of cultural police without knowing and so have some Ogu individuals confessed, on their own, to their true identity. Gradually Ogu people are getting to know that attaining wealth, as well as high social standing, is not synonymous with being Yorùbá but that sound education, coupled with ambition, is what is needed for anyone – whether Yorùbá or Ogu – to succeed in life. Seeing their kinsmen, who do not succumb to the pressure of Yorùbá identification, yet became successful, has helped many denying Ogu to retrace their steps. This is evident in the case just discussed where the so-called Ogu, disguised as Yorùbá, realized that living under a false identity has not made his variables different from his friend's who has always been proud of his Ogu identity from his college days till now, even in America.

The long term unconscious policing case discussed above yielded results due to the longing for home which the man, living under a fake identity, had been enduring for several years. The feeling had become so consuming that he had to give vent to it by "coming out". The fact that he still had in his possession cassettes of traditional Ogu music is a pointer to this fact. He probably had been listening to the music in the secrecy of his bedroom when no one was around just to retain the only tie to his language and identity

that he still held dear to his heart despite his disguised identity.

Moreover, his "coming out" was an indication that he was finally ready to return to his roots by patronizing the language and the culture as well as identifying with his kinsmen. Reality dawned on him after forty-nine years that he was not Yorùbá, no matter how long he had presented himself thus. This adds credence to Edward's (2010:55) assertion that "the assumption that those who know your language are also members of your group is often incorrect as outsiders can learn your language and still be themselves". More than ever before, Ogu people are becoming aware that their patronage of Yorùbá does not necessarily have to result in the non-patronage of their language as, for some people, language is not just an instrumental tool but "an emblem of groupness, a symbol, a psychological rallying point" (Edwards 2010:55). The personality of the cultural police is iconic in the sense that an icon commands so much respect which everyone wants to emulate. If an educated and important personality in the society could be proud of his language by speaking it, then it behoves the commoners to follow suit. Even among the elite the activities of such Ogu sons and daughters, who believe that the survival of their language lies in their hands, have gradually been increasing the ethnolinguistic vitality of Ogu. This has found expression in many Ogu families, especially where both parents are Ogu, reviewing their family language policy which, according to Pitton (2013) can even be achieved at the dinner table.

The case discussed here is another pointer to the fact that the Ogu are continuing to discover that disguising as Yorùbá does not change their variables as when the chips are down, they are told to their faces that they don't belong. This has made many of them to retrace their steps and return to the patronage of the language as well as the identification with the people. The activities of the cultural police team is creating this awareness,

4.2.4.2 Case 14

The next case is another instance of self-confession induced by shame and guilt. Self-confession resulting from shame has been evident in some Ogu people, moved by the positive attitude of their kinsmen towards their language as mentioned earlier. In this next case study, another key informant, a 50-year old top government functionary from Badagry LGA reveals how his own positive attitude towards Ogu led the *Iyaloja* (head of

market women) of the prominent Yaba market in Lagos, whom everyone knew to be Yorùbá, to develop confidence in herself and confess to her true Ogu identity.

Part of the strategies employed by the Ogu cultural police is to create an example with themselves by showcasing their language and culture with pride. This they execute by speaking the language wherever they go without any apologies. By so doing, they encourage members of their immediate families, especially their children, to speak the language. Denying kinsmen are often challenged when they see children of such kinsmen competent in Ogu despite growing up in the city and are usually moved by a combination of shame, guilt, remorse and even despair to follow suit. Without anyone asking them questions or probing, they just find themselves opening up to their kinsmen, expressing their admiration of their commitment to the language and their regret for neither speaking it nor teaching their family members to. There is nothing abnormal about this as the confessants are neither forced nor cajoled into making such confessions. Blum (2008:96) again asserts that "Shame per se is not a destructive state. It actually serves a constructive role, which is necessary for human development". Overwhelmed by several years of living under a false identity, confession, for them, becomes a way out of emotional strain. Below are excerpts of the interview:

> I had been working closely with the Iyaloja of Yaba market for quite some time now. My office in the local government secretariat requires that I interact with representatives and leaders of various economic groups. One day, I received a visitor in my office. It was the Iyaloja. A woman holding a very powerful position amongst women, she commands respect and wields a lot of influence. Everyone knew her to be Yorùbá from Isale Eko i.e. Lagos Island. I have always been proud of my Ogu identity everywhere I go and so everyone also knew my identity including the Iyaloja. While discharging my duty, I would proudly introduce myself to my official guests as an Ogu man. Though I am aware of the ridicule that my people often face in the midst of Yorùbá people, I do not allow that to weigh me down to the extent of hiding my identity. In fact, my friends, acquaintances and neighbours admire the way I showcase my identity such that they are wont to point out any Ogu or suspected Ogu that they meet to me. I speak the language with members of my family as well as politely chide those who ridicule the language and its people. This is far from the usual behaviour of my people. I am educated and hold a high position with the Lagos State Government. No one would say I am a man of low status or mean standing.

Researcher: *So how did Iyaloja reveal her true identity to you*?

> I was rather surprised when it happened because I had no reason to suspect her identity. I only remember that she often commended my positive attitude to my language and my people just like my other friends and colleagues do. But on this day she walked up to me and said with a voice full of emotion:

"My brother, do you know that I am also Ogu?" I couldn't believe what I had just heard. My reaction was silence for some minutes, too shocked for words. She then went ahead to tell me the story of her life. She had arrived from her village in Tube not understanding Yorùbá and looking awkward. Each time she told people she was Ogu she met the ridicule of her life so much so that she resolved to learn Yorùbá fast. Once she gained mastery of the language, she bade goodbye to Ogu. However, in the years that she had known me, she had been filled with shame seeing the pride with which I identify with Ogu and speak it. Despite her elevated social status now she has been unable to retrace her steps.

Researcher: *Have you been able to help her in any way*?

Yes, I gave her all the encouragement I could offer at that moment and since then we have both been on it. It has not been easy but with the kind of determination she has now she will pull through. She already tries to speak the little Ogu she still remembers even though she mixes it with Yorùbá sometimes. At least it is a way of starting. So long as the interest and the willingness are there then success is sure.

Researcher: *So what do you think prompted such confession*?

Well I think that her confessing to her Oguness was prompted by her apparent surprise to see that such a highly placed official, the big boss for that matter, could proudly identify with the Ogu-something she had been unable to do for years.

Shame and confession have actually played a positive role towards Ogu language and cultural renaissance as more people are realising the negative implications of their long years of hiding their Ogu identity. What I find very revealing is the fact that the cultural policemen and women do not even pressurise anyone to confess to their true identity. The 'suspects' on their own, moved by the sense of pride exhibited by the Ogu cultural police give in to confession out of their own volition. Such voluntary confessions are what Brooks (2005) term 'acceptable confessions' as they are not associated with coercion or compulsion through the pressure of torture.

4.2.4.3 Case 15

The case discussed here involves a long interview session with one of the foremost Ogu cultural police, a 44-year old male university lecturer from Ado-Odo Ota LGA. I would call him the pioneer of Ogu language maintenance efforts in his community, given his activities since childhood. In this key informant interview, he gives a detailed account of his policing activities which he titled 'How it all Began and the Journey so far'.

How it all began and the journey so far

Researcher: *Can you tell me a little about your background and what informed your motivation to encourage your kinsmen to speak Ogu*?

By the time I was in Form Two, I had become the most-lettered member of my church. However the tradition of conducting service in Yorùbá had prior to this time been well established. It was a CAC denomination and the Yorùbá influence was overwhelming. This was in spite of having 99.5 percent Ogu members. By the time I was in Form Five, I had risen to the post of Choirmaster. The elevation coincided with the decision of the church elders to transform into a full-blown Pentecostal church. This was in the late 1980s. With the sectarian transformation, the CAC hymns were abandoned and we entered into a stage of classical and hymnal experimentation.

The church began to encourage singing of choir specials in both English and Yorùbá, which was the practice of the new church called New Creature Evangelical Church throughout its branches in the Southwest. For me, the situation provided me with an opportunity not to only express my reservations about singing Yorùbá and English songs, but to also translate a number of the English songs into Ogu. I had a largely unlettered choir; yet I was to lead them in singing harmony: treble, alto, tenor and bass. It was an experimentation that was challenging but went well. While they struggled with the English words and lyrics and while they could perform excellently in Yorùbá, I discovered that my introduction and translation of Ogu versions of the hymns brought about a new kind of excitement and attraction for the church. Meanwhile, both the Founder and General Overseer of the church and his assistant were Ogu, I mean pure-blooded Ogu based in Lagos; but there was nothing in their names to show this. One day, when the Assistant General Overseer of the church came around, he was pleasantly surprised to see that the branch was the first to engage in a multilingual choir ministration.

Researcher: *Tell me more about your efforts towards promoting your language and culture.*

I extended this orientation towards my interaction in our compound and then the village in general. In no time, I heard people call me Baba Egun. In all these years, I was still a teenager. I challenged people to speak Ogu and explained to them that it was bad enough that we could not be taught in Ogu in schools. Not being under the regimen of formal interaction associated with school and church, we should be able to interact freely in Ogu. I was concerned that while growing up in the 70s children had Ogu as both mother tongue and first language. But by the 80s, the situation had changed and few children had begun to pick Yorùbá as first language and not still being coherent in Ogu by the time they attained age 10. Whereas, while I was growing up in the same village, you could only speak Yorùbá as a child only if your parents sent you to school. Yorùbá then was learnt in school and I remember we mostly needed interpreters from among our seniors in upper classes to be enrolled on the first day of registration into Primary One.

Researcher: *For how long have you been in this struggle*?

When I gained admission into university, everybody thought my attitude would change, as they attributed the habit of shifting to Yorùbá with the influence of Ogu cosmopolitans – people who travelled far and wide in Yorùbá towns and cities in places like Ife, Oyo, Akure, Ondo, Ibadan, Abeokuta and Lagos, of course. Some kind of superiority was conceded to them by those in the villages. The first cosmopolitan trait these people were quick to display on their return was speaking Yorùbá to their people in the village. They sounded and looked better, economically advantaged, and in no time those in the village ascribed some kind of progressive agency to these Ogu cosmopolitans who dumped their Ogu for Yorùbá. Yes, it was a case of modernity of the well-travelled. In no time, these cosmopolitans returned home on visits or permanently and they consistently admonished those at home to speak Yorùbá.

They gave people the impression that there was something inferior about speaking Ogu and social mobility was tied only to speaking Yorùbá. However, I also observed that the linguistic shift and pride in speaking Yorùbá were meant to hide their social inadequacies. They were generally, little lettered or completely illiterate men and women who became ashamed to identify with their language in the cities. On account of this, they saw social integration and economic empowerment in Yorùbá, a language that had been invested with so many economic and political privileges in Southwest Nigeria. Some of them went to the extreme extent of denying their relations for speaking Ogu in the cities. A nephew once told me about how his elder brother was given a dirty slap in Lagos by another cousin for speaking Ogu to him in public. It was time for the aggressor's training celebration as an artisan in Lagos during the occasion of his "freedom". Apparently, he had never allowed anybody know he was Ogu before the day of the celebration. Slapping his cousin was his way of showing how shameful it was to speak Ogu in a public and cosmopolitan space like Lagos.

In another part of Lagos, Ikorodu, in the 80s, another so-called cosmopolitan spoke snidely about his relations who had come from our village to celebrate the "freedom" of another son. Upon alighting from his car and seeing that his relations from the village had settled down to engage in discussion and banters with reckless abandon in Ogu, his expected excitement at seeing them was replaced by a most shocking question in Yorùbá: "Bawo ni awon eyan mi se baje bayi?" (How come my people are this uncouth?). Some form of inadequacy was ascribed to Ogu by these Ogu travellers because they invested Yorùbá with all-sufficiency, which brought about so much shame to the people in the Ogu-speaking communities. In no time, Yorùbá spread in all the indigenous Ogu communities in Lagos and Ogun States. Most of these early cosmopolitans went as far as changing their names from Ogu to Yorùbá.

Researcher: *So the journey so far*?

While training in the university, people thought I was going to join the earlier cosmopolitans in shifting to Yorùbá. But they were surprised to know that the more advanced I was in my training, the more grounded in Ogu I became. I would talk to my people anywhere I went throughout Ogu land that there was

no need feeling inferior for speaking Ogu. I also realized that many other Ogu undergraduates and later elite had experienced the same challenge in their communities and by opting to speak the language always, they began to reclaim for the people in the indigenous communities their lost pride and confidence in Ogu. What is more, the social status of those who had acquired university education and other forms of higher learning was considered far better than that of earlier cosmopolitans with little or no western education.

The highly educated, who are also mostly proud to speak the language, change their names from Yorùbá and English to Ogu; their influence is also on the rise. This has resulted in the receding influence of earlier cosmopolitans who on account of their low education and equally low social status shifted to Yorùbá. The situation has now brought about a linguistic revival since the 1990s. This was primarily because their economic empowerment and social mobility were not tied to speaking Yorùbá, but a high level of formal education. What is more, those highly educated have become the rallying point for socio-political and cultural struggles for the greater recognition of Ogu people in Lagos and Ogun States. The older, less educated who were ashamed of their identity cannot do this.

Researcher: *If I may ask, how would you rate your Ogu maintenance efforts*?

On a personal level, I have come to realize that my efforts have played an incredible role in how my people everywhere are shifting back to speaking the language. I hold a PhD and I am well travelled. My people know this and for them, if our son who has been everywhere in the world can continue to speak the language; if he can encourage his wife married from another state so far from us to speak the language; if his children born and raised in the city can speak the language better than their peers in the village, then we should be ashamed of ourselves. In no time, wherever I go in the community, I realise that people are on their best linguistic behaviour.

Parents remonstrate with their young sons and daughters to take after the example of their uncle who is so well read but does not cease to amaze everyone with his incredible proficiency in Ogu. Debates are always on about how on account of some misinformation in the past they shifted to Yorùbá. For instance, having not still attained the social integration they sought,

everywhere in the communities today, my people have withdrawn their patronage for Fuji music, a popular Yorùbá music which displaced Ogu music in the 80s.

Researcher: *Can you mention some specific instances and areas of your linguistic intervention and influence on your community*?

Well there are many instances, but I will mention a few. A few weeks ago, I was in my village. It was during an occasion of a communal burial. I decided as usual to pay a visit to a compound next to my ancestral home to exchange peasantries with other relations. Many of my uncles, their wives, my aunts, and younger cousins and their wives were all around. We exchanged pleasantries over shelling and eating ground boiled nuts. Given the light mood, we discussed so many issues and then suddenly, one of my uncles called my name and said with so much sobriety in his tone, "You know what son, we have watched you grow in this village and you have now become a big man. We are so proud that you have taken it upon yourself to show us that we don't have any business speaking Yorùbá when there is no basis for it.

Each time we remember you in this compound, we also remember the need to speak Ogu and we feel ashamed that we ever shifted to Yorùba, seeing how it has made it difficult for children to acquire Ogu at the moment. Thank you our son." At this point, I had been invested with the status of a cultural icon and linguistic gatekeeper in the community. But even more intriguing for me was how the discussion on the occasion gradually shifted to the history of shift to Yorùbá in the compound. This was an issue they brought up by themselves – without my prompting them. I was only in a mood to banter with people I had not seen in years; but surprisingly the more the banters progressed, the more they wanted to express their guilt and shame about ever shifting to Yorùbá. So another uncle asked, "But come to think of it, how did Yorùbá speaking begin in this compound?" This for me was like a discussion on compound legend. Different people came up with different theories. Each theory was debated and dismissed until somebody came up with the theory of a married sister who had lived for several years in Ado-Odo, a neighbouring Yorùbá town. She eventually had some marital

crisis and had to return home with her children. It was during her return that she began to exhibit some air of linguistic superiority and in no time, her male siblings' wives and their children had begun to speak Yorùbá.The men would reluctantly follow suit with time. It was at this point everybody dropped the previous theories and blamed it all on Thosi, their sister, whose brief return home on account of matrimonial crisis left such strong and negative linguistic impact on the compound. I was amazed at how they went into all these, without my prompting just to impress me and to propitiate for their linguistic shift and transgression. It was really sobering for me. I have had similar experiences in other places in the community and people have told me how they have completely shifted back to Ogu because of the attitude of highly educated people like us who now constitute icons for them.

At another level, and beyond the community, I have watched my maternal uncle with whom I had once lived in Lagos shift back to Ogu. In my college days, he would not allow anybody know he was Ogu; he also would not speak Ogu with me. Whenever he visited my mother from Lagos, he would do all discussions with her in Yorùbá, even if my mother responded in Ogu. He struck many people as an icon in those days. Today, on account of my attitude, he has now become an enthusiastic speaker of Ogu. I insist on conversing with him in Ogu, whether on phone or in live conversations. His attitude has now completely changed. Sometime after I had completed my MA, I was in another university environment where I conversed with a lecturer in the compound in which we were living. Since we did our conversation in the open, one day, an undergraduate female student walked up to us to introduce herself as Ogu. She put the shame of being Ogu behind her upon realizing that her superiors were proud of speaking the language and from that day on, she spoke the language with us and everywhere she went.

A few months, ago a lady wrote me from the United Kingdom, confessing to being Ogu. This was after almost 20 years since my first meeting with her. She was my junior in the university. Apparently, she was not proud then to be associated with Ogu people. But having watched me identify with

the language and the people so consistently, she wrote me all the way from the United Kingdom, expressing her shame over not having earlier identified with me during our days on campus. Like I said earlier, many other elite colleagues continue to encounter such confessions and shift back to the language on account of our attitude of pride and identification with the language and the people.

Researcher: *What then gives you the impression that your attitude and similar attitude by others are changing the linguistic equation and orientation of Ogu people*?

Two things: These days people call me up imploring me to advise others who are about starting their families to ensure that they encourage their families to speak the language. The second issue, which for me is an amazing epiphany, is the realization that there is now a reversal of what we witnessed then in the 70s and 80s. As a college student in those days, I remember my mother and other mothers telling their children proposing to spend their holidays in Lagos with their uncles to ensure they did not speak Ogu over there. This was because the uncles could take offence and send them back to the village.

The reverse is the case now, and I intend to prove it with the case of a relation that joined me in the city recently. He was leaving the village for Ibadan upon admission to a polytechnic. The mother who, interestingly, is Yorùbá, called the boy into her room and said: "You know what, son, as you go in pursuit of further studies in the city, don't hide your identity as Ogu. Take a cue from your big brother (referring to me) who has been everywhere in the world but is proud to speak Ogu everywhere. Don't be like your older uncle, Zannu who went to Lagos in those days and lied to everyone about his identity and refused to speak the language to his (Yorùbá) wife and children. That singular act of self-denial has cost him his family in the end. He is now back in the village at old-age without the wife and the children. They are not proud to identify with the Ogu. Yet in the end, when the chips were down, he realized that the only people he could call his own were Ogu people. You have seen how he carries

himself in the village now; you don't want to end up that way my son, do you? Speak the language everywhere and be like your big brother". I would like to end it here for now.

Researcher: *This is quite amazing! Thank you for your time.*

The excerpts above typify the regular style of the Ogu cultural police. Armed with the realization that the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá has been on for many years and that efforts to reverse shift would take serious efforts, the Ogu cultural police team are undaunted in their struggle. Their main tool is leadership by example as they exemplify all that they teach their people. As has been discussed earlier, their own lifestyle of patronizing the language serves as a great source of inspiration to others. No doubt social status has played a major role in enhancing the maintenance of Ogu. We can see a lot of patience and resilience on the part of the cultural police in the case study above. Here is a situation where a single individual has been able to bring about a linguistic renaissance which has spread round an entire community. Ehala (2011) explains that the emotional attachment to one's ethnic group is the key aspect that influences individual ethnolinguistic vitality. It stands to reason therefore that the more emotionally attached a person is to his ethnic group, the more likely he is to participate in group actions. The cultural police in the case study above has been able to impart his community so positively that other people have keyed into the idea of shift back to Ogu. However the role that high education and social status has played and is still playing towards the success of cultural policing among Ogu people, cannot be over-emphasized. I would therefore like to discuss further the data from the key informant interview above under what I term "Social Status and Ogu Language Maintenance".

4.2.4.4 Social status and Ogu language maintenance

The Ogu cultural police team is made up of men and women of high social status: lecturers, accountants, medical doctors, engineers, high school teachers, civil servants, university undergraduate and postgraduate students, etc. These people are educated and

know the value of language and identity and as they preach the message of language shift reversal, the commoners are wont to listen to them. These men and women are the people that the community looks up to ordinarily for direction, counsel and guidance in matters pertaining to politics, government and community development. They champion the cause of the people in other areas apart from language maintenance as their people see them as icons. Thus their iconic status endears them to other members of the community who are not that endowed since people generally like to emuliate icons. They encourage their people to be proud of their language and their culture by speaking Ogu. Due to their elite status resulting from their level of education and experience, they are respected by their people who believe that they cannot be led astray by their own blood. They are challenged by the fact that such highly-read and enlightened sons and daughters of theirs, who have travelled far and wide, can return from the city with their families speaking Ogu.

Ordinarily one would expect city people to be the ones shifting from their heritage language as a result of language contact and distance from homeland, but the reverse is the case here seeing that it is the city people that are reversing language shift. Their agitation for the maintenance of Ogu is having impact on Ogu people because of their status in the society. Members of the cultural police formation who are university undergraduates and post graduates have also been of great influence to fellow Ogu undergraduates and other youths at home. The students who disguise as Yorùbá on campus are being fished out by their Ogu brothers and sisters who showcase their Oguness everywhere. Again these undergraduates are able to influence other young people who aspire to get a university education seeing that their acquisition of higher education has not affected their loyalty to the language. And because this elite group has the habit of returning home at festive periods, they are able to relate with the people back home who have been experiencing massive language shift. When a language is no longer enjoying much patronage in its ancestral home, then there are dire consequences for it as it is already threatened. That the cultural police force comes home with their families, who also speak Ogu. has been of great inspiration to parents back home whose children are more fluent in Yorùbá than Ogu.

Fishman's (1991) GIDS emphasizes intergenerational transmission of language as the sure panacea to language shift. This knowledge has propelled the Ogu cultural police team to teach their own children the language and use them as examples to families back home. The same realization has made the young people in the police formation to target fellow

youths as any language that enjoys the patronage of its young ones is less likely to face endangerment and subsequent attrition. Many youths who have been 'converted' are now part of the struggle since they have also keyed into the ideals of the struggle. From the testimony of the key informant above, it is obvious that it is working out and as the Ogu cultural police continue their activities, there is hope for Ogu.

4.3 Short term *cultural policing*

The cases discussed above are instances of cultural policing that took quite some time to wrap up. They range from a few weeks to months and even years. There are however, cases that took just a few minutes to unravel. Some took a few days while others a week or a little more. Such cases do not need long periods of observation or investigative interviewing. The moment a cultural police member runs into a 'suspect', he simply asks a few calculated questions targeted at establishing his real identity, which the suspect is often unable to deny. Again names, tribal marks, accented Yorùbá, etc. are pointers to denying native speakers. The method of approach here is also friendly, not confrontational thus making the suspects warm up to their kinsmen. This is not to say that there are not a few persons who get offended by the sheer idea of questioning; but in the end, the police still record much success as seen from the responses from some of my key informants below:

4.3.1 Case 16

> I work with one of the government-owned television stations in Southwestern Nigeria. From time to time we get students of mass communication and media studies from universities and polytechnics coming to do their industrial attachment with us. Recently a new batch came and as the one in charge of the training, I arranged to see them the following day. Already they had all submitted their names and the institutions they came from. Taking a look at the names, I saw a particular one-Dickens. Immediately I knew that he was one of my kinsmen who had anglicised their Ogu names. In this particular case, I suspected that Dickens was a corruption of the Ogu name Dekon (prayer answered, or prayer over). I was ready to get to the root of the matter, pained at the extent to which my people had deviated from the language. The next day, as they all sat in front of me, I jokingly asked who it was among them that bore the same name with the author of Great Expectations. Beaming with smiles, the young man identified himself and what happened next gave him the shock of his life for I suddenly switched to Ogu: 'Depe, Ogunu wa we! E te weh zon bo a tho dio oyin towe tho Dickens? Dekon we a no yin ya? (Young man, you are Ogu! Why did you change your name to Dickens? Are you not Dekon?). Stupefied and completely thrown off balance, he responded in Ogu, "Mowe, Gunu wa mi" (Absolutely, I am Ogu). My relationship with him after that incident was very cordial. He enjoyed his time with us and lent a great

> lesson of self pride for which he was to remain grateful to me. We are still in touch till now, always conversing in Ogu. (A 48-year old male television broadcaster from Ado-Odo Ota LGA).

The case above typifies what I call short term cultural policing since the case was wrapped up within a few minutes as against previous case studies. The cultural police is familiar with the different patterns of language shift among his people especially in the area of naming. There are certain English names that may arouse the suspicion of an Ogu cultural police as to the identity of their bearers-Pot (Potuetho); Accord (Akodegbe) Dickens (Dekon), Wegan (Hunyigan), etc. Bearers of these names often anglicize them in order to avoid ridicule from their Yoruba neighbours. The cultural police here did not bother to carry out any investigation or questioning as he spoke to the 'suspect' straight in Ogu on their very first meeting. Knowing that he had been uncovered by a kinsman, the young man had no choice but to own up to his Ogu identity. My informant revealed that the young man had a Yoruba surname, which ordinarily should not raise suspicion but the first name was what gave him away. Note that the youn man did not just confirm he is Ogu, he responded in the language and used the emphatic 'mowe' (absolutely) instead of 'en' (yes). He could have responded in English pretending not to understand but the linguistic stance and the brotherly way the cultural police addressed him mellowed him. I have stated earlier that some denying Ogu people would not deny their identity if they had anyone to encourage them to remain loyal. The policed, who easily succumb to policing, are often challenged by the pride with which the elite Ogu cultural police speak their language. This serves as a driving force and a source of motivation for them. Another example of this kind of encounter is seen in case 17 below where an Ogu cultural police was able to identify his denying kinsman by his yorubaized name. Again the encounter did not last more than a few minutes but made lasting impressions on the policed. See the excerpt below:

4.3.2 Case 17

> I lecture in one of the government-owned universities in Southwestern Nigeria. During one of our recent oral examinations, a masters student came into the examination room and introduced himself as 'Adamitunde' – a Yorùbá name meaning "My matchet is

returned". I immediately became suspicious of the name and its bearer. My suspicion was further strengthened by his facial scarification. He bore the Whedah clan scarification. Shortly after the exam, I asked the guy to see me. I then subjected him to a round of questioning. Initially he wanted to stick to his Yorùbá farcade because his was a forced transliteration of his Ogu name into Yorùbá, which makes it sound so wierd; for, I had never encountered such Yorùbá name anywhere before then. But when I put it to him that I am Ogu and suspect that that name was actually ‘Athanmitonde – an Ogu name meaning 'it has not been by our power', he knew he could no longer continue with his pretext. He immediately confessed that he was Ogu but felt more comfortable identifying himself with Yorùbá. He later told me that owning up to my Ogu identity despite my academic position in a predominantly Yorùbá environment and workplace encouraged him to develop some level of confidence in himself. I encouraged him to speak his language with pride as he owed no one any apology for being Ogu and he promised to do so. He even demonstrated his new resolve by continuing the conversation in Ogu right there and afterwards. (A 45-year old male lecturer from Ado-Odo Ota LGA).

The excerpt below attests to the fact that some policing cases do not take too long to wrap up. It is another example of what I call short term cultural policing. However, the informant was not policed by anyone. He gave in to confession out of his own volition. Shame and guilt played a major role to the reformation of the denying Ogu here. In earlier discussion, I pointed out that some denying Ogu, out of shame and guilt, confess to their Ogu identity when they see the linguistic loyalty that some of their kinsmen pay to Ogu. They often then resolve to make amends by embarking on the task of return to Ogu and the more difficult task of teaching their family members to. For them, the driving force is ‘better late than never’. The following excerpt is further proof that cultural policing sometimes can be short term:

I once had cause to host a kinsman of mine who had come to attend his PhD convocation in the University of Ibadan. He came with his wife, his children and a few friends who had come to rejoice with him. They were warmly received by my wife and other members of my family. The visitors continued chatting among themselves in Yorùbá – my kinsman interacted with his wife in Yorùbá, with his kids in English and with his friends in Yorùbá. I concluded that his friends were all Yorùbá until the second day of their stay. One of the friends, in fact, the one he had introduced as his bosom friend and colleague at Redeemer’s University, suddenly remarked in Yorùbá that he was deeply impressed by the way my family interacted

in Ogu. He was particularly challenged that my wife, who is from a non Ogu speaking community, and our kids leaving far away from home could speak Ogu in a predominantly Yorùbá environment. We were shocked to learn that he was Ogu. He said he had been observing the fluent Ogu that was the language of communication in our home since he came in the previous day and felt pained in his heart that his own family could not speak the language. He went on to blame himself for not emphasizing his language and identity as he had allowed himself to imbibe his wife's language. Appreciating my wife and kids with some cash gifts, he made a resolve to return home and embark on the task of teaching his family Ogu. He even gave a template on how he would go about it. According to him, he would code-mix Ogu with English and Yorùbá if need be for them to understand e.g 'Wa hito' – 'Come here' coupled with gesticulations and sign language. (A 46-year old male civil servant from Ipokia LGA).

Fathers have the mandate to determine the language policy of their families although it is believed that mothers determine the language of the child. Smith-Christmas (2014:511) emphasizes that family language policy is germane to minority language maintenance. This probably explains why it is Ogu fathers that are now taking the lead in the maintenance of Ogu in their homes by insisting on the speaking of the language especially by the children.

Data collected from Badagry LGA reveals that the situation is the same as the cultural police team there are also playing a significant role in the maintenance of Ogu in their unique way. My next informant here, a 34-year old female teacher, gives a rundown of her activities and strategies as a high school teacher in an Ogu community. This case is also an instance of short term cultural policing as the police does not spend much time to investigate, question, look for clues and proofs, etc. In a few minutes, the police are done with the policed and the desired results are achieved. Sustaining the seemingly momentary reformation exhibited by denying kinsmen depends on the ability of the cultural police to maintain close contact with them and continue to give them moral and linguistic support. Here are excerpts of the interview:

4.3.3 Case 18

Researcher: *Tell me about your work and your experiences with your students regarding language use.*

I am a secondary school teacher in a community school in Badagry LGA. The school is located in an Ogu community but a large number of the teachers and the students are Yorùbá.It is not as if Ogu children are not many

enough to fill the spaces in the school but the fact is that the school is located at the boundary of Yorùbá communities, and the Yorùbá , who are reputed for their pursuit of western education, have taken over. Their presense in the school has brought in their language with its air of superiority. I noticed, with disdain, that Ogu students had started speaking Yorùbá and claiming it. Children, whose parents we know, come to school and deny their Ogu identity for fear of ridicule. I found this very unhealthy for the future of our language. I decided to sensitise and orientate my Ogu students on the need to hold on to their Ogu identity with pride. Letting them know the implication of their behaviour on the survival of our language, gradually they have started developing confidence in themselves aand are no longer intimidated by the Yorùbá classmates especially when they discovered that they even performed better academically than the so-called Yorùbá superiors.

Researcher: *How do you do this considering the fact that you are supposed to be teaching your subject*?

How I do it is simple: As I move about the school compound outside classes and hear my Ogu students speak Yorùbá to their fellow Ogu, I immediately chastise them and they revert to Ogu. Now they call me 'Teacher Ogu' and know that I stand for the sanctity and maintenance of the language. Though English is the medium of instruction, outside class hours the students are free to speak their mother tongue and I insist on Ogu for the Ogu students. So far I think my efforts are paying off as I see some other teachers who are Ogu and had joined the Yorùbá-speaking community, withdrawing their patronage of Yorùbá for Ogu and also joining in the campaign to save the language.

Part of the problems militating against the maintenance of Ogu is the unavailability of a standard orthography (Apari 2014) which has also affected the writing of literature in the language. This also means that there are no trained teachers who can teach the language as a subject in elementary schools or use it as a medium of teaching. Although a few educated and concerned Ogu individuals have written some elementary materials on numbering, English versions of some Ogu words; and a little attempt at Ogu grammar, so far there is still much to be done. The teaching of Yorùbá as local language in schools in Ogu communities, no doubt, has contributed to the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá. Seeing the

danger that this development poses to the survival of Ogu, the cultural policewoman in this case study has taken it upon herself to sensitize her Ogu students to speak Ogu against all odds. After all, Ndlovu (2010:175) submits "maintenance or neglect of a minority language goes beyond the official status by which it is recognized as native speakers play a key role in both marginalization and maintenance". Thus, the continuity of any language lies in the speakers themselves speaking it.

4.4 Summary of chapter four

This chapter presented and analysed data from two main instruments of data collection – observation and key informant interviews. It also engaged the concept of cultural policing as well as the dynamics of its operations. Data discussion was presented as cases which were either long or short term and subjected to content analysis. The chapter mainly sampled the opinions of Ogu cultural policemen and women as regards the modus operandus of their activities, drawing leverage from participant observation.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS FROM INDEPTH INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of data from indepth interviews and focus group discussions. Specifically the chapter addresses the opinions of the individuals who have been policed by Ogu cultural police as well as samples the opinions of selected Ogu sons and daughters to find out if cultural policing has had any impact on the maintenance of Ogu.

5.1 Indepth Interviews

Twelve indepth interviews – four in each LGA – were conducted with individuals in the three local government areas under study. Data analysis from the interviews are also presented in the form of case studies for a clearer unpacking of the theme of the study. The first set of data analysed here is discussed under what I term *Linguistic Nostalgia.*

5.1.1 The concept of linguistic nostalgia

In this study, I have coined the term "linguistic nostalgia" to describe the strong feeling and longing for one's native language in the face of shift to another language. It also entails a desire for home and the cultural heritage as well as values that are associated with home. There is thus an implication of exile, at least metaphoric exile, to the way I engage the discourse of linguistic nostalgia here. As is normatively acknowledged, there is a strong implication of nostalgia in the apprehension of exile (Valis 2000; Jurney 2011; Gillespie 2013). Conceived as dispersal against one's wish, exile, even when it offers an initial libratory feeling from the dystopia of homeland (Ndebele 2016), eventually leaves the dispersed distraught. The realization about the undesirability of separation from one's homeland in the manner of exile often obtains from knowing that even at its best, the actualities of exile resonate with ignominy (Morris 2009). The shift from Ogu to Yorùbá is therefore a form of exile, which initially leaves native speakers with a feeling of liberation in view of the socio-political and economic leverage they imagine to draw upon their identification with Yorùbá. Ultimately they realize that the imagined linguistic liberation is either short-lived or unrealizable, hence their regret over their shift and the longing for return to Ogu, especially with the intervention of cultural policemen and women. It is this longing for the reappropriation of Ogu, like the longing for homeland associated with physical exile, that I have termed linguistic nostalgia.

Several Ogu people have been forced to shift to Yorùbá as a means of socio-political and economic survival. Some deny being Ogu and refuse to identify in any way with their people. However, deep down in their hearts, they feel lost, especially when they find themselves in the midst of other Ogu speakers who speak the language with pride. Even when they bear a different identity, some of them still long so much for their language and culture that they need only a little prodding from a kinsman, who understands that peculiar feeling, to draw them out of their shell for them to return to their roots. The feeling of nostalgia finds expression in some of the policed confessing to their shift and resolving to patronise the language again. This accounts for why, rather than getting offended by the policing approach of the Ogu cultural police, they warm up to them instead seeing them as models to emulate.

The feeling of nostalgia is sometimes very strong among some of the Ogu who have shifted to Yorùbá as their shift will be more correctly regarded as forced and not voluntary. The Ogu cultural police are aware of this knowledge on the part of their kinsmen, having been through nostalgia before. It was the discovery, in the first place, by the cultural police that nostalgic feelings for their language gave them a pedestal for easy and determined return to the patronage of Ogu that encouraged them to set out on the task of getting back their 'lost' kinsmen. Armed with this knowledge, members scout for fellow kinsmen with the same feeling and the task of maintaining Ogu is made easier. For some of the policed, return to the language gives them freedom from the emotional strain of long years of false identity, which has translated into the feeling of being neither here nor there. For many of such Ogu people the feeling of nostalgia is expressed and manifested in one or several or all of the following ways:

a. the inclusion of an Ogu name among their children's names even when such names are often only on paper and the Yorùbá name emphasized as first names;
b. the readiness and willingness with which they respond to the maintenance efforts of the cultural police;
c. their tactical way of associating with other Ogu kinsmen, whom they admire for the pride with which they identify with and speak the language, even while still hiding their true identity;
d. their stylish way of identifying with Ogu culture especially in their culinary delight, dressing, music, etc.

e. their rising to the defence of fellow Ogu in times of danger or maltreatment from the Yorùbá even when they do not disclose their true identity; and

f. their speaking of French and other related languages like Ewe as a make-up for the loss of Ogu.

Many an Ogu has been discovered by the cultural police by their choice of Ogu dishes at parties or other events. Their momentary forgetfulness of their pretended identity during moments of celebrations, where they give vent to their true cultural heritage and dance to Ogu music – in such a way that reveals their true identity – is often a useful pointer to their Ogu identity. Ogu police are often suspicious of persons who are unusually attracted to them or their families; fascinated by their patronage of the language or ask personal questions about their language and people. From experience on the job, such persons are more often than not Ogu people who suffer from linguistic nostalgia and need help. Once the cultural police talk with them they usually give vent to their frustration to the extent of even breaking down in tears.

In the indepth interview with my informant in the case below, she claims that linguistic nostalgia was a major contributory factor to her resolve to return to Ogu at all cost. Linguistic nostalgia, in this case, found expression in a strong desire to be around her kinsmen. Sometimes this feeling is outwardly expressed unconsciously, with the individual betraying the desire to identify with his roots by certain traits without his actually planning or meaning to do so. The informant in the interview below had found herself hanging around Ogu people whether they were from Benin or Nigeria so long as they spoke Ogu, thus unconsciously betraying her Ogu identity. Speaking French with the Beninnoise Ogu around her was her own way of trying to identify with her people through another language that is common with them. The Ogu spoken in Nigeria is sometimes mixed with loan or adulterated French because of Ogu people's location close to The Republic of Benin, which is officially French-speaking. Again with the influx of immigrants from The Republic of Benin into Nigeria, it is not uncommon to find people, who speak French and Ogu, around Lagos. Ogu is one of the major indigenous languages of Benin but a minority language in Nigeria (Ofulue 2013). Though the Ogu spoken in Benin is mostly known as Gun or Fon, and has slight dialectal and regional variations with the Ogu in Nigeria – just like the Yorùbá in Benin and the Yorùbá in Nigeria – speakers from both countries usually understand one another. The study below typifies linguistic nostalgia.

5.1.2 Case 19

Case 19 involves a 32-year old female public school teacher of French from Badagry Local Government Area. The essence of the indepth interviews was to find out from people who had been policed how they felt about the activities of the Ogu cultural police team, whether they actually impact Ogu language maintenance or not. Data analysis from this interview has been discussed under what I term *Linguistic Nostalgia* above. Below are excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: *Can you say a little about yourself and your family before marriage*?

My father was Ogu and my mother Yorùbá. They lived in Okokomaiko near Badagry. My father rarely spoke Ogu to us but my mother managed to pick a few expressions like 'Na weh?'(How are you?) and 'E na yon' (All will be well). I had interest in the language but no one to teach me. My father died early – 30 years ago – and my siblings and I were shared to live with our paternal and maternal uncles and aunties. I was sent to live, at a tender age, with my maternal aunt who is Yorùbá and that was how I grew up speaking Yorùbá and losing completely my heritage language. I wish today that I had been sent to my father's relations perhaps I would have picked Ogu. The only Ogu I still remember are the names of my siblings – Gandonu, Senapon, Sewanu, Senami and Sebomi.

Researcher: *What is your own Ogu name*?

Aah my Ogu name! Mautin, and I love the name so much because of its meaning and the fact that it is the only reminder of my Ogu heritage.

Researcher: *So what is the meaning of the name*?

Oh it means God is alive! Isn't that great? The name has been working for me you know.

Researcher: *Have you had any encounter with your paternal relations or other Ogu kinsmen since you have been in Lagos*?

Yes, there are several Ogu people from Nigeria and The Republic of Benin around my neighbourhood whom I would have loved to identify and interact with but because of language barrier, I simply speak Yorùbá with them and they believe that I am Yorùbá. I am married to a Yorùbá man, but deep down in my heart I know that I am Ogu yet with nothing to show for it.

Researcher: *Has there been any Ogu person who has ever inspired you to want to return to the patronage of Ogu again*?

Oh yes! There is this colleague of mine where I teach, who is married to an Ogu man. I was always surprised at the way she spoke the language with pride. It was a shocker to me that a woman who is not Ogu but from down south admired her husband's language so much so that she could learn it and speak it with her children. Her identifying with the language greatly inspired me to the conclusion that I could still learn it. I began to get close and interact with her. I think she suspected something about me for she started asking me questions.

Researcher: *So how did you respond to her questions*?

At a point I could not hold back myself. I broke down in tears as I realized that I had lost my identity. I can no longer go back to my ancestral home because I have not been there since my father died 30 years ago. Though I work with Lagos State Government with my papers showing that I am Yorùbá, I would gladly change my documents to reflect my true Ogu identity if I had my way.

Researcher: *Why didn't you pick offence when your colleague started asking you questions about your identity? I mean, didn't you feel that she was intruding on your privacy*?

No, not at all. You see by the time my colleague started asking questions, I was already at the point of emotional breakdown. I think she had suspected my state of mind. I was already so overwhelmed with the fact of my lost identity that I was rather relieved with the opportunity to let go. I am grateful to her for helping me to get back my bearing. I was a lost child, (in tears) "Olorun sanu mi!"(Yorùbá expression meaning Lord, have mercy on me!)

Researcher: *Now that you are resolved to identify with your people and learn Ogu, how do you hope to achieve mastery of the language seeing that you are married to a Yorùbá and live among Yorùbá people*?

Well I have already started interacting with the Ogu in my neighbourhood, some from Benin, whom I had been speaking French with as a way of

making up for my inability to speak Ogu. They are impressed with my desire to speak the language and so have been teaching me. Already I have started picking a few words and phrases. I tell any Ogu persons I come in contact with that I am one of them. Though I cannot speak the language fluently, I am proud to identify with it. If I have my way I would like to bring in two Ogu relatives to live with me so that I can learn from them. Again if there was anything like an Ogu evening school, I would gladly enrol.

Researcher: *So what advice would you give to other Ogu who find themselves in the kind of situation you had been before your encounter with your Ogu colleague who helped you to redefine your identity*?

I am sure that there are many Ogu people in Lagos who are parading themselves as Yorùbá. I believe it is ignorance and lack of education that make them to behave like that. So my advice is that my people should get educated for education broadens the mind and gives people some sort of confidence in themselves. They should own up to their Ogu identity and rich cultural heritage. Of course this is made a lot easier when they are enlightened through the agency of sound education.

The presentation of the full excerpt of the interview with the informant above is premised on the importance of the nexus between Ogu language shift and loss of identity, which has ultimately necessitated the need for the maintenance of Ogu. The extract exposes the enormity of this loss of identity which manifests as nostalgic feelings. This state of mind has been a contributory factor to making the efforts of the Ogu cultural police receive widespread acceptance.

The interview above reveals the state of mind of many Ogu people, who on account of diverse reasons, have found themselves voluntarily or involuntarily embracing Yorùbá up to the extent of losing or almost losing their Ogu identity. The informant was able to respond to the cultural police that freely and easily because she had been suffering from what I term *Linguistic Nostalgia.* This is also what has helped the Ogu cultural police to succeed in their language maintenance efforts.

More specifically, her expressive response could be read as connected to her gender as female, which allowed her to give free rein to her emotions. It facilitated how we are able to come to terms with how strongly she felt about her loss of her heritage language. The enormity of the loss is further accentuated by her social status and education, especially in the humanities and culture. Such background would naturally make her appreciative of the value of language as a foremost index of culture and identity. In her younger years, the innocence of childhood and youth may have fused with her initial low level of education to be indifferent about her mother tongue. As age is associated with knowledge, her further studies and exposure, coupled with the consciousness about intellection, have become a basis for feeling so alienated from her core linguistic heritage. Even when marriage may be an influence on language shift, it is generally held that mothers wield more influence in adopted family languages. Considering also that, Yorùbá in a location like Lagos would be naturally acquired by her children; she would have felt more fulfilled to influence her matrimonial family language if she had not lost her opportunity to speak fluent Ogu.

The childhood linguistic deprivation has translated into some sort of alienation for her; it has also resulted in her realization that she can neither integrate fully into Yorùbá identity, just as her integration into Ogu remains doubtful. Such realization of a missing link, especially one considered to be associated with a primordial homeland, has often informed nostalgia in exile studies. When this is the case, return, on account of the longing for return, often takes a rather complex dimension and varies from person to person and identity to identity. On this account, there can be no single paradigm in the discourse of return. It is on this account that her resolve to study French up to the university level is justified. The justification stems from the realization that on account of bordering the Republic of Benin, most Ogu communities tend to code-mix certain common French lexical items in their use of Ogu. Such words, range from D'accord, Merci, Jamais, C'est bon, C'est fini, etc. (Agreed, Thank you, Never, This is good, It is finished, etc. respectively). For someone that reckons that such code-mixing is peculiar mostly to the Ogu in Southwestern Nigeria, it stands to reason that French would be a mode of simulated linguistic return. Since Ogu as the desired linguistic category proves elusive on account of the circumstances surrounding her youth and growth, on the one hand, and the unavailability of Ogu as a language of study in any educational institution in Nigeria, French becomes an alternative.

At another level, and more importantly, the colonial languages erect a barrier between Ogu-speaking people of Nigeria and Benin Republic. However, the choice of Ogu when citizens of both countries come in contact dissolves the colonial map and shows Ogu-speaking people of Nigeria and those of Benin Republic to be one. Such understanding points to a paradox in the explication of her linguistic return. The divisive notoriety of a colonial language like French has also become for her the link with Ogu-speaking people of Benin Republic, who in the process of their sojourn in Lagos, are reputed to be more assertive in the speaking of Ogu. What mostly tells them apart from the Ogu-speaking people of Nigeria is the degree of code-mixing and switching to French. Such identity marker thus informs the respondent's choice of French, particularly because it is taught in Nigerian schools.

5.1.3 Case 20

The case examined here further adds credence to the claim that some Ogu exhibit linguistic nostalgia in a somewhat different way by learning French as another way of making up for their inability to speak Ogu. This gives them some sort of emotional satisfaction even though speaking Ogu would have been more satisfactory. For them, faced with the situation of language loss, half bread is better than none. This concept is what I refer to as "*linguistic simulation*". It is the imitation and learning of a language people consider closest to a target language they may not be able to learn. This concept can be deduced in the excerpts below:

> I know that it is a plus for me to speak Ogu but since I lost the language from childhood, and I long to identify with my people, I chose to read French during my NCE programme so that I can at least speak French with those of my kinsmen who speak French too. I am now a French teacher with the Lagos State Government and doing my degree in French part-time with the University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre. My choosing to read French is as a result of my desire to make up for the loss of Ogu. If there was Ogu as a course in Nigerian colleges of education or universities as there is Yorùbá, I would definitely have read it. (A 32-year old female secondary school teacher from Badagry LGA).

5.1.4 Case 21

Here is another excerpt from Ado Odo LGA which again points to the fact of linguistic nostalgia manifesting in the simulation of French in place of Ogu:

> I was very excited when I got a job as an admin staff at Le Village Français du Nigeria (French Village in Badagry) because I saw it as an opportunity to be in a French environment and learn the language. Before then, I had lived in Lagos all my life and lost touch with my kinsmen and my language since I had assumed the personality of a Yorùbá man. In recent times however I started noticing some of my kinsmen speaking Ogu with pride. I was challenged as I had almost lost command of the language. I knew I would meet my people there since the school is located in Badagry which is an Ogu-speaking community and regain competence in the language. Since some of my people speak French, I have, over the years that I have been working with the school, learnt French as another way of associating with my people. To satisfy my desire for the language which I have not been able to regain completely, I have turned to French as a makeup. That way I do not feel totally lost anymore. I even did a diploma programme with the school and now I teach French in a public secondary school in Ado-Odo Local Government Area. My competence in Ogu has also improved as I now live in a typical Ogu rural community where I am lucky to meet with old people who are still fluent in the language. I use my position as a teacher to sensitize my students, in a subtle way though, on the need to identify with their language of birth. (A 43-year old male French teacher from Ado-Odo LGA)

Researcher: *How do you feel about the activities of your kinsmen who encourage others to speak the language*?

I am grateful to our kinsmen who have taken it upon themselves to encourage us to speak our language. Now I have a sense of belonging with pride.

Researcher: *Would you like to join the struggle for the linguistic emancipation of your people*?

As a matter of fact, I have already joined as I would like my fellow kinsmen, who are still under the psychological tragedy of living under a false identity, to experience the kind of emotional relief that I now enjoy. You may not understand it but I feel relieved of a heavy burden, thanks to these agents of deliverance.

The excerpts above prove the fact of linguistic simulation on the part of some Ogu sons and daughters who pretend to be Yorùbá. Nostalgic feelings usually make it easy for them to own up to their true identity without much ado, thereby making the efforts of the cultural police yield fruits. Some respondents even claim that they have had to learn to speak Ewe as a way of getting closer to Ogu, their mother tongue which they have lost from long years of shift. Ogu has close affinity with Ewe being under the same language family with a degree of mutual intelligibility that is a little less than average. It is to this language too that some Ogu people, who find themselves suffering from linguistic nostalgia, simulate in order to have a sense of not being totally lost. Linguistic simulation then is a consequence of linguistic nostalgia. The excitement with which my informant in this case study welcomed the job at the French village was double. First was the joy of working in an environment where French is spoken, which would facilitate his learning of French. Understanding French would help him to communicate with kinsmen who also speak French and that way the psychological strain of being estranged from his people would reduce. Again working in Badagry which is the home of majority of the Ogu in Nigeria, would afford him the opportunity to begin to learn Ogu again since outside the French village the people he is likely to interact with in Badagry are Ogu. So the appointment was a win-win situation for him. In either ways he would be regaining his identity and language by learning Ogu or french as a make-up.

5.1.5 Case 22

In the excerpts below, another in-depth interview with one of my informants reveals how a 15-year old male private secondary school student from Ipokia LGA was policed by his English language teacher and the result of the policing, which shows people's positive attitude to the Ogu cultural police:

> My English language teacher always wondered why my classmates called me Tunji when the name on my exercise books was Setonji, though my surname is Olajide. She once asked me where I was from and I told her Lagos State. She explained that my first name resembled an Ogu name but I insisted I was Yorùbá and that my name was Tunji for short. Not wanting to continue the argument, she calmly advised me to ask my parents about my true identity as she suspected that I wasn't the Yorùbá that I claimed.

Researcher: *Did you really ask your parents about your identity*?

Yes I did as I was surprised to learn that I might not be who I thought I was. Again the suggestion that I may be living under a false identity was rather scary. I wanted to know who I was

Researcher*: What was the reaction of your parents?*

When I narrated my encounter with my English teacher to my parents, I expected that they would be angry that she dared to question my identity but to my utmost surprise, they started asking questions about her instead. When I told them that her name was Mrs Gandonu, they were quiet for a while, after which my dad heaved a deep sigh and gave me the shock of my life.

Researcher: *Tell me more about it. I mean what was the shock about*?

Do you know that my dad told me for the first time in fifteen years that we are Ogu people? I couldn't believe it. I grew up knowing my family to be Yorùbá. All my brothers and sisters answer Yorùbá names and the fact that people call me Tunji despite that the full name is Setonji did not make me think otherwise. Yorùbá and English are the languages spoken in our home. My parents had never given us any hint about our true identity before that day. I was truly shocked!

Researcher: *Did you ask your parents why they hid their identity from everybody*?

Well the only explanation they could offer was that at the time they came to live in Lagos it was a thing of shame to be called Ogu. They wanted to identify with the prestigious language for socio-economic benefits. Dad further revealed that our surname was originally 'Jidenu' an Ogu name which means "Hope or A matter of hope", but that he had to change it to 'Jideola' a Yorùbá name meaning 'waking up in wealth' in order to reflect his new Yorùbá identity. My mother had no choice but to cooperate with him. We have never been to our hometown that is if we have one. We have lived in Lagos all our lives.

Researcher: *Since you got to know about your true identity, what has been your response to the new revelation*?

Initially I was mad at my parents for keeping such a vital piece of information from us for that long. Since then however I have been asking questions about our people, hometown, the language, culture, etc. My

parents, glad that they have been able to off load the burden of secrecy and the shame of false identity, are very willing to assist. They answer my questions and surprisingly they can still speak Ogu and have even started using simple expressions at home. Dad and Mum have decided to communicate with each other in the language so that we can learn. Already I have picked a few words and expressions and I am so happy with myself.

Researcher: *So what is your response to the role that your English teacher played towards your self-rediscovery*?

I am most grateful to Mrs Gandonu for helping me to discover fundamental information about my identity. In fact, I had to give her the good news about our true identity and my parent's resolve to do anything within their power to amend the linguistic situation in our family. My parents have since become friends with her family and are impressed that her family identifies with Ogu with pride. She, in turn, is quite thrilled to find her denying kinsmen return to their roots. More importantly she is happy for me, knowing that I now have an identity. She has been relating with me at school more as a relative than a teacher. And from her my competence in Ogu is improving.

Researcher: *Would you behave like Mrs Gandonu if you had the opportunity*?

Of course! I would tell my people anytime and any day that it pays to have a true identity. You don't know how I felt discovering I didn't belong anywhere. I will not behave like my parents; I must let my own kids know that we are Ogu and show them our ancestral home. I am sure that by the time I am old enough to get married, my competence in the language will have improved considerably.

The notion of linguistic nostalgia is also at play here. This is evident in my informant's father still retaining the Ogu version of his son's name in print despite the fact that it is the Yorùbá simulation that is emphasized in the pronunciation. The Ogu version of the name is the only link he has to his Ogu heritage and this shows that the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá is forced, thus re-iterating my argument that the seeming identification with the Yorùbá exhibited by some Ogu can, at best, be described a facade. The longing for home and all that it embodies in still there in the average denying Ogu and this makes it easy for the cultural police to encourage them to return their loyalty to the language by developing a

positive attitude towards it. From the angle of intergenerational transfer as emphasized by Fishman's (1991) GIDS, the teacher, being a cultural policewoman, knew the implications for Ogu if the younger generation lost the language. This realisation is the force that pushes the cultural police to 'catch them young'. However the young generation cannot gain competence in the language if their parents do not speak it and teach them to do so. The survival of Ogu lies therefore within the individual and the family in the domestic front.

Nevertheless, the realisation that it is possible to revert to Ogu as a way of fulfilling the return that nostalgia encourages is important. This is so even when the level of competence that grown children, like in the case above, can acquire would be limited. The reverse shift which is the point of language maintenance can thus be read as evolutionary. In its earliest stage, the beneficiaries of the reverse shift may not be as grounded in their heritage or mother tongue as those who never shifted, but the number of those returning to the maintenance of the heritage language stands to swell the rank of speakers. It is in this sense that Ogu as a language stands to potentially reclaim a substantial number of those that have previously shifted to Yorùbá and in some cases English. As language maintenance is also about the numerical strength of the speakers, the facilitation of return through the efforts of language policing will ultimately facilitate the appreciation of the number of Ogu speakers.

It will also translate into the consideration of the speakers as a distinct identity group, which also has other developmental implications for greater official recognition of the language in the states in which the language speakers are found as an indigenous group. Put differently, there is a value of political economy to be leveraged upon when those who have shifted from Ogu to Yorùbá shift back to the language. This much is so considering that in their shift to Yorùbá and English, they have in some cases attained much socio-political and economic influence and weight, which they can now throw behind the push for greater recognition of the language.

5.1.6 Case 23

The next data I want to analyse here evolved from an in-depth interview with another informant of mine, a 50-year old female professor from Badagry LGA. She talked about her encounter with an Ogu cultural policeman whom she had been working with for

several years and then one day he got interested in her private life. Below are excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: Have you ever had any encounter with anyone in the course of your research that inspired you to take interest in Ogu people?

Well, I once had an encounter with someone whose impact on my life made me to reveal something about my life and identity that had been a top family secret and which I got to know about only recently. I had been working with Mr Gbemenu, a top government functionary with the Lagos State Government who is very passionate about his language and his people. As a professor of language in one of Nigeria's top universities, my research interest has been on Badagry and the Ogu people. I have written several articles on the subject, which have been published in prestigious local and international journals. Each time I go on fieldwork in Badagry to collect data, I usually work with Mr Gbemenu who is an Ogu scholar. In fact, his works are among the few literature on Badagry in particular, and Ogu in general. He was always fascinated with my interest in his town, the language and the people since he always worked as a kind of research assistant with me. After years of working together, I think he started suspecting that my interest in conducting research on Badagry had more to it than met the eyes. I probably had behaved in such a way that aroused his suspicion, for during one of our fieldworks together, he suddenly asked me why I was that passionate with Ogu studies. At this point, I became emotional.

Researcher: So why did you become emotional? Was there anything wrong with the question?

[Sighing] *You wouldn't understand! Do you know that my father died at 80 and it was on his deathbed that he revealed to all his children gathered around him that we are Ogu? I am in my fifties and I have grown up as a Yorùbá from Isale Eko (Lagos Island). I would only hear for the first time that I am Ogu in my fifties. My father concealed this secret from us until he was about taking his last breath. In fact those were his last words before he gave up the ghost. You cannot imagine the huge shock the news gave to all of us.*

Researcher: Why do you think he chose to reveal the secret in his last moments? I mean why didn't he die with it?

Well, he probably felt guilty for keeping the secret for that long and felt he owed his children the duty of letting them know their true identity. They could then choose to continue the pretence if they so wished. Or perhaps he was scared of facing his Ogu forefathers with such guilt [laughs].

Researcher: Waoh what an emotional narrative! So did you and your siblings choose to continue the pretence?

My siblings have continued their lives as Yorùbá people but I have developed interest in the language and the people. Now in my fifties, I find it difficult to learn the language. I have taken solace in carrying out my post doctoral research on Ogu ever since. Mr Gbemenu has been helping out especially by inviting me to ceremonies like the annual Badagry carnival where I meet with my people and learn our language and culture. Already I have picked a few words and phrases. I am married to a Yorùbá and my children speak Yorùbá but I am determined to let people know my real identity. My husband and the kids are aware that they are partly Ogu by reason of marriage and birth. The few phrases I have picked up from my research assistant, I use at home though they sound funny to the kids and make them laugh. However I am undeterred and will continue to learn more even if I may never be a competent speaker till death. I am making moves to knowing our ancestral home which, I learnt is across the Lagos lagoon, somewhere in Badagry.

Researcher: How do you view the activities of people like Mr Gbemenu?

They are doing a good job by encouraging people to identify with their language. Mr Gbemenu has assisted me immensely in finding my bearing. He and his likes should continue their good works. Rome was not built in a day. With time Ogu will regain the loyalty of its people.

Researcher: And what about you, would you like to join in saving Ogu from getting endangered as a result of the negative attitude of its speakers towards it?

For sure! I have already started in my own little way, especially by declaring my true identity to everyone who had always known me as Yorùbá. They now know that one can be an Ogu and be proud.

The policed are happy with the activities of the cultural police, seeing that they are working for their interest and the good of their land. This accounts for why the police record a high level of success as seen in their responses and in the responses of their

kinsmen. The cultural police in the case study just discussed above was led by suspicion, propelled by many years of observation, to questioning. Then there was confession leading to remorse and rehabilitation. The high point of the whole process is the wilful enlistment of the reformed policed into the Ogu cultural police team. Again there is a sort of linguistic simulation here as the professor in the excerpt above took to Ogu studies as a way of associating with the language and the people. Thus her loss of Ogu, due to no fault of hers though, is somewhat made up for by her area of research. The annual Badagry festival showcases the language and rich cultural heritage of the Ogu people thereby endearing the language and its culture to its denying speakers. She derives some sort of emotional satisfaction from being with her own people at the festival. As earlier stated, this kind of linguistic nostalgia has enabled the cultural police to regain the loyalty of their lost kinsmen to Ogu. Data from this interview also adds credence to my claim that perhaps a large number of the teeming population of the Yorùbá in Lagos Mainland is made up of Ogu people hiding under Yorùbá identity. This has had grave consequences for the people and the language as their minority status is further aggravated by their own actions.

Though Heine (2014) argues that number of people is not a factor in language shift and language maintenance as the Ake people of Gambia have been able to maintain their language despite their minority status, I argue that the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá by the Ogu can be traced to the number of speakers. In the Republic of Benin where Ogu is the majority language, it is not threatened. Instead, Yorùbá is the minority language that is under threat of getting endangered as the number of speakers of Yorùbá compared to Ogu is infinitesimal. The politics of Nigeria dwells more on number than on other variables. The designation of Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo as national languages is based on number of speakers as well as area of coverage. Thus elevated in status, minority language speakers around them have found themselves shifting to the language of prestige either voluntarily or involuntarily.

Some of the policed reveal that their willingness to retrace their steps from Yorùbá to Ogu stems from the realisation that pretending to be Yorùbá has not changed their economic or political variables. At the point when they need the Yorùbá identity most, that is when they are told pointblank that they do not belong. Here is the confession of one of my informants from Ipokia LGA:

5.1.7 Case 24

My informant in this case is a 32-year old male administrative staff of a private university in Nigeria and from Ipokia LGA. He narrates how he was challenged by the linguistic poise of an Ogu cultural police to give vent to his longing for home and an identity. Here are excerpts of the interview:

Researcher: *Have you ever had any encounter with anyone that inspired you to be more positively disposed to speaking Ogu*?

Yes, I had an encounter with a certain gentleman once who came to my office to make an enquiry. As soon as he wrote down his name on the visitor's book, I realised that he was Ogu. Immediately I got talking with him and that was how a relationship that has helped to heal the wounds I suffered emotionally as a result of loss of identity started.

Researcher: *How do you mean loss of identity? Tell me more about this relationship*.

You see from the 60s to the 80s, there was an entire Ogu community around Dugbe in Ibadan. My father was the last baale of the community before it fizzled out. Up till 1985, my father used to bring 'Zangbeto' from Badagry to perform at public functions. I don't know what happened because I was still a little boy then as my father suddenly cut off every link with the Ogu and got integrated in the Yorùbá political milieu. I then grew up as Ajibola Akamu believing that I was Yorùbá until something happened.

Researcher: *So what happened*?

It happened that as an ambitious young man, I decided to vie for a political position in Oyo State and received the shock of my life when I was told I didn't belong. For the first time in my life I came to terms with the fact that I am Ogu and not Yorùbá. The shock was aggravated by the fact that the same people whom I had related with all my life denied me at a very crucial moment. I felt like a fish thrown out of water. I then tried to ask the few relations that I could find if the allegation was true and they confirmed it. I was told my family came from Ipokia LGA in Ogun State but that there was no one or particular space to return to and claim as family or ancestral home. I mean, I am neither here nor there.

Researcher: *So how did the young man whom you met in your office help you in rediscovering your identity*?

I had been living in sorrow and selfpity for a long time as I had had the longing to find my roots and reconnect with my people. So when I met him, I confessed my plight to him and he immediately assured me that all was not lost. He has been of immense encouragement to me, having promised to find time during my next annual leave to travel with me down to my community and trace my ancestral home. Already I feel some sense of belonging; I feel at home with him and have started learning the beginnings of the language like greetings.

Researcher: *What do you find most inspiring about the young man*?

I am inspired by the fact that he answers an Ogu name, which tells his identity unlike I that answer a Yorùbá name. I am also motivated by the pride with which he identifies with the language and the people. I mean he tells anyone who cares to listen that he is an Ogu man with so much pride that can be described as infectious.

Researcher: *What advice do you have for other Ogu people who find themselves in your kind of situation*?

I would advise that they should come out of their hiding, retrace their steps and reconnect with their people as there is no place like home. I have started talking to the few relations I have here about the need for us to identify with our people and some have already agreed to travel with me whenever I am set for the journey back to Ipokia Local Government Area.

The scenario above typifies the peculiar circumstances that some Ogu people face in trying to identify with Yorùbá as a more prestigious identity. Many have been robbed of certain benefits that were supposed to accrue to them as just at the crucial moment, someone raised an objection and the Ogu was denied access. It is often double tragedy for these folks as they realize after countless years that they belong nowhere, neither Yorùbá nor Ogu. They are just used and dumped by the same people they call their kinsmen. Unfortunately for them, they have no more link with home or family in the African sense of the word. Thus, the denying Ogu is already in a state of emotional and psychological imbalance that makes him receptive to the kinsman (cultural police) who comes encouraging him to return to his language and people.

Linguistic nostalgia is again at play here as the young man had had a longing for his people before his encounter with the Ogu cultural policeman. The police didn't have to ask him questions before he volunteered confession on his own. This reiterates the claim that some people, who have committed a crime, sometimes give in to self confession as a result of pent up passions of regret, shame, guilt, remorse, etc. as experienced in professional policing (Blum 2008). The fact that an entire Ogu community around Dugbe in Ibadan, which had had several Ogu *baales* up till 1985, could just fizzle out of existence speaks to the enormity of the language shift to Yorùbá which the language has suffered. Such Ogu people have swelled the number of the Yorùbá in Ibadan and even Oyo State. And since numerical strength is a factor in language shift and language maintenance (LSLM), Ogu is at the losing end. Some Ogu people that were interviewed are even of the view that the word 'Dugbe' in Ibadan is an Ogu word, which means "to enjoy". If then there had existed an Ogu community around Dugbe in Ibadan for several decades, this claim may not be far from the truth. The carriage and poise of the Ogu cultural police in this case study is what cracked this case rather than any direct act of policing. Other Ogu communities had also existed in Lagos Island between the '60s and the '80s, which have also fizzled out of existence thereby whittling down the numerical strength of the Ogu. No wonder Ofulue (2013:41) cites Lewis et al's (2009) report that the Ogu people in Nigeria are 259,000 which is obviously a far cry from the true figure, given the demographic figure provided earlier.

5.1.8 Case 25

In this indepth interview with another informant of mine from Ipokia LGA, a civil servant with a federal ministry in Abuja, it was discovered that cultural policing also resonates with some sort of social economy for the policed and this has also served as an incentive for their resolve to continue to patronize Ogu. Excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: *Have you had any experience whereby someone who spoke your language in one way or the other encouraged you to speak Ogu*?

Oh for sure! A particular incident comes to mind. One day, I went to Wema Bank National Assembly Complex, Abuja, in my suit. One of my friends just called me on phone. I said, in Ogu, "Friend, how do you do?" There was a man behind me in his "Agbada" (flowing gown). When I was through with

the call, he just asked me in Ogu, "This boy where are you from?" I responded in Ogu, "I am from Ere (one of the Ogu communities beside the Yewa Lagoon)". He then said, "For speaking that language without feeling any unease, take this" To my utmost surprise, he counted ₦50,000 and gave it to me. That was how I became friends with Hon. Sejodo Sewanu. He said I should always check him in his office in Abuja. I couldn't believe that such goodluck could hit me just for speaking my language. It was amazing!

Researcher: *How has that encounter affected your attitude towards Ogu*?

I am very happy and encouraged about it. Personally, the incident has had an indelible impact on me to the extent that I have been encouraging my siblings to cultivate the habit of speaking Ogu with pride anywhere they find themselves. So far, they have listened to my advice. Look at these three brothers of mine (pointing to Godonu Joseph, Remi Tuthonu Kovobau, Matthew Sehubo Agbotuedo). Whether you call them or they call, they will never respond by saying "Hello, how are you" in Yorùbá. It was not so before as they would respond in Yorùbá. If you call this one (pointing to them one by one), you will hear him respond, "Awe na o bayi jan?" (Friend, how are you?), call that one and you hear him respond, "Depe na neh?" (Guy, how do you do?). So you see, that singular action from that kinsman of mine has left lasting effects on me.

5.1.9 The social economy of cultural policing

The incident that happened in the case above is what I call the social economy of cultural policing. Ogu cultural policemen and women have been giving out gifts to their kinsmen who showcase their identity with a view to encouraging others to do same. Such gifts come sometimes unexpectedly as seen in the case above. People are beginning to see that something good can come out of speaking Ogu. The same elite group, who in time past, would chide their kinsmen for speaking Ogu are the same elitist group now complimenting their folks for patronizing the language. They are a big source of inspiration to young and old people back in their ancestral homelands and in the cities. Some Ogu people are known to have been selected for employment because they spoke their language and won the commendation of their Ogu employers. Some others have enjoyed certain exclusive privileges from their Ogu employers just for identifying with the language. All these

favours act as incentives to speakers of minority languages. My informant in the case above was only making a phone call in Ogu. Unknown to him, an Ogu cultural police was nearby listening to him. As discussed in previous chapters, Ogu cultural police have a keen sense of observation and are usually alert as to noticing things around them. This is also a feature that is common with professional policemen and women.

He immediately suspected that the young man was his kinsman and decided to carry out further investigation by questioning. However, contrary to the professional police, he used a friendly and brotherly tone by even speaking to the young man in Ogu. This is a sign of brotherhood and the young man on phone had no choice but to warm up to him as a fellow kinsman. To encourage him to remain loyal to Ogu, he rewarded him handsomely with a cash gift. This is the length to which members of the Ogu cultural police can go in their efforts to reverse language shift and maintain the language. The young man, who was policed, too has joined in the campaign for the linguistic renaissance and emancipation of Ogu people. Needless to say that he has become a member of the cultural police from his testimony above.

5.1.9.1 Case 26

The social economy of cultural policing is again evident from the revelations of another informant of mine, a 40-year old male government official from Ipokia LGA, attesting to the claim that Ogu people, who speak their language in public spaces without shame, have been receiving rewards that they hadn't expected both at home and even abroad.

Researcher: *Can you tell me about any peculiar encounter you have had with any of your kinsmen which has challenged you to speak Ogu*?

I once travelled to the UK and went to buy something at Berkham. I was there when a younger one phoned in. I said in Ogu, "Sunday, how are you?" I did not know that the lady behind me was an Ogu woman. When I was done with the call, she asked from behind in Ogu, "Guy, where are you from?" I told her in bewilderment, I could speak Alatha (a dialect of Ogu regarded as the standard) very well but I would speak Toli (another dialect of Ogu) with her. She said I should go ahead. I told her I am from Akasun and she said she's from Badagry; they are as many as 500 in the UK.

Researcher: *What happened after that*?

Hon. Sewanu (a relation of mine) had told me when he heard that I was travelling to the UK that if I got there, I should call his wife to come and pick me from the airport. In addition, Senator Bajomo, another relation, had given me money for hotel accommodation, feeding and other things. That was not necessary any longer. It was that lady that took me out and we later returned to her residence. To date, her husband refers to me as his brother-in-law. Before then, none of their four children had ever stepped on the soil of Badagry. They had been told this terrible story that cannibalism is practised in Badagry. I told them, "Look, I am your uncle". Before I returned to Nigeria, they already had some smattering of Ogu; they had begun to say "Uncle, I want to eat; Uncle, I want to drink water", etc. in Ogu.

Researcher: *This is quite a remarkable experience! Since you returned to Nigeria have you made any attempt to find out if the family continued speaking Ogu as a way of follow up*?

Oh yes I have remained in touch with the family. In fact what gladdened me most is the fact that based on my prompting, the following year they all visited Nigeria. When they arrived Badagry, their mother informed me that they had arrived. I said "Fine; put them in a *danfo* (a kind of commercial bus in Lagos) and let them hear some commuting terms. After that put them in a canoe, let the paddler take them across the lagoon". I told her that after all that, she should put them in a bus and bring them to me at Idi-Iroko. She brought them. I took them to Akasun and told them we could not go to their mum's place that evening because it was already late. But I pointed to the community for them and told them the name is Whekan. Then I took them back to my house, showed them round my house and introduced them to my father. At least they got to know that we are not cannibals. That visit has left an indelible impression on them. They witnessed abundance of Ogu language use and also joined in their little way.

The agency of ancestral homelands (Holmes 1992:65) in the maintenance of minority languages cannot be overemphasized as regular visits back home helps speakers of minority languages, who live far from their communities, to be in touch with their roots.

Their grandparents and other extended family members (Ishizawa 2004) will help to teach the language. In the case above, my informant was policed way back in Britain by a woman, whom I would refer to as an Ogu cultural police. She was impressed to hear an Ogu speak his language in a public space far away from home. She divulged her identity and took the guy home. He already had plans to book into a hotel but got invited to the home of his relative where he was treated like family. That singular action brought in linguistic renaissance into the family as the visitor encouraged the woman to teach her children Ogu.

He laid the example by being their teacher for the period of time he stayed with them. It is not surprising that the woman's children didn't understand Ogu even when their mother is Ogu. This behaviour is typical of Ogu women who get married outside their linguistic community, especially to Yorùbá spouses. However linguistic nostalgia is evident in this case as she welcomed a total stranger just because he spoke her language, and not even to her in the first instance. Again she took to the advice of the visitor and brought her family home to Badagry for the first time in order to have direct contact with her language and culture which are usually inseparable. The children were able to pick the language fast because they were still within the language acquisition age. No doubt the visit to Badagry has facilitated further mastery of the language.

Ogu cultural policemen and women often maintain close relationships with families that they have policed and who have keyed into the idea in order to encourage them to keep speaking the language. Several long lasting relationships have developed between strangers who became friends upon discovering that they were from the same language community. Sometimes the now reformed families, on their own, give back progress reports of the mastery of Ogu in their families. The tone of excitement, joy and fulfilment with which these families recount their progress report is often amazing, thus giving credence to my earlier submission on linguistic nostalgia. It should be noted that Ogu people do not go about displaying their competence in the language because they hope to get some sort of reward from a chance meeting with an influential kinsman. The point I want to emphasize here is that through the efforts of the Ogu cultural police team, many Ogu people who had shifted to Yorùbá for diverse reasons are returning to the patronage of the language. Having been tutored to develop confidence in themselves and in the language that they speak, they now speak their language wherever they find themselves

with pride. It is paying off for them. Clearly this is in consonance with Priestly et al (2009)'s submission that positive attitude on the part of speakers of minority languages go a long way in language maintenance.

5.1.9.2 Case 27

The case that will be examined here is another instance of the social economy of cultural policing. This indepth interview with another informant, this time a female civil servant with the Lagos State government and also from Badagry LGA, reveals how a particular event in which her ability to speak Ogu paid off has endeared her towards the language and her resolve to continue speaking it. Here are excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: *Can you recall any particular instance where your speaking of Ogu gave you some benefits*?

A particular incident comes to mind. I once was involved in an interview for a job with the Lagos State Government. On the day of the interview, several questions were asked including what LGA I am from. I told them Badagry. The interview continued and suddenly in the middle of things, one of the members of the interview panel blurted out in Ogu "Na a no yin?" meaning "What is your name?" In shock I replied also in Ogu and the section ended. I got the job!

Researcher: *What do you think informed the speaking of Ogu as part of the interview procedure*?

Well I later found out that there are sometimes job vacancies that are meant for Lagos State indigenes and are shared by quota although the quota for the Ogu is usually very small. Sometimes even some Yorùbá, who are aware of this, claim to come from Badagry LGA in order to secure such appointments. So during interviews for a vacancy that is meant for Badagry, such sudden questioning in Ogu often arises and many Ogu people have failed due to inability to speak the language. Of course, those Ogu who bear Yorùbá names are usually not shortlisted for such interviews as their names suggest that they are Yorùbá. Even if their credentials show that they are from Badagry, the fact that they bear Yorùbá names makes them suspected impostors.

Researcher: *How has the incident affected your attitude towards Ogu*?

> I am so happy I could speak the language at that interview as I needed the job desperately. I would not have ever forgiven myself if I had lost that chance because I could not prove who I said I was. Since then I have resolved to continue speaking the language. I have also been telling my relations about the experience and the need for our young people especially to have some level of proficiency in Ogu. At least there are some benefits from speaking the language, which I have enjoyed.

Incentives play a major role in inspiring people to speak their language. Part of the reasons why Ogu people shifted in the first place was the belief that identifying with Yorùbá would give them some socio-economic leverage as well as political acceptance. However in this case study, we see a lady who got a job as a result of competence in her language, Ogu. This is part of the social economy of cultural policing. Elements of policing at play in this case include suspicion as it was suspected that the lady was an impostor. Then there was questioning which was expressed in Ogu. Her ability to speak the language brought about confirmation and then reward. Those who failed the interview realized that their lack of proficiency in Ogu was not in their best interest. Many young Ogu have taken a cue from this incidence to gain proficiency in their language now that they realize that there are some gains accruing from it. Again this is in consonance with Batibo's (2005) submission that minority language speakers should be made to patronise their language by making the speaking of the language attract some socio-economic benefits. Ogu families, especially of the cultural police team, in their own little ways have been giving material gifts to their children who make efforts to speak Ogu as a way of motivation. My next case study again attests to the socio economy of cultural policing.

5.1.9.3 Case 28

Case 28 again attests to the fact that the social economy of cultural policing has immensely imparted Ogu language maintenance. In this indepth interview with my informant, a 28-year old male university undergraduate from Ado-Odo Ota LGA, he revealed how he won a scholarship from the Akran of Badagry because he spoke Ogu. He has now become an active member of the Ogu cultural police team, telling youths to return to the patronage of the language. Excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: *Have you ever had any experience whereby your speaking of Ogu brought you some benefits*?

Yes, I can remember when I was in my second year in the university. I learnt that the Akran of Badagry was giving out scholarships to deserving Ogu students from Lagos State in higher institutions. I decided to go for it. I thought that the moment I got there and told them my name and showed them my identity card, I would be given the money. But alas when I got there, there was a large crowd. Then an interview session started. Those who had neither Ogu first names nor surnames were immediately sent away. The few of us who had letters from our local government areas showing we were Ogu were further interviewed in Ogu and that was where a whole lot of other students fell out. They could not speak the language. I was among the few who got the scholarship.

Researcher: *How has this incident affected your attitude towards Ogu*?

It has definitely made me to develop a more positive attitude to my language. All the other students who had gone for the scholarship realized that day the need to have an identity which is expressed through language. Since I had that encounter, I have been telling my siblings and other Ogu youths to be proud of their language and speak it.

Researcher: *Have your efforts been paying off*?

Absolutely! Many friends of mine are now making efforts to learn the language. Some have gone as far as blaming their parents for not teaching them the language when they were younger. As a result their parents have been compelled to start teaching them. I am grateful to the Akran for this gesture.

It is pertinent to note here that scholarships and enhanced employment opportunities associated with the speaking of Ogu targeted at the youth is strategic here as the survival of Ogu lies in the hands of the young generation. In as much as intergenerational transfer is encouraged, the youths need more than that to continue their patronage of Ogu outside the home front. That is where attaching socio-economic and political empowerment to the language by the cultural police team is very pertinent. Once the youth are sure that speaking Ogu does not in any way reduce their economic leverage then the shift to Yorùbá is uncalled for. Again youths are able to influence fellow youths to patronize Ogu at that age than parental influences. My informant in this case study has been able to

encourage fellow undergraduates and other youths in his community to return to the patronage of Ogu by relating the story of how he got the scholarship from the Akran. He has also been a model by speaking the language with pride even in the midst of fellow students who are Yorùbá in a predominantly Yorùbá-speaking institution. Once a minority language still enjoys the patronage of its young speakers then its prospects of getting endangered is slim.

5.1.9.4 Case 29

Case 29 is a revelation from my informant, a 45-year old male civil servant from Ado-Odo Ota LGA, of how a young female cousin of his was policed and the aftermath of the policing. It also adds credence to the social economy of *cultural policing*.

Researcher: *Is there any event that you can remember which has encouraged you to speak your language like never before*?

Ogu as a language is something whose speaking makes me so happy that I speak it everywhere. That language did something for me concerning a cousin. Because of that incident my other young cousins have all developed interest in speaking it. Those of them who could not speak the language before now speak it

Researcher: *What incident are you talking about; tell me more about it*.

How did it happen? My paternal uncle's daughter was going to get her international passport. She told me and I asked her to go and keep me posted about the situation at the immigration office. She went and discovered that they were about 40 people that were waiting to get the passport. When God would work His wonders, it was through Ogu language that He perfected everything. The person that would attend to them was going through the list when he saw 'Sewanu.' He called the number and asked whose name it was. My cousin stepped forward and went to him. When she got there, it was Ogu he spoke to her and she replied in it. 'Where are you from?' She said 'Poka',[16] that is, Ipokia. 'Are you an Ogu girl?' 'Yes', she responded. She even told him that she had an uncle working in so and so place and she would want him to speak with the uncle. She called me and gave him the phone to speak with me. The person said he had told her to go back home and return the following day for her passport.

[16] The Ogu call Ipokia Poka.

Out of several people, she was the first to get her passport. When she got back home, she called and told me all that had transpired at the immigration office. Surprisingly when I later paid her a visit, even her younger siblings that could not speak the language then said they wanted to learn it.

Researcher: *Do you think that your cousin's siblings actually made efforts to learn Ogu*?

Oh for sure! Having seen the edge that the knowledge of Ogu had given to their sister, they now believe that there is benefit in speaking the language. Before now, people got ridiculed for speaking the language in public spaces but the reverse is now the case as more people are getting applauded for identifying with Ogu in public. I can testify to the fact that anytime I visit that home the young ones are always all over themselves trying to impress me with the latest Ogu expressions they've learnt.

Professional policing strategies, which can be used to describe the activities of the cultural police are at play in this case. First there was observation as the officer noticed the Ogu name. That then gave rise to *suspicion*. Though the name served as a *clue* to the girl's identity, he needed further *proofs* to *confirm* his suspicions. He then went on to questioning and in the process he employed tact by speaking to the girl in Ogu. As a cultural policeman, he needed to commend his 'sister' for being unashamed of her identity and encourage her to remain loyal. That the immigration officer holding such an enviable position could speak Ogu in public was enough for the young girl to be proud of her Ogu identity. The aftermath of this case of policing is the effect that it has had on the girl's family as her younger siblings who didn't have a positive attitude towards the language are exhibiting a reversal of attitudes. As more people get enlisted in the Ogu cultural police, the ethnolinguistic vitality of Ogu keeps increasing thereby having positive implications for its maintenance.

5.1.9.5 Case 30

Case 30 involves the encounter of one of my informants, a 42-year old civil servant from Ado-Odo/Ota LGA. He narrates how he and some of his friends were rescued from the hands of some professional policemen at a police checkpoint by a member of the Ogu cultural police. Excerpts from the interview:

Researcher: *Has there been any time in your life that speaking of Ogu saved you thereby encouraging you to stick to the language*?

Of course, a particular incidence comes to mind although it was some of my kinsmen it happened to but I was also involved. I was returning from Lagos on a fateful day in a commercial bus and we got to a checkpoint where we were stopped. Some youths were speaking Ogu in the bus. Immediately we were stopped, these youths began to bring out money; it was like they already knew the ritual. I thundered, 'If you dare bring out any money there...!' They did not know I am an Ogu man; I was just returning from work in suit with my tie properly laced and knotted. They became scared and asked for confirmation in Ogu: 'Big brother, what did you say?' I repeated what I had said, 'If you give them any penny, you will not like what I will do to you.' The immigration officers asked the three of them to get down and they began to interrogate them. They asked them where they were from and they said they were from Ere. At this time, someone was saying in Yorùbá: 'Give them some money and let us go or are we going to remain here forever?'

Researcher: *So what happened next*?

I then got down and went to see the officers. "These guys have told you where they are from, you can understand what they are saying and you know they are not of the Yorùbá stock. What more do you want? The place they mentioned, have you been to that place before?" They said 'No'. I said to them, 'Leave these children; I am also from that part of the country they just mentioned to you.' When they were not cooperating, I went to see their boss inside the shed. I told him, 'This is unfair. You are here and innocent Nigerians from my community are being maltreated by your boys. What is the difference between the people of Badagry and the people of Ere?' He apologized for the harassment explaining that his men had suspected my kinsmen of being illegal immigrants from The Republic of Benin. Because of my intervention, my kinsmen were allowed to go.

Researcher: *How did your kinsmen react to your intervention*?

By the time we got back into the bus, it was Ogu language we were

speaking till we got to Idi-Iroko. They said 'Big brother, we never knew you were an Ogu man; nobody could have ever suspected.' It was a sort of eye-opener for the guys that day. I then told them, 'wherever you are, you should learn to speak your language because that is what God has put into your mouth. If you hide it, you will offend God.

Researcher: *Do you think your intervention will make those guys favourably disposed towards Ogu*?

I am very sure that those kinsmen of mine will continue to hold their own wherever they find themselves, having seen the benefits in speaking their language. I believe they will also tell the story to others thereby creating the awareness of the need to speak Ogu among our people.

Cultural policing has obviously exposed Ogu people to some socio-economic benefits accruing from speaking the language with pride. The highly educated man, who saved his kinsmen, fits into the category of cultural police. He belongs to the elite group who now employ the speaking of Ogu without apologies as one of their tactics. While the cultural police was trying to question the extortion of money from his kinsmen, the Yorùbá passengers were impatiently urging them to pay up. It is becoming obvious to Ogu people that when the chips are down, the Yorùbá, whom they try to identify with, often deny them. Again this has facilitated their new resolve to return to the patronage of their language since they will not be denied by their own. It has become a usual habit for people from Badagry and some other parts of Ogun State around the Nigeria/ Benin border to face harassment and extortion from policemen at traffic check points. While some of the traffic policemen working in that area are aware of the presence of the Ogu in Nigeria, they often pretend they don't know them in order to extort money from them. Again due to lack of formal education and proper enlightenment, these people continue to suffer such harassment in their own country. No doubt the intervention of the Ogu cultural policeman will leave a lasting impression on these individuals thereby creating a bonding between them and Ogu.

5.1.10 Case 31

In the case discussed here, a 47-year old high school teacher of French from Ado-Odo Ota LGA reveals how he has keyed into the vision of cultural policing. He has been making

efforts to preserve and maintain Ogu in his own little way using his vantage position as a teacher who has the opportunity to reach out to many Ogu students at the time. As a teacher of French, he has been preserving French and its culture by teaching it to Nigerian students. Meanwhile, his own Ogu is gradually heading for the doldrums even when majority of his students are Ogu and the school is located in an Ogu community. He took a personal decision to also do something to save Ogu by translating the Nigerian national anthem into Ogu. Having done that, he embarked on the task of teaching all the students the anthem at the assembly ground with the permission of the principal of the school. Not stopping there, he convinced him to permit the singing of the Ogu version of the national anthem on Wednesdays. This has continued to date at Toyon High School in Ado–Odo LGA in Ogun State. Here is the Ogu version of the anthem as translated by my informant:

National Anthem in Ogu-First Stanza

Mi fon tovi leh, mi wa sio Naijiria	Arise, O compatriots, Nigeria's call obey
Na tho sen ayiten lo	To serve our fatherland
Po yise wanyina huhlon po	With love and strength and faith
Na'zon suka mi ton leh po	The labour of our heroes past
Nigba yi tho vo gbe	Shall never be in vain
Mi sen bo wa zon ganji	To serve with heart and might
Blonde yiten gbenopo ton, Jomio, konthopo	One nation bound in freedom, peace, and unity

National Pledge in Ogu

N tho pagbe na ayiten se Naijiria	I pledge to Nigeria, my country
Na tho yi home dopo tho do nugbo	To be faithful, loyal, and honest
Na tho sen Naijiria po huhlon po	To serve Nigeria with all my strength
Na tho go alo na gbenopo mi ton	To defend her unity and uphold her honour and glory
Na Okluno ni go alo na mi.	So help me God.

5.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDS)

Three focus group discussions–one for each – were held in the three local government areas under study which are Ado-Odo/Ota, Badagry and Ipokia. The group discussion at Ado-Odo/ Ota was held at Obakobe village on the 4th of July, 2015 and lasted for two hours and thirty minutes. It comprised ten discussants made up of seven males and three

females. The discussants were aged between 16 and 78. The second focus group discussion was held on the 3rd of January, 2016 at Idi-Iroko in Ipokia Local Government Area. It lasted from 4:06- 6:18 p.m. It comprised seven discussants who were all males between ages 35 and 46 and cut across different occupations. The third group discussion was held at Javie in Badagry LGA on the 28th of February, 2016. It comprised 12 discussants –11 males and 1 female aged between 18 and 40 also cutting across different occupations and lasted for two hours. Generally, we had the challenge of getting women to attend focus group discussions. Many of them did not turn up as scheduled as they felt it was culturally improper for them to sit with men and discuss. This is part of the challenges already noted under the limitations of the study in chapter one. The semi-structured questions were aimed at finding out the opinion of the general Ogu people about the activities of the Ogu cultural police in order to ascertain if their strategy for Ogu language maintenance was working. The essence of the group discussions was also to find out the extent to which the maintenance efforts of the police have gained ground that is how far and how well. Data from the group discussions are also presented and discussed as case studies.

5.2.1 Case 32

Researcher: Have any of your kinsmen been coming around to encourage you to speak Ogu?

> Yes quite a number of them have been coming home to talk to us about the need to start speaking our language again and teach our children to speak too. You see our people who have become highly-educated and now have good jobs visit home and speak Ogu to us. We are surprised that they haven't forgotten the language; they still remember their roots. The reason that some of us preferred Yorùbá to Ogu was because we felt ashamed of the language. If we found ourselves in the midst of the Yorùbá, they belittle us by saying "Who are the Ogu? They are worth nothing". This kind of ridicule made many of us to hide our identity, stop speaking the language until some of us lost it. But now that some of our sons and daughters who are highly placed in society speak the language with pride, we in the villages are encouraged by their actions to regain some confidence in ourselves. (A 48-year old business man, Ado-Odo ota LGA)

5.2.2 Case 33

Here are some more responses from other discussants, which traced the genesis of the shift and how the reversal of attitudes is now being entrenched by a new generation of elite and cosmopolitans, contrary to the shift previously instigated by earlier generations:

> For me and some other tribesmen, it is gladdening to know that our people who are away and are well-placed still come back home and speak the language. It makes us happy because until this development, we had always thought that our people who are away had shaken off the language and all memories of home as they used to do in those days. Now some of our influential kinsmen come home and speak the language more fluently than those of us at home. It comes as another form of shame to us that those of us at home are more deficient in Ogu proficiency than our sons and daughters who are based outside the community as some of them now speak better Ogu than us (a 66-year old, male, farmer from Ado-Ota LG)

5.2.3 Case 34

When asked the same question, another respondent from the group, this time a 42-year old female trader who is married to a fellow Ogu responded thus:

> When we were schooling, we were not allowed to speak Ogu, just Yorùbá. That contributed to why I am not versed in Ogu to date. The little I speak now is because I am married to a fellow Ogu otherwise I would have completely lost the language. Many of our people give their children Yorùbá names and even if they give Ogu names, such names are never heard. I am always happy when I see our sons and daughters in the city who come home and encourage us to speak our language with pride. I am surprised to see their children answer Ogu names while we in the village give our children Yorùbá names. Now things are changing as we now realize from the efforts of our kinsmen and women that we don't need to be ashamed of identifying ourselves as Ogu.

5.3 Cosmopolitanism, reversed shame and the reversal of Ogu language shift

The responses of the discussants in the group blamed the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá in the first place on their kinsmen who had travelled to the cities and returned home speaking Yorùbá. These kinsmen had been perceived to be more enlightened than the people at home. They even chided their people for speaking Ogu since having been to the city and back, they saw themselves as some sort of "been-tos". The speaking of Yorùbá then became a show of social modernity as anyone who wanted to prove that they were not barbaric began to speak the prestigious language. Gradually the shift, instigated by the first generation of so-called elite group, began to gain ground to the extent that both young and old began to patronise Yorùbá, which soon took over almost all the domains of Ogu except the ancestral shrines.

It is interesting to note that the efforts to reverse Ogu language shift and maintain the language are being championed by returnees from the cities. It is however ironical to note that both the language shift and the reversal efforts are traced to the same source, the cosmopolitans. However the situation in the 1940s and 50s and up to the 80s was different from what is on the ground now. In those days, the Ogu people did not quite embrace western education, especially up to tertiary level, even when western education first came to Nigeria through their land. As a result of this, those that left the villages for the cities – especially Lagos, Ibadan, and Abeokuta – for greener pastures – could only end up with menial jobs. They served as servants and subordinates to Yorùbá employers. Hence they were made to feel inferior and uncouth. Due to lack of education and enlightenment, they could not hold their own in the face of ridicule each time they tried to speak the language. They were forced to accept that to survive in a Yorùbá-dominated community they had to hide – and even deny – their identity and sometimes cut off all links with their ancestral homes. Shame then was the precipitating factor for Ogu language shift. For those who paid visits home, the fact that they were city folks made them some sort of icons such that the village folks began to imitate them and their linguistic preferences. Eventually the group of Ogu people that migrated to the cities relocated back to the villages as frustrated old men and women who had little or nothing to show materially for all their many years of living in the cities. They became the laughing stock of their contemporaries who never left the villages, seeing that their embrace of Yorùbá had not in any way made their lives better. For many of the Ogu that embraced Yorùbá, their expectations were social-economic benefits. However reality dawned on them too late as their denial of their language and people did not improve the quality and worth of their lives. Things were even worse for them as they lost from both ends.

The reverse is the situation this time as the Ogu cultural police is made up of men and women who have acquired higher education and have become eminent citizens by virtue of hard work and talent and not by the patronage of Yorùbá or the denial of their identity. These individuals also live in the cities but return home as influential men and women who have made a mark in their various careers. These are the people who are now returning home to encourage their people to speak the language. The village folks are challenged seeing their folks from the city still holding on to their cultural heritage while they, who are

supposed to be the custodians of the language and the culture, have lost it. The cultural police have gained the respect of their people since they speak their language, together with their wives and children – born in the city – with pride. Their attitude of linguistic pride in the cities and everywhere in the world resonates with the hegemonic understanding of cosmopolitanism as "feeling at home everywhere in the world". A critical examination of this attitude reveals that as is espoused in hegemonic cosmopolitan practice, their pride and linguistic affirmation are anchored in the essential ingredients of cosmopolitan praxis, especially, high education, elitism, and comfort/wealth (Rossbach 2007). The qualifications have substantially accounted for why the new generation of Ogu cosmopolitans are influential and able to instigate shift back to the language in the ancestral homelands. It is pertinent to note that it was shame, resulting from ridicule and inferiority complex that precipitated Ogu-Yorùbá shift in the first place. It is paradoxical to note also that it is now another kind of shame that is facilitating the reversal of shift from Yorùbá back to Ogu by Ogu people. Seeing the pride with which the cosmopolitan cultural policemen and women, together with their family members speak Ogu, folks at home are again filled with shame at the loss of the language. This I have termed *Reversed Shame.* It is this reversed shame that now propels the Ogu in the ancestral homelands to return to the patronage of their language seeing that they are at the losing end. Further responses from discussants attest to this:

5.3.1 Case 35

Researcher: How do you feel when you see your kinsmen who are well-read from the city come home to encourage you to speak Ogu?

> I have a brother who works in the city with a white man. Anytime he comes home and speaks Ogu, it sounds strange to me that someone working with a white man can still speak Ogu as fluently and as impeccable as he; whereas those of us who live in Ogu-speaking communities and enjoy the daily interaction with fellow Ogu speakers cannot boast of that kind of flawless performance. That has now compelled us at home to make concerted efforts to polish whatever we now speak to measure up to his standard. (15-year old male student from Ado-Odo Ota LGA, FGD)

It is ironical to note that it is the Ogu speakers from the cities that now constitute the standard to measure up to as regards Ogu. Scholars of language shift and language maintenance (LSLM) studies have always claimed that languages are better

maintained in their ancestral homelands (Holmes 1992, Ishizawa 2004). This then presupposes that the folks in the ancestral homelands would be the best speakers and users of the language. It is often advised, as part of maintenance efforts, for families living outside their language communities to pay regular visits home in order to have regular contacts with their languages. However in the case of the Ogu people under study, we see a reversal of roles as the city now brings language maintenance to the villages which are supposed to be the custodians of the language. This is what I have earlier on referred to as *Reversed language Maintenance*. Some Ogu individuals in the cities, especially among the cultural police, who have consciously fought to maintain personal proficiency in Ogu, are now more fluent in the language than their counterparts in the villages, who have given in to the speaking of Yorùbá. In fact, in one of the focus group discussions, a discussant revealed that it was the three-year old daughter of a cousin of his from the city, who had come to the village with his family to celebrate the New Year that challenged him to reconsider his linguistic preferences and those of members of his immediate family. This is evident in the case study below:

5.3.2 Case 36

> I was greatly challenged when my cousin's three-year old daughter from the city of Lagos held me down to a conversation in Ogu. I had just returned home from my farm and she wanted to know what I was carrying in my bag, apparently expecting some goodies. She went ahead to ask me series of questions in Ogu in a bid to finding out what exactly I had in the bag. It was the shock of my life to hear that little girl, born and bred in the city speak such fluent Ogu whereas all my seven children cannot boast of that level of proficiency. It is even a thing of shame for me because my cousin's wife – the mother of the little girl – is not even an Ogu and yet the entire family speaks the language. Meanwhile my wife and I are full-blooded Ogu yet we pride ourselves on speaking Yorùbá. In fact I gave the girl a gift and made a resolve to review my family language policy in favour of Ogu. I was not surprised at the little girl's display of proficiency in Ogu knowing that her father, my cousin has always been passionate about our language from his youth. He has always been in the forefront of the awareness of the need for us to speak our language and has demonstrated this by speaking the language with pride, together with his non-Ogu wife, and children who live in a Yorùbá community. His family is a model to us and we are grateful to them and others like them for showing us the way. (A 40-year old

male church minister from Ado-odo Ota LGA)

There is no doubt that education and cosmopolitanism have played a great role in the linguistic renaissance of Ogu people. It is the level of education that has been acquired by the elitist Ogu cultural police that has enabled them, in the first place, to shake off the shackles of inferiority and interiority complex and then convince their kinsmen to do same. This has been made easy because such kinsmen look up to them naturally for guidance even on issues that are not only linguistic but others that are pertinent to their social political emancipation. These individuals have proven their mettle in other areas of community development such that their advice on language matters is also taken seriously by their people. Here are some other responses from discussants attesting to the claim that it is the elite Ogu cosmopolitans that are bringing the maintenance of Ogu back home to the hinterlands:

5.3.3 Case 37

> Concerning our people who are well placed out there, when they visit home, it makes me happy to hear them speak Ogu. There is a sister of mine who lives in Chicago. She rarely visits home but whenever she does or calls from there, she speaks Ogu. But we have so much to do for our children that we now bear. When we started schooling, we didn't understand what the teachers said because we didn't understand Yorùbá. That affected us adversely. We had to go and learn Yorùbá in order to fare well at school. For that reason, people did advocate that before the child started schooling it had to learn and understand Yorùbá first. What also led to our people speaking Yorùbá were land crises. The Yorùbá suddenly began to say that the Ogu were slaves and refugees at best. That sprang the Ogu into action and they researched into history and found out that the Ogu actually settled in those places well ahead of the Yorùbá. It was as a result of our grandsires' fear and docility that the Yorùbá cowed them down and deprived them of a voice. But now that we are becoming relatively educated, we are wiser. We can also speak some English now. So it is no longer compulsory that we learn Yorùbá any longer. If anything happens and the police are involved, we can also communicate in English. (A 39-year old male trader, Ado-Odo Ota LGA).

It is pertinent to note that some Ogu sons and daughters living in other parts of the world have also enlisted into the Ogu cultural police. From the excerpt above, we see an Ogu cultural policewoman in Chicago who would speak Ogu whenever she visited Nigeria and whenever she called on phone. Living in America has not made her forget her language

and her people. She is a source of inspiration to folks at home who are mesmerised by the knowledge that their international sister in the white man's land still has a good degree of proficiency in the language than some of them back home. She can best be described as an Ogu cultural international policewoman (InterPol). Indeed the activities of the Ogu cultural police have gone beyond the shores of Nigeria as more and more people abroad are keying into the concept. More evidences of Ogu cultural Interpol are already discussed under some case studies in KII. Some of such Ogu people abroad exhibit their loyalty to Ogu by giving their children Ogu names, whether the white man can pronounce them or not. For them, they owe no one any apologies for the names they bear and people will just have to accept them for who they are. They believe that a person's name is a pointer to his identity; so they want to show that they are proud of their identity by giving their wards Ogu names rather than Yorùbá or English names as the case may be. This resonates with Tae-Young Kim's (2007:117) submission that "name changing practices reflect their sense of ethnic identity, and suggest how individuals' unique practices reflect their sense of ethnic identity and suggest how individuals' unique socio cultural milieu impact name, maintenance or change".

Discussants also responded to the question on whether they thought that the efforts of the Ogu cultural police were yielding fruits. Their responses are further presented in the cases below:

5.3.4 Case 38

> My brother living in the city told me how he was encouraged to speak our language by a fellow kinsman he had met by chance.
> He got motivated and resolved he would make amends and begin to teach his family Ogu. Recently he told me that his wife and children are beginning to pick the language. To my utmost surprise, he gave his wife his phone and for the first time since he married that woman, she greeted me in Ogu and asked about the wellbeing of my family. Before I could recover from the shock he gave the phone to his children and one after the other, they said something to me in Ogu. I was almost moved to tears on hearing the sheer determination with which they were learning the language.
>
> (A 48-year old male civil servant from Ipokia LGA)

In line with the data above corroborating the fact that cultural policing is working, another discussant had this to say:

5.3.5 Case 39

> I attended the naming ceremony of the third child of my elder brother a few months ago. The first two children both answer Yorùbá names though they have Ogu middle names which the children don't even know. Their parents even have to think hard before they can remember as the names were given the kids by their paternal grandparents. As a result of the linguistic renaissance going on in our community presently, our people now cash in on every opportunity to showcase our ethnic pride. My brother's third child was given an Ogu name at the ceremony and so far that is the only child answering an Ogu name in the family. When I asked him what prompted this new trend, 'cos he was notorious for not identifying with Ogu, he said he had become "converted". I am very happy with the changes I see in our community now.
>
> (A 45-year old female civil servant from Ado-Odo Ota LGA)

The response of the next discussant again attests to the fact that the maintenance efforts of the Ogu cultural police team has gained acceptance with Ogu citizens not only in the country but outside Nigeria. If the cosmopolitans, who were initially known for denying Ogu by shifting to Yorùbá, now speak it with pride even in foreign lands, the simple folks at home have no choice but to follow suit. The excerpt also says something about the new trends in the naming patterns of Ogu families.

5.3.6 Case 40

> A brother of mine whom I had been encouraging to speak Ogu, together with members of his family, called me recently from the United States of America to announce that his wife had just given birth to a baby boy. I was thrilled and asked after the health of mother and son. He then mentioned a particular Ogu name – Sejlo – and asked me to explain the meaning. Upon explaining that the name means "God's will" he immediately told me that he was going to name the boy that. He then explained further that if he had had the kind of present orientation about Ogu when he had his first son, he wouldn't have named him Samuel Olaoluwa – names which do not in any way portray their Ogu identity. He then declared that all his children would thenceforth answer only Ogu names.
>
> (A 44-year old civil servant, FGD, Ipokia LGA)

Ogu people have learnt to place some value in themselves, thanks to the activities of the Ogu cultural police. Gradually they are shaking themselves off the shackles of shame and inferiority complex, which had prompted their shift to Yorùbá in the first place. Self-confidence is a key factor that is always stressed by the Ogu cultural police as ignorance and lack of education can make a person lose self-confidence. The Ogu had always looked up to the Yorùbá for endorsement which was often denied them when needed most but now they realize that they do not need anybody's endorsement to assert their ethnic identity. A discussant in one of the group discussions revealed how he had to reprimand his eleven-year old son sternly for not being able to hold his own when he was fed with wrong information by his Yorùbá Language teacher at school. Here are his very words:

5.3.7 Case 41

> My son returned from school on a certain day and told me excitedly that his Yorùbá language teacher had commended him in class for scoring the highest mark in her test. I was thrilled that he had performed brilliantly and exclaimed: "Waoh! And to think that you are not a Yorùbá boy and you outstripped your Yorùbá classmates in a Yorùbá test!" To my utmost surprise and disbelief my son retorted: "But my teacher told us that Egun is a dialect of Yorùbá like Egba, Ikale, Ijesha, etc." I couldn't believe my ears and it took a great lot of restraint on my part not to hit the boy hard. I was embarrassed that my son could not assert his identity at school despite my efforts at educating him about his language and people at home. On second thoughts however, I concluded that I hadn't done enough – the fault was mine. I had to sit him down for hours educating him about his people and I will not relent on doing this.
> (A 45-year old lecturer from Ado-Odo LGA)

The excerpt above describes the passion with which Ogu families now teach their children their language and their culture since they see the maintenance of the language as a task which must be performed with much commitment. In the 1950s and 60s and up to the 80s, an average Ogu parent would feel on top of the world to learn that his child had performed so well in Yorùbá to the extent of earning a commendation from a Yorùbá who also taught Yorùbá. Again such a parent then would encourage the child to believe and accept that he was Yorùbá. The reverse is now the case however as families, who have been under the influence of Ogu cultural policemen and women, even forbid their kids from speaking Yorùbá. They teach their wards to develop self-confidence and take pride in speaking their

language. Though Sun Hee (2010:285) is of the opinion that "the role of fathers in language maintenance has been understudied", it is pertinent to note that Ogu fathers are taking the lead in the reversal of Ogu language shift in their homes. Realizing that many Ogu children who had been taught Ogu at home often lose confidence when they are faced with ridicule at school – especially when they are schooling in Yorùbá communities, parents now see the need to give their wards strong orientation about their language and identity. They go a great length to instil self-confidence in their children such that they are able to hold their own and assert their ethnic identity even before their teachers and classmates. Some of these children, even when they cannot speak Ogu fluently, are aware of their Ogu identity and hold on to it. Self-confidence and pride in mother tongue are pertinent to language maintenance according to Carli et al (2003).

It is often believed that whatever a child is raised with that is what he grows with. Ogu people are beginning to realize that they are the architect of their own inferiority complex and that their being Ogu has not in any way made them perform less academically and otherwise than their Yorùbá counterparts. The Ogu boy in the case above has been misinformed by his teacher and this is common among people from Southwestern Nigeria who believe that everyone in that part of the country is Yorùbá. Such mis-information is even found in academic journals and books.[17] It is in order to address this issue that I included some clarifications about Ogu as a distinct language in the introductory paragraph of this thesis.

The next response from another discussant again attests to the fact that Ogu children are now being trained to assert their identity at school, which is where language shift often begins from for them. Their ability to hold their own in the midst of Yorùbá classmates and teachers will go a long way in developing confidence in themselves and pride in their language. There is no gainsaying the fact that school acts as a socializing factor that facilitates shift. It is in recognition of the role of school in minority language shift that Potowski (2004) calls for dual immersion programmes for minority language learners. For him, if the minority language learner is immersed in both the prestigious language and the minority language for some hours of the school day, the learner is less likely to lose his language. Children who grow up speaking their heritage language at home often go to school and lose it. In the case of the Ogu child, Yoruba is the language of teaching in the

[17] See IRB - Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada: The Egun and their relationship to the Yoruba [NGA34665.E], 25. August 2000 (verfügbar auf ecoi.net): http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/188398/306419_de.html

first three years of elementary education. After that he goes on to offer Yoruba as a subject up to secondary level though Yoruba is no longer a compulsory subject. Shift then is often inevitable as the child finds himself socializing with Yoruba children in a predominantly Yoruba setting. Ogu families are now getting their children well grounded in Ogu at home in order to instil self-confidence in them. Self-confidence is perhaps the key element that speakers of minority languages need to assert their ethnic identity and pride and resist shift. The next case study is a pointer to this fact.

5.3.8 Case 42

> I told a friend that something made me happy the previous day. I am not as "lucky" as he (pointing to Asogba Owhenayon, who has an Ogu wife). I am married to an Ondo woman who does not understand Ogu, but I do not regret that because I do not know what God has destined for me. But yesterday, I picked my child's book to see what she had done at school. She was given a writing exercise on "Myself" and here is what she (she is nine going on ten) wrote:
>
> *My name is Nudegbesi Pentho*
> *I am ...years old.*
> *My tribe is Egun but my dad calls it Ogu, etc.*
>
> I asked her where she got the information from and she told me that each time grandma visited, she learnt from her but that she found the issue of Egun and Ogu in my diary. Her teacher called her and said "How can you be Egun, is it not your dad that works at so and so place?" She said: "Yes but he is an Ogu man and he can speak it very well. (A 35-year old civil servant FGD, Ipokia)

Many an Ogu has been deceived into believing that the Yorùbá had accepted him especially when the Yorùbá need them to beef up their numeric strength during politics. However when it is time to share the dividends, they are often shocked to learn from the same people who had said they were one that they do not belong. Such has been the case and this has made the return to the patronage of Ogu much easier for them since they cannot be denied by their own. Grandparents are also playing their role in Ogu language maintenance as seen from the testimony of the child in the case study above. The role of grandparents in language maintenance cannot be overemphasized. They are the custodians of any language since by virtue of their age, they may not have experienced shift. Children who grow up with grandparents or live with them are usually better speakers of their

ancestral languages than their counterparts who do not have contacts with theirs.

Further responses from Badagry and Ipokia local government areas attest to the fact that the activities of the cultural police have spread everywhere within the three local government areas that have a significant presence of Ogu people in Ogun and Lagos States. Responses from discussants in these two local government areas reveal that the people welcome the efforts of their kinsmen and are equally eager to tow their line. This is proof that the strategy is working for Ogu language maintenance. Here are more responses to another question posed by the researcher to ascertain the efficacy of cultural policing for Ogu language maintenance:

5.3.9 Case 43

Researcher: *Are your kinsmen in the villages now patronising Ogu more as a result of the encouragement of your kinsmen from the city*?

> Before now, we in the villages perceived that some of our learned and widely travelled people didn't find it fashionable to speak Ogu and didn't encourage being spoken to in the language. That was why we were not that proud of the language and not eager to speak it. We felt that because it was the people who "had seen it all" that were not so moved about patronizing the language. Did people get imprisoned for speaking the language or did they get killed for it? We didn't know. Because of that we were quick to hide the language and the related names. But we have now seen that our people who are well learned, enlightened and well placed, especially those who are based abroad and are employed speak the language. When they call from their base, they speak the language. We now know that even their children also speak the language. When they visit, they speak the language with us and they don't discourage us from speaking it with them. (A 35-year old male teacher, FGD Ipokia LGA)

> I have said that inferiority complex was one of the causes then. But the sway of inferiority complex is now beginning to wane. The younger ones behind us are now beginning to copy us; what we are doing is now giving them confidence in themselves, the people and the language. As to that effect, they now speak the language. Those who are based abroad but didn't find speaking the language worthwhile before are now becoming influenced too and they now speak the language to their children, relatives and tribesmen. (A 40-year old male civil servant, FGD Ipokia LGA)

More responses from respondents in the three focus group discussions attest to the fact that younger generations are beginning to emulate the stance of the cultural policemen and women. They are being challenged to speak the language with pride just like their senior kinsmen from the elitist city group. It is pertinent to reiterate the fact that the cultural policemen and women have always played leadership roles in community development before now and have always represented their people in other socio-political matters. They have been community leaders of some sort, such that their views are well respected by their people. They are believed to know the way forward for their people so much so that their people are assured that they cannot lead them astray. The consciousness of the reversal of shift from Yorùbá back to Ogu has permeated the entire community in such a way that both young and old enlist into the cultural police by the day. Another discussant gave the following response to the question on whether the activities of his elitist kinsmen have endeared him towards Ogu:

5.3.10 Case 44

> See, I am proud of my language. Till now, I speak my language anywhere and I am versed in our music. I even thank God I am a member of Celestial Church of Christ and I was a choirmaster at home before I shifted base. I can drum "Awhangbahun,[18] and also sing the accompanying songs very well.When I woke up this morning, I picked one of the Awhangbahun songs and began to sing. My relations at home became astonished and asked me if I still sing the songs where I am based. I told them I am not a bastard. Even there in Delta, when I am given a church assignment and I want to render a chorus that has an Ogu version, I simply take the Ogu version sometimes and ask the congregation to join by singing other versions. (A 35-year old male civil servant from Ipokia LGA)

Cultural policing has been going on for a long time among the Ogu people though it was not quite noticeable as many people had not keyed into it then. A few language loyalists had, in one way or the other, been making individual efforts towards Ogu language maintenance in their own unique ways. However, with the elite group of cosmopolitans who have now joined in the struggle, their efforts are gaining wider visibility. Here is the response of another discussant illuminating the maintenance efforts of Reverend Mobiyina Oshoffa, the current General Overseer of the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) during a recent service:

[18] *Awhangbahun* is a special Ogu drum used by the Celestial Church. It literally means "victory drum."

5.3.11 Case 45

> I remember a scenario. We do go for retreats at Imeko, the Nigerian home of the Celestial Church. Rev'd Mobiyina Oshoffa liked Ogu ministers to pray in Ogu language. There was a time one was asked to pray and he began to pray in terrible Yorùbá with a heavy accent and Rev'd Mobiyina Oshoffa lambasted him asking why he could not pray in Ogu. I was very happy. (A 40-year old male lecturer from Ipokia LGA)

It is pertinent to note here the role and antecedent of Reverend Samuel Oshoffa, the founder of CCC in the maintenance of Ogu as far back as the late 1940s when he founded the Celestial Church of Christ along the Nigeria/ Republic of Benin border. On every signpost of the church in public spaces, the name of the church is always written in four different languages-English, French, Yorùbá and Ogu. This is strategic as the other three languages are majority languages that threaten the very existence of Ogu. Such recognition accorded the language has granted it much visibility within the CCC fold and has also served to grant Ogu national and transnational visibility in the linguistic landscape of Christian spirituality. This you will find all over the world. The special drum used by the church is called "Awhangbahun" and that is the name it is called worldwide. In fact a lot of people admit that they first got to know about Ogu language and people through the signposts of the celestial church. Late Rev'd Oshoffa, who was an Ogu used the agency of the church to give visibility to his minority language through linguistic landscapes. Today members of the church the world over are able to utter a few utterances in Ogu thus establishing the presence of the language and its speakers in Nigeria. No doubt this gesture has helped to revitalize and maintain the language in a unique way, and validating the argument that the semiotic resources found in signposts and other linguistic landscapes, coupled with their emplacement, tell the story of a people. Several other responses show that cultural policing is achieving results for language maintenance among the Ogu.

5.3.12 Case 46

> I can see that shame and inferiority complex are beginning to fade fast. Because then, we had only a few people who had formal education but now our people's level of education is a source of encouragement to our younger ones. What caused our backwardness initially was lack of (formal) education. Take for instance my daughter who was doing registration in school. She called me and asked what she should write against 'tribe'. I told her 'You must be stupid for asking me such a question. Don't you know your tribe?' She said 'Ogu'. I asked, 'So what are you asking me?' You see, I had an opportunity with my father. If you did not speak Ogu, he would go mad at you. That is why my children can speak the language anywhere they are. Inferiority complex is now dying down, our people are becoming exposed and the awareness is becoming high. (A 46-year old male civil servant from Ipokia LGA).

The agency of intergenerational transfer in the maintenance and survival of languages is at play here. The Ogu cultural police are gaining grounds in their being able to educate parents to begin to teach their children to speak the language. The daughter in the excerpt above is already a grown girl who may have already completed high school, yet she needed to call her father to know what tribe to write down on her registration forms. This reveals part of the extent of the shift the family must have experienced for their daughter not to be sure of her tribe. Again it also suggests that there is a reversal of attitude in the family language policy as the girl now knows the new linguistic stance of her father. The response of the father attests to the passion with which those who have keyed into the ideals of the Ogu cultural police pursue their goals. It is obvious that language maintenance is already going on in this family as before now the girl in question would not bother to call her father but would just write 'Yorùbá on her registration forms. Again she needed to test her father's stance on Ogu as she was able to respond in favour of Ogu when questioned sternly by the father. That her father was not reneging in his new loyalty to Ogu is not in doubt here and this will go a long way in boosting the morale of the little girl as well as changing her attitude towards Ogu. Parents, especially fathers, are putting in concerted efforts to teach even their grown children who are already above the language acquisition age to speak Ogu. For them, it is an issue of 'better late than never'.

Respondents also gave their views about the general attitude of Ogu people towards their language presently. See some more responses below which are all subsumed under case 47.

5.3.13 Case 47

> At my work place, we are three Ogu-speaking people but the third person who is a woman cannot speak it. Whenever the other person and I see each other, it is Ogu we speak. One day she came to us and pleaded that before she or we are transferred from there, she should also have attained some spoken competence in it. (A 35-year old male civil servant, FGD, Ipokia LGA)

> If the generation ahead of us had put on the kind of attitude we are now putting on, Ogu language would not have suffered such a terrible fate. But now, there is serious improvement, especially from the younger ones because of how we see and regard the language in their presence. I have as many Ogu music discs as possible and I play them in my office, anywhere...even the ringing tone of my phone is one of Nougbozoukou's tracks. (A 35 yr old male civil servant from Ipokia LGA)

> What I have gained through speaking Ogu is so much. Therefore, I thank God that this discussion came through. May God help the project. (A 46-year old male civil sevant, Ipokia LGA)

The excerpts above point to the fact of regret and shame as affirmed in earlier discussions**.** Minority language speakers have been advised to take pride in speaking their language as a measure towards reversing language shift. Ogu people are now asserting their ethnic identity though music, the earnest desire to learn the language as well as identifying with their Ogu-speaking kinsmen. The stance of the Ogu cultural policemen and women in speaking Ogu with pride has imparted their denying kinsmen to the extent that it is now again a thing of shame not to be able to speak Ogu. This is what I have earlier on referred to as reversed shame. That some Ogu people have been saved from difficult situations by their Ogu-speaking brothers have also facilitated the renewed loyalty to Ogu as seen in the case below:

5.3.14 Case 48

> I was coming from the Republic of Benin and got to the border and found that an Ogu person had been detained. I said to myself, "This is an Ogu immigration officer on duty and an Ogu man being delayed!" I went nearer and asked the Ogu officer, "You are here; an Ogu officer and an Ogu man is being delayed here. The Hausa people that usually import foot wears from Niger through this border, do they have passports? Why do you like harassing my people? "He became ashamed of himself and released the Ogu man. For these reasons, God will aid you in this research. (A 45-year old civil servant, Ipokia LGA).

The following are some of the responses from the focus group discussion held in

Badagry LGA. They attest to the fact that cultural policing has had impact on the maintenance of Ogu in that locality as well. People's attitude towards Ogu is becoming more positive as there is now a sort of psychological satisfaction from being able to speak their language again with pride.

5.3.15 Case 49

> As for me, my landlord is my motivation. He is a mobile police based away, but whenever you call or he calls, wherever he is, he will neither speak English nor any other language; it is Ogu he speaks. If you dare speak Yorùbá to him he will ask you immediately if you are not Ogu. For that reason, even though the approved language in my children's school is English language, at home it is Ogu language. They may speak Yorùbá and English at school but once at home, it is Ogu. I have also told my mother to always speak my language with my children. (A 40-year old male artisan from Badagry FGD)

> When I was in primary school, we held an inter-house sports competition. When the cultural dancers were dancing, it was all Yorùbá songs and drumming. The guests could not endure it any longer, so they asked if there were no Ogu pupils in the school that could entertain the guests with Ogu cultural music and dance. It was then that the teachers said, "Go and gather yourselves you Egun or didn't you hear the complaint of our guests?" That was how we gathered ourselves. We presented ours that day to the taste of the guests and we even realized more money than the Yorùbá cultural group. Then I reasoned within myself, "So Ogu is this esteemed in the society!" (A 20-year old female trader, Badagry FGD)

The excerpts below are all subsumed under case 50. They serve as confirmation that the Ogu of the three local government areas under study are having a change of attitude in favour of Ogu as a result of the activities of the cultural police team.

5.3.16 Case 50

> I am not ashamed of my language. Wherever I am, Yorùbá may be there, the president may be there, I will speak my Ogu language if there is someone that can speak it with me. In my school, it is Ogu that my friend and I speak. When I was in primary school, we put an Ogu music band together. A time came when all the primary schools in Badagry were invited to play at Ikeja. We took the very first position. (An 18-year old male student, Badagry FGD).

> Something happened in 2014. It was my sister who is based in Lagos that told me it is good to understand Ogu. I asked her

> why she said so. She then told me that thieves invaded an apartment beside theirs in Lagos. The parents understood Ogu but the children did not. As they were telling the children in Ogu "go and loose the dogs, go and loose the dogs", the children did not understand. (A 16-year old male student, Badagry LGA)

The excerpts above confirm that cultural policing has gained widespread acceptance among the Ogu as they now display their Ogu identity with pride anywhere they find themselves. The excerpts resonate with Carli et al's (2003) submission that minority groups should show pride in their mother tongue. Kubota (2011) and Ortactepe (2013) both agree that cultural capital can be read as a consequence of language learning. Most importantly by reason of the activities of the Ogu cultural police, Ogu people of all ages, sexes and social statuses are developing a positive attitude to the language and this Priestly et al (2009) affirm is core to language maintenance. Evidence of this development is the decrying by the youth of the non-existence of a certain radio station that used to air its programmes in Ogu. Before now Youths hardly bothered about media programmes in Ogu as they were satisfied with Yorùbá programmes. With the present reorientation, they are now clamouring for the role of the media in granting visibility to Ogu:

> It is unfortunate that many of the radio stations that once transmitted their programmes in Ogu language hardly do so nowadays; I don't know why. All Radio Wheke's programmes were once broadcast in Ogu but now, it is only once in a while. That is why I don't listen to it any more. I had once come across a complaint like this in my own community; a young man lamented he no longer listened to that radio station because a presenter that did his programmes in Ogu before either no more works with the station or something.(18-year old male student, Badagry FGD)[19]

5.4 Confirmatory evidence from participant observation

It is pertinent at this point to reiterate the fact that the motivation for this study in the first place was the researcher's personal observation of certain linguistic trends taking place among Ogu people as they make efforts individually to maintain their language using strategies that are akin to what obtains in the professional policing. I was privileged to attend a funeral ceremony on the 8th of March, 2016 and witnessed firsthand the impact of cultural policing on Ogu language maintenance as the people bore their minds freely on their impression of the activities of the Ogu cultural police team. Hence the study started on a note of observation and ended on a note of observation.

[19] Radio Wheke is an FM station based across Benin Republic border with reception covering certain Ogu-speaking parts of Nigeria in Lagos and Ogun States.

One of the numerous occasions for the return of well travelled cultural policemen and women to their ancestral homelands is the observation of burial rites of their dead. February 8th 2016 was one such occasion. Many Ogu sons and daughters had returned home from different parts of the world to witness the rites of passage being performed for the mother of a well-known Ogu intellectual and academic based in a South African university. The eve of the rites was considered particularly crucial. It was also the time that my family decided to be fully part of the event. As the activities progressed, the main informal gathering in the village allowed for the mobilization and rare meeting of both the stay-at-homes and the cosmopolitans from all over the world. Banters and pleasantries were exchanged, some remarking about how long it had been since they had met. Because some guests stood out in terms of qualification, age and influence, everybody wanted to specially ask about their families. It was at this point, an elder from the city of Lagos asked after the wife of another attendee. He got to know that the young man also came in with his wife. The young man beckoned his wife to come and greet the elder. To the elder's pleasant surprise, the non-native speaker wife exchanged pleasantries with the elder in very competent Ogu. It was this that led to a three-hour discussion and debate between the stay-at-home relations and the cosmopolitan returnees.

In the end, the stay-at-homes confessed to, without being urged, that they had erred in believing that speaking Yorùbá to their children was going to give them an edge in school. As most of the cosmopolitan returnees were cultural policemen and women, they saw it as an opportunity to re-emphasize the need for those in the ancestral homelands not to lose their linguistic agency. Besides accepting to turn a new leaf, the stay-at-homes in that community accepted the views of the successful and highly educated returnees as superior. The cultural policemen and women however did not feel totally satisfied. This was why right there and then, they agreed to fix a new date for a community meeting to further facilitate development for their ancestral homeland.

What I found most instructive and which pointed to the efficacy of cultural policing agency as a native speaker-to-native speaker strategy for language maintenance was that the developmental agenda would be driven by prioritizing shift back to Ogu in the ancestral homeland. It was then agreed that the meeting to be facilitated by Ogu cosmopolitans and cultural policemen and women would put maintenance of the language as the first item on the agenda. The elder from Lagos also confessed to have learnt a new lesson. Being

married to a wife from Northern Nigeria, the family had adopted Hausa as the language of communication. But upon the encounter with the younger cultural police family, he promised there and then to go back to his Lagos home and assume agency in changing the family language from Hausa to Ogu, since his children were still within language acquisition age.

From the above, there is a re-validation of the assertion made at the beginning of the research that among the Ogu, *cultural policing* for language maintenance believes more on native speakers' agency in the reversal of shift and maintenance of Ogu than sate agency. The final trip has proven this much and the reliability of observation as the main instrument for the implementation of the research. While *cultural policing* continues to gain ground through the agency of Ogu elite and cosmopolitans, other normative strategies in the maintenance of Ogu have also contributed, although to a lesser degree, in the continued survival and maintenance of the language. A few of these strategies and their workings among the Ogu are discussed below:

5.5 Other complementary maintenance strategies employed by the Ogu cultural police apart from cultural policing

The major style of operation of Ogu cultural policemen and women is the use of policing strategies to discover kinsmen who hide their identity and speak Yorùbá. Realising the grave consequences that this trend, if not mitigated, may have on the survival of Ogu, the cultural police have been using suspicion, tip-off, questioning, persuasion, etc. to win back the loyalty of denying Ogu people to their language. However for more people to be aware and key into this new linguistic renaissance, members of the team also employ other avenues to showcase Ogu and its rich cultural heritage. These other strategies are carefully and specially aimed at making the language attractive to its speakers. Some of them are discussed below:

a. Ogu traditional music: It has become the habit of Ogu cultural policemen and women to play Ogu music in their homes and offices. As they drive around during festive periods, they strategically allow loud Ogu music to boom out of their car stereos to the entertainment of everyone around that vicinity. Sometimes they even leave their cars parked in front of their compounds with choice Ogu music blaring from them. Previously youths danced to the music of Yorùbá fuji musicians like

Saidi Osupa, KWAM I and others. But now Ogu youths enjoy the music of Ogu legends like Sagbohan, Letriki, Joel Yotonyon, Jean Nouvette, Anice Pepe, etc. which celebrates Ogu people as a unique group, rich in culture and tradition. Such music gives the people some sense of self-pride as well as a sense of belonging. This awareness about Ogu music has even translated into other domains where Yorùbá had taken over before now. For instance, more Ogu songs are now being rendered in churches than Yorùbá songs and traditional ceremonies like funerals, marriages, child naming, etc. now engage Ogu traditional musicians to perform. This, in no small way, is helping to attract the people back to their language.

b. The revival of Ogu names: The Ogu cultural police and their 'converts', so to speak, are making conscious efforts to revive Ogu names that had been existing only on paper over and above Yorùbá and English names. Many families are changing their Yorùbá names back to their Ogu names. An example of this new trend is Maupe Ogun of Channels television, who, up till her Masters training in the UK answered Esther Ogun. However on getting employed by Channels Television, she decided to showcase her Ogu identity by answering Maupe (God be Praised). By this singular act, other Ogu youths are challenged to take pride in their language and identity seeing that such a celebrated TV star can showcase her Ogu identity to the whole world. Maupe's decision to revert to her Ogu name on screen is her own way of using her vantage position to establish the reality of the presence of her people in Nigeria. Some other individuals, who are unable to change their Yorùbá surnames due to the intricacies involved in change of names on certificates, make sure that their own children answer a different Ogu surname from theirs. The importance of naming as a maintenance strategy cannot be overemphasised as the shift from Ogu to Yorùbá is first evident in the speaking of Yorùbá and then in bearing of Yorùbá names. Thus the Ogu cultural police are of the opinion that their people patronise Ogu names as a way of entrenching their identity.

c. Educational empowerment of the Ogu: The Ogu cultural police are aware of the value of education and the role it has played in their ability to extricate themselves from the shackles of inferiority and interiority complexes. They, therefore, as part of their strategies to help their kinsmen regain confidence in themselves as Ogu, embark on conscious efforts to advise and encourage their people to embrace western education especially at graduate and post-graduate levels. To this end, they assist their youths materially, financially, morally and otherwise. Their commitment

to their people is not only expressed in words but also in action as they sacrifice their personal funds in order to assist in the educational development of their youths. The Akran of Badagry is known to give scholarships and bursaries to deserving Ogu students. Part of the criteria for getting the bursary includes ability to speak Ogu during the interview to prove the originality of the Ogu identity of the candidates. This is with the bid to encouraging the speaking of Ogu among children and youths in whose hands lies the future of the language.

d. Awards and recognition: Some Ogu cultural policemen and women on their own give awards to eminent Ogu sons and daughters who have contributed immensely to the maintenance of Ogu either financially or morally. Such awards of recognition go a long way to sensitizing the people that the maintenance of Ogu is a worthy task that must be done and for which members stand to be rewarded. Some job appointments are even now being tied to proficiency in Ogu especially when the job vacancies fall within the catchment of Ogu-speaking communities. Again political appointments are also now tied to fluency in Ogu as anyone who is interested in any political position must exhibit a fair knowledge of the spoken language to be accepted as a son or daughter of the land. Gone are the days when so-called Ogu sons who could not speak the language held any worthwhile political position. The political aspirant does not only have to show some proficiency in the language but must be known to be conversant with the culture of the people and is a regular visitor home. During political meetings and campaigns, Ogu is insisted on as the language of communication as against the use of Yorùbá, which had been the norm before the activities of the Ogu cultural police team gained ground. The consciousness of the necessity to speak Ogu everywhere has gradually gained ground in the entire community such that people are quick to caution their kinsmen who, in momentary forgetfulness, speak Yorùbá around them. It is not uncommon to hear people say to their kinsmen: “Tho Gugbe!”("Speak Ogu!"). This phrase has become such a refrain that even children also join in cautioning their parents when they try to speak Yorùbá. Indeed one such parent told me that his four-year old daughter has become the cultural police in his house. She acts as the linguistic monitor of the language of interaction in the home. The little girl is the one who reminds the entire family with the “Tho Gugbe” refrain to sustain the speaking of Ogu.

e. Ogu language youth activism: Perhaps the winning tool of the Ogu cultural police is

the enlistment of members of their immediate family into the cultural police formation. An informant told me how his daughter caused a scare in her University International School in the Southwest when her teacher called her a Yorùbá girl. She held down the teacher to such an argument that eventually involved her parents and the school management. Eventually the school had to tender an apology to the girl and her parents. In time past, an average Ogu child would feel privileged to be called Yorùbá. However, the activities of the Ogu cultural police have served as an eye-opener to Ogu people. They are now very conscious of their identity and would not tolerate anyone addressing them otherwise. Many have developed self-confidence and are able to hold their own in the midst of Yorùbá speakers, without fear or cringing. Batibo (2005) maintains that one sure way to reverse language shift is for speakers of minority languages to develop self-confidence and not allow any intimidation from speakers of the dominant or prestigious language.

5.6 Summary of chapter

This chapter presented and discussed data from indepth interviews and focus group discussions. The indepth interviews revealed the minds of Ogu people who have been encouraged to return to the patronage of Ogu through the use of subtle policing strategies. The focus group discussions sought the generality of the people's opinion to ascertain the effectiveness of the strategy of cultural policing in the maintenance of Ogu. It also discussed other complementary measures that Ogu people are employing to maintain their language apart from *cultural policing*.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

Chapter six offers a summary of the study, presents findings from the work as well as its contribution to knowledge, and proffers suggestions for further research.

6.1 Summary

The research studied a peculiar maintenance effort – which involve informal, conscious and unconscious simulation of professional policing strategies – being carried out by the Ogu people of Southwestern Nigeria to maintain their language which is currently experiencing shift. Chapter one introduced the study by giving background information about Ogu, the research problem, the aim and the objectives of the work as well as its significance. In chapter two relevant literature on language shift and maintenance were reviewed in order to ascertain the gap in the literature. It also reviewed the two theoretical frameworks – Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale and Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory on which the study was hinged. Chapter three presented the research design and methodology, which included the study area, population, research instruments, sampling technique and method of data analysis. In chapter four, data from two instruments of data collection – participant observation and key informant interviews – were presented and discussed. Chapter five presented and analyzed data from the other two instruments – indepth interviews and focus group discussions. It also did a discussion of other complementary maintenance efforts employed by the Ogu *cultural police* team. This chapter, which is the final, does a summary of the study, presents the findings; contribution to knowledge; conclusion and suggestions for further research.

6.2 Findings from the study

Following from the analyses and discussion of data from the four instruments of data collection employed in this research, the following are said to be the findings from the study:

1. There has been massive shift from Ogu to Yorùbá and English by the speakers of Ogu due to the need to belong to the more prestigious and privileged linguistic group. Following Fishman's (1991) GIDS, Ogu falls into stage six, which is endangered.

2. Inferiority complex, resulting from shame and ridicule is suffered by the Ogu. Socio-economic and political depravation are also factors contributing to the shift. However, ignorance resulting from lack of high formal education tops the list.
3. The history of language shift was traced to Ogu sons and daughters who left their communities in search of greener pastures beginning from the 1940s. On their return and return visits home they brought back Yorùbá, which the folks at home quickly emulated as they were seen as cosmopolitans and models.
4. Language shift manifests in diverse ways among the Ogu, ranging from bearing of Yorùbá names, Yorùbáization and Aglicization of Ogu names, speaking of Yorùbá, though with an accent, and the outright denial and hiding of Ogu identity.
5. Intra-marriage, which is recommended by scholars of LSLM studies as a panacea for language shift, has not mitigated language shift among the Ogu. Rather it was discovered that inter-marriages between Ogu men and women from other ethnic groups other than Yorùbá have helped more in maintaining Ogu.
6. A new consciousness among the Ogu reinforces efforts made on a consistent basis by some native speakers to maintain the language on an intergenerational level.
7. Some highly-educated and well-placed Ogu citizens from the cities return to their communities to encourage their people to return to the patronage of their language. In doing this, they employ certain soft, non-forceful, non-coercive strategies that are akin to what is employed in professional policing to collect intelligence on people that they suspect to be members of the linguistic community who may have shifted. These strategies include suspicion, tip-off, questioning, evidence, confirmation, investigation, persuasion, etc. Policing strategies like Hindsight Bias, Intelligence-led policing, etc. Interpol and Community Policing are also employed.
8. Using the policing strategies mentioned above, which may be long or short term, the Ogu cultural police are reversing language shift by encouraging several of their kinsmen to drop their false identity and speak Ogu again. Languages are said to be best maintained in their ancestral homelands but in this study, I discovered that language maintenance is emanating from the cities to the villages thereby contradicting existing literature on minority language maintenance.
9. Language shift started mostly with Ogu cosmopolitans who returned from the cities with Yorùbá. It is therefore paradoxical that it is a new set of Ogu cosmopolitans that are now instigating a reversal of attitudes. Cosmopolitanism has played an

indexical role in the Ogu language shift and Ogu language maintenance paradox.

10. The activities of Ogu cultural police have had positive implications for Ogu language maintenance as the people testify that the strategy is working out. There is the general consciousness in the people of the need to speak their language as many families have keyed into the importance of intergenerational transfer. A consequence of this is that the ethnolinguistic vitality of the people is fast shifting from low to high.
11. The language maintenance efforts of the Ogu cultural police have had positive results due to the fact that majority of Ogu people were living under a false identity and had been suffering from *linguistic nostalgia* – a serious longing for one's language and culture. Linguistic simulation, guilt and shame have also played key roles in facilitating the acceptance of the ideals of the police by the people.
12. Ogu cultural police also add some socio-economic benefits to their activities that have helped in endearing the language to the people. Such benefits include scholarships, bursaries, instant cash gifts, lasting cordial relationships, safety from difficult situations, etc.
13. Evidence that the peculiar language maintenance strategy has had positive implications for Ogu include obvious change of names from Yorùbá to Ogu, de-emphasizing of Yorùbá first names while emphasizing former Ogu middle names; reversal of the trends in music played in churches and traditional ceremonies; agitations for the standardization of Ogu orthography and use in schools and the media.
14. Data from the three local governments studied attest to the fact that *cultural policing* has gained wide acceptance due to the elitist status of the people behind it. Coupled with this is the community's realization that identifying with Yorùbá has not changed their socio-economic variables in any way. The people have learnt to shake off the shackles of inferiority and interiority complex, develop self-confidence and speak Ogu with pride.

6.3 Contribution of the study to knowledge

Existing studies on language maintenance globally have been restricted to certain strategies that are not only paradigmatic but also hegemonic. Data collection and analysis from such studies are often both predictable and monotonous. This study therefore has radicalized global scholarship on LSLM by theorizing and integrating a previously unknown strategy in extant literature. This strategy is what I have termed *cultural*

policing. It refers to those soft, non-forceful but subtle strategies that people of threatened languages consciously and sometimes unconsciously adopt in their efforts towards maintaining their language, which may have undergone shift. Such strategies range from nationalistic articulations of pride by highly educated and privileged members of such language communities. It also involves the collection of intelligence on community members who may have shifted. When their suspicion is confirmed, on account of their high status, the cultural police are able to encourage those who have shifted to change their attitude and even join them. The relevance of this study invariably lies therefore in the way it investigated the various strategies in the maintenance of Ogu on the one hand and on the other by operationalizing *cultural policing*. It will therefore open up a new ground in the global studies of language maintenance. Again it promises to expand the frontiers of knowledge as the language maintenance strategy employed in this study is the first of its kind in the literature. The only resemblance to it is *language activism* which however is not quite like it in its modus operand us. While language activism advocates state agency in the maintenance and development of minority languages, *cultural policing* affirms native speaker's agency through the prioritization of culture.

6.4 Conclusion

This work has gone beyond the regular submission about Ogu as being either endangered or facing endangerment as a result of widespread shift, to examining an otherwise unique strategy of language maintenance which some elite Ogu citizens are employing to reverse the trend. The strategy involves the informal, conscious and unconscious use of professional policing strategies like investigation and questioning to find Ogu people who may be hiding under the cover of Yorùbá and encouraging them to return to the patronage of the language. The strategy has had positive impact on the maintenance of Ogu as the people are keying into the idea. Accepting the ideals of the cultural police has resulted in a change of attitudes facilitated by linguistic nostalgia, which is a longing for language and culture. It is obvious from this research that speakers of minority languages that are threatened have the capacity to maintain the language by themselves without waiting for state intervention. All they need is a high ethnolinguistic vitality, which can facilitate language loyalty and maintenance. In conclusion, the maintenance of Ogu has substantially been facilitated by the native-speaker-to-native-speaker agency that manifests in the informal adoption of non-violent and subtle policing strategies, which have been referred to in this study as *cultural policing.*

6.5 Recommendations

Findings from the research suggest that Ogu people have been able to, on their own, begin to reverse Ogu-Yorùbá language shift and effect the maintenance of the language. Maintenance efforts have been mainly individualistic and at the domestic level. Whatever success Ogu people have recorded so far from their individual efforts cannot be compared to the ethnolinguistic vitality as well as the socio-economic leverage that Ogu stands to enjoy given the intervention of the Nigerian government. The role of government in empowering minority languages that are faced with attrition cannot be overemphasized. From the findings and conclusion drawn from this research, therefore, I make the following recommendations for further maintenance of Ogu:

a. Ogu should be introduced as a school subject in primary and secondary schools in Ogu-speaking areas in line with the National Policy on Education.
b. Wealthy Ogu indigenes and organisations should establish newspapers and radio/television stations that predominantly use Ogu.
c. Ogu progressive unions should form a language board aimed at standardizing Ogu orthography.
d. Government should facilitate the writing of books and other learning materials in Ogu by encouraging literate and competent speakers of the language to publish books in it.
e. Ogu should be given more slots in government – owned mass media outfits, both print and electronic.
f. The knowledge of Ogu should be made mandatory for certain kinds of jobs in the local government areas or communities where Ogu is dominant.
g. Government should facilitate the training of teachers who will in turn teach Ogu at elementary level of education.

6.6 Suggestion for further research

This study can serve as a pedestal for more global research into the maintenance of other minority languages that are being threatened by prestigious languages in order to see if there are parallels in the informal application of *cultural policing* for the maintenance of other minority language groups.

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APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN, NIGERIA

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Location: Obakobe Village, Ado-Odo, Ogun State

Date: 4th July, 2015

Convener/Researcher: Senayon, Esther

Faculty: Arts

Department: Linguistics and African Languages

	Group Members	Sex	Assumed Age
1.	Azinmagba, Kodogbo	M	78
2.	Hunmenu, Jidenu Daniel	M	66
3.	Hungbeme Pono Isaiah	M	48
4.	Akonthe Gbesu Sunday	M	39
5.	Azinmagba, Elizabeth	F	63
6.	Gbetoho, Emmanuel Seji	M	32
7.	Hosu, Omolaso Rhoda	F	37
8.	Segla, Maume Atiwo	F	22
9.	Hoteyin, Nathaniel	M	15
10.	Adebiaye, Thosa Samson	M	45

The report

Q: Nu e jo e bayi fan, do hoho whenu, e jo fan lo yin meho miton e tonwhen mo yan Ayonugbeji di Abeokuta, Awonlin, etc., ni ye go, ye ma jodo/jlo na no tho Gugbe we. Amu mi len fan e zon ye tho bayi e to?

It was observed that years back, if our elderly ones moved out into such cities as Abeokuta, Lagos and other Yorùbá cities, when they came back, they did not find out it fashionable to speak Ogu language. What do we think was/were responsible for such an attitude then?

A: (Jidenu Hunmenu) Mi ko no po Anagonu le po kaka bo ye ko yi ayiha tho thon mi tho ogbe yeton me bo mi ma so mo ayiha de do na. Wehome we so hen nu ne wa. Na yin Gugbe mi no tho to wehome, e na so yon. Sigba Anagogbe we mi no tho to wehome kakaka bo e ko bio nu na mi hugan Gugbe bo. Yin do mi te go wa whegbe bo me miton

le tho Gugbe na mi, Anagogbe we mi no yi tho no fli na ye bo ye le su ma so mo nde blo thego. Amo thin le mi na wa gbon na yopo miton le ni tho te Gugbe tho po mi po bo winyan ma so na tin-in the me na ye uwe mi na so thin. Na thin ni yovo wa fi tin, e ma ja Ayogbe tho po mede po wa moo; ogbe e ton lo jan e na tho. Ene wutu mi na tho len pon bo fojo.

Then, we had lived so much with our Yorùbá neighbours that we simply acquired the language and placed it over our own language. Schooling was partly a cause too. Had it been it was Ogu language that we spoke in school,that would have been better. Even when we returned from school and our parents talked to us in Ogu language, Yorùbá still found its way into our responses so much so that our parents too began to speak Yorùbá with us even at home. But now, we have to look for a way to make our children speak their language without feeling any sting of stigma. It has to be noted that whenever an English man arrives in our midst, he will not speak in Yorùbá but his language. For this reason, we have to repent (turn a different attitude to our language).

Q: En-en, ho lo ji jan mi gbe de. Mi bayi na gbingblon. Do hoho whenu ki n lo na tho be, ye lo fan e be po wehome po na Ayogbe jan ye tho plonwe e kaka ye tho wa se linlen fan e sin gan yin fan Ayogbe lo go e yo mi na hen mo tho yanga. Me miton e go son wen be Ayogbe dodo ye na do thitho kon poun. Ho lo ka o wa dio ti mo yin fan me mi ton po vikefu mi ton de e hle we mo do nukon e (Awonlin, Badan, Abeokuta, po Ayonugbeji devo e po), ni ye go wa sinme mo yin fan ye ma go no tho Ayogbe ba Gugbe e ne go yi ye han mo no tho, na mu e no do agbasa me na mi, yewheno?

Well, we are still on that same subject but we thank the respondent for his response. It has been said that in those days, when the whole issue (of the Ogu people preferring Yorùbá to their language and actually speaking it instead of their language) would start, it began with the schools they attended where Yorùbá was said to be the language of the immediate environment and was adopted as the medium of expression and teaching. For this reason, our people felt that maybe it was by speaking Yorùbá that they could also rise; even if they returned from their hunting expeditions, it was Yorùbá that they would be speaking. But now it could be perceived that the trend has changed in the sense that when our people and our children who are now highly educated and are based in cities return to the village they do not speak Yorùbá with us in the village but Ogu language. How does that feel in our body, man of God?

A: **(Hungbeme Pono)** Nde ma ka do ode gotho ne. Ode e ye fan na mi tho ble da. Amo tii, mi dike na mi gbe hode bo. Me miton e dee hle we mo yan nukon mo do ten daho daho me, mo go wa go wa sinme mo no tho Gugbe gbe ye ma wonji eton; ye flin whentho ne we, fan whenthome ma gbodo gble, sinme ma go gbodo gble e yo ye flin. Do ayihonme hito, ki mi de mo bayi gbeto lisilisi do ayihonme hito, Gunu mo dee, Yibo mo dee, Yoba mo dee, Hausa mo dee do lisilisi, kaluku e yo e tin tho ogbe eton, mo tin tho asa yeton, mo tin tho whenthome eton gbe depepe ma jo whenthome eton tho. Nu e jo e tho yin fan bie Gunu athadewhlen tho jo ogbe miton tho e mo yin fan Ayogbe eyo mi no tho e yo e bayi winyanho. E tori ni mi je Ayonu dewhlen sin sinsin ye tho jan mu Gunu e yin ya? Ye ma ja mo nde. E wa yin winyan na Gunu athade na tho no tho Gugbe. Fan be ye na yon fan Gunu e wa yon tete ya. E yo e zon ye tho wa no tho Ayogbe kaka gbe Gugbe ma gotho wa vi thitho ba.

Nothing can succeed without prayers. We ought to have started with prayer. So, then, let someone pray for us... Our people who have become well educated and are now in good jobs, when they come visiting, they speak Ogu with us. They haven't forgotten the language, they still remember their roots. They remember that their roots must not be abandoned and their compounds must not become desolate. In this universe, as we are, different races and tribes, there are Ogu, there are Igbo, there are Yorùbá and Hausa. Everyone of the tribes owns its language, tradition and roots and do not dessert them (their roots). The reason some of us Ogu people do not speak our language but speak Yorùbá instead is because we feel ashamed of the language. For if we find ourselves in the midst of the Yorùbá, who deride/belittle us by saying, "Who are the Ogu? They are worth nothing", it makes some Ogu feel ashamed to speak the language. How should people find out that such a person as I am an Ogu person? This is one of the reasons why our people kept on speaking Yorùbá until some of them lost the language.

Q: (Insistence) Hide mi wa n go ti ne. Me mi ton dee hle we mo yan nukon e, ni ye waa go, Gugbe jan ye o tho gbe winyan ma go de me na ye le ba; na hide pepe dee de ogbe lo jan ye tho. Be e ehen bie tete dee do sinme e mo tho len fan me miton ton e dee hle we mo yan nukon gansho mo go mo gbe tho ogbe lo, be bie tete maa ha winyan se mo go bio gbe lo thitho me we ya?

That is where we are going. Our people who are now highly educated and well placed in the society, whenever they visit the village, it is the Ogu that they speak without feeling ashamed about it; and they speak it everywhere. Does that make those of us at home feel that if our people who are well read, equally well placed and are based in cities could speak be speaking the language anywhere without any stigma, why shouldn't those of us at home take off that shame and begin to speak the language freely without any apology?

A: (Hungbeme Pono). E bayi nue vivi na yon ati hagbe athadee fan me mi ton e dee ton mo yan nukon, mo do 'to daho me, mo go go mo no tho Gugbe na mi, e bayi nue vivi na bie ga-an, e tori sa de me bie len fan me mi ton e de do nukon, ye o wonji mi, e yo bie vetho. Amo ni me miton e ne e go mo do Toligbe thon na mi kon, e wa go zun winyan na bie dee do sinme fan be me dee ka yan nukon mo go po mo no tho Gugbe, ogbe lo mo go me do nugben nae hugan bie dee do sinme e, e wa lezun nue hu winyan na bie dee do sinme e fan olanyan bie tete do na thogbe ehe. E yin gigo depo na mi taun. N go se do Ledio me wafe ti fan ye no bayi programme de do ogbe lo me, ye mo no ylo me daho daho e do Gunu gbeji mo no kan see fan na mu do ye mo gbe lo ati joamo de Gunu e no jotho do ya? Mi se fe fan wewe whenu, Gunue do me dee do aholu mo do sisi, amo nu whinwhlen e zon nu hae ne e tho fle son e si, a mo ye o no go thopo. Gbe lo thitho vivi na mi gbau.

For me and some other tribesmen, it is gladdening to know that our people who are away and well placed still come back home and speak the language. It makes us very happy because until this development, we had always thought that our people who are away had shaken off all memories about home. But if such people come back home and speak the language more fluently than those of us at home, it comes to us as another kind/form of shame. Why should those of us at home be deficient in the language and our sons and daughters who are based outside the speech community still speak the language better than we do? Recently too, radio programmes are being presented in the language and elderly people are being invited to seek their opinions about the language and some other practices of the people.

Q: Oya, hode mu do ayo mo tho ho lo go?

Woman, what is your contribution to this matter?

A: (Hosu Omolaso) N thogbe mi mepo mi kutho awan sinsin. Vude de yon mo tho ho lo me e bayi fan e ye fan mi me po ni do ogbe mi ton to kon. Me dee do nukon e mo yin fan Gunu e wae ni ye jivi mo do yinko na do na vi kon, ye mo yan do Ayogbe sinyin navi; ye na do Gugbe ton do hinne amo e yo maa yanga kon. Me dee jivi mo do Gugbe sin yinko na, hide pepe de e je ye mo yon fan Gunu ne. Ye goo jivi, ye ni mo yi Gugbe tho plon vikefu e ye nitho se Gugbe. Sugbon misingbe e ne e vivi na yon ni ye do thitho kon. Saa de me bie tete yan wehome de ye ma dike mi tho Gugbe; Ayogbe dodo ne. Bie hae le Gunu e wa mi amo n ma se Gugbe gli de. Na mi dosu tho Gunu e me, eyo hutu mi tho se Gugbe lo taa taa ta de amo e ma didi di.

I greet you all. The little contribution I have to make is that all of us are supposed to be using our language. Our people outside the immediate community(ies), when they give birth to children, they give them names that are foreign to Ogu; even if they give Ogu names, the Ogu names will not be as pronounced. Anyone who gives an Ogu name to his/her child, wherever the child goes, people will identify him as an Ogu child. I also advise they should use Ogu language to train the children so they can understand the language. But it makes me happy if people speak the language. When we were schooling, we were not allowed to to speak Ogu language; just Yorùbá. People like us are Ogu but are not that versed in it. I still understand some smattering, even though it is not that smooth, because I am married to an Ogu man.

A: (Hoteyin Nathaniel) Ni mi yan wehome ye ma dike mi tho Gugbe. Ni bie me dee go yan to me, ye ma tho Gugbe, sugbon ni mi go wa sinme, mi sin baba ma dike mi tho Ayogbe...

Q: Ni me dee do nukon e kaa go mo wa do thitho kon, na e bayi ja ne?

A: E vivi na mo go dike na yon tete ni tho.

If we went to school, we were not allowed to speak Ogu. Some people also go out on their own and decide not to speak the langugae but whenever we come back home, our father does not allow us to speak Yorùbá.

Q: When your elderly ones who are well to do come back and do not communicate with you in any other language but Ogu how do you feel?

A: It makes me happy and also encourages me to speak the language.

A: (Ojo Jayeola) Mi bayi gan-an. Me e o loho susu. To boda de dee Anagogbeji e de. Ye ma awe ne moo amo alopa dee tho do Glogbe tho kon, e ma me do nugben na bie dee do sinme so eto; e mo vivi na mi gan-an. To boda devo go dee, Anagogbeji e yo tete go de, amo e ma singan tho Glogbe depo; mi do Gugbe tho kon e mo se amo e ma gan flan. Yon tete gbon-on, Gugbe ma e to tho dan do nugben na da, sugbon e do di. Ki n tho yan azonme, ni mi do awansinsin po mi sin hagbe e po kon, ye mo no jan "Egun ni 'wo." E ne gotho, ye mo jan "Egun ti o jale, oju lo n ro". Gbogbo insult e ne e eyo e zon bie Gunu e tho wa jan fan ni ye ma kuku yon fan Gunu e ma mi, ye ma kuku na insult mi ton kon. Nu e no zon me susu tho hun tho Ayogbe me ne. Amo tii, me e o wa no dio. Do hoho da, me e ma te do Gunu yin na vi; na ye ni gbaa yon fan Gunu ne.amo tii, mi sin me e o no do Gunu yin na vikefu e ton e. Do tii tete, ni mi yan hidewhlen ti mo yan do Ayogbe tho kon, ni ye mo yon fan Gunu e wa me lo, ye mo thoya nigan-an.

Thank you very much. People have said much. I have two brothers who live in the Yorùbá dominated- communities. They are two but the kind of Glogbe that one of them speaks cannot be got from those based at home. That makes me feel really good. The second brother, who also lives in a Yorùbá-dominated community, cannot utter a single word of Glogbe; he can understand but cannot speak. Even me, the Ogu was not that smooth in my mouth before but it had a reason. When I was an apprentice, whenever I a co-apprentices and I were seated, they would say, "You are an Egun". Then they would also say, "An Egun person who doesn't steal is only struggling against temptations." It was all these insults that made us resolve to hide the Ogu identity. By not speaking the language, none of the insults would be heaped on us. That was how many Ogu resorted to speaking Yorùbá at the expense of Ogu. But now, the orientation of Ogu people is fast changing. Before, the Ogu didn't even give Ogu names to their children so people wouldn't know they were Ogu, but now, our people give Ogu names to their children. Besides, if you go to some arenas and continue to speak Ayogbe (Yoruba), if they get to know that such a person is an Ogu person, he/she will suffer some deprivation.

Q: Mi jaale bo. Do hoho da ki ye tho zun Gunu e fan ni Gunu de ma je ajo be otu tho kon e de, e di fan Gunu e tete ma gblon ho de; no ye nobe mo yi 'zungbe lo tho sa'nu difan Jewhe e yo e tha e do eto. Be tii, be linlen e ne n ko o wa dio ya?

Please, in the olden days when the Ogu were derogated that it was only natural for them to steal, it appeared that they didn't refute it; they simply kept mute and endured the

insult as though God had designed their fate that way. Has that complacency changed?

A: (Chorus) Me de jan e to ti Gunu e mo gblon ni taun, ni e do nu finflen ye mo flen taun. If anybody says that today, the Ogu are ready to respond strongly; even if it requires landing some strokes, people will.

A: (Ojo Jayeola) E ma te do nu finflen; amo nue no jo ti e bayi fan, ajo de Ayonu e no je ti, e hugan Gunu e to. E ne hutu, ni Ayonu de zun Gunu fan ajoto ti, Gunu e mo no te mo fli ni daadaa.

It doesn't even need physical exchange but the current situation of things is, the Yorùbá are much worse thieves than Ogu now. For that, if a Yorùbá should raise such an insult again, the Ogu are ready to respond to them vehemently.

A: (Akonthe Sunday) Thopla me mi ton dee do ten gbogbo me gasho mo go wa tho Gugbe, home hunhun sin nu e yo e yin na yon. To anti de dee, Chicago e de. E singan yin fan jodepo e yo e na go dowhe aton me, sugbon ni e go, Gugbe e yo e tho; ni e goo ylo son Chicago, Gugbe lo jan e tho. Amo vikefu de mi no ji tii e, azon dee de mi na wa. Sa de me mi ble wehome de, mi ma se ho de ni sisa (tisha) do ho lo kon toli fan n ma se Ayogbe; Ayogbe mo ne sisa na go tho. Ogbe lo de mi ma se affect miton daadaa; mi do naa plon gbe lo whepo mi tho wa she nue sisa no jan se. E yo e zon mee mo tho wa n lo fan whepo ovi na tho yan wehome, e do na plon Ayogbe whe. E yo e zon mi sin me e tho plon Ayogbe. Do tii, nu e wa zon e tho wa sin-en fan Gunuvi e do na no tho Gugbe tii, ayigba ho ji e ble son. Ki e tho ya, Ayonue wa no lo fan kanlinmo wa bie. E he wutu, Gunu e wa she tho thin mo wa mo fan Gunu e je nukon na Ayonue tho wa ze to. Amo obu didi mi sin meho e ton e yo e zon Ayonue tho wa yi ten son e si. Amo ki mi sin me e tho wa she we hle vude vude, bie tete o wa yonnu. Do tii de mi singan tho Yevogbe, e ma wa yin thanthan fan na mi plon Ayogbe ba. Ni n de jo n mo yan ponogba, mi singan yi Yevogbe tho loho.

Concerning our (Ogu) people who are well placed out there, when they come visiting, it makes me happy to hear them speak Ogu. There is a sister of mine who is based in Chicago, she rarely visits but whenever she does or calls from over there, she always speaks Ogu. But we have so much to do on the children we now bear. When we started schooling, we didn't understand what the teachers did say because we didn't understand Yorùbá.That affected us really adversely. We had to go and learn the language in order to fare well in the classes. For that reason, people did advocate that before the child

started schooling, it had to learn and understand Yorùbá first. What now makes it mandatory that our people speak Yorùbá is the issue of land crises. The Yorùbá later began to say that the Ogu are slaves or refugees at best. This sprang the Ogu into action and they researched into history and found out that the Ogu actually settled in those places well ahead of the Yorùbá. It was as a result of our grandsires'fear and docility that the Yorùbá cowed them down and deprived them of a voice. But now that we are becoming relatively educated, we are becoming wiser. We can also speak some English now. So it is not compulsory that we must learn Yorùbá any longer. If anything happens and the police are involved, we can also communicate in English.

Q: Be te medaho de e do Chicago mo ylo son hunmo to mo tho Gugbe, be e o hen ayo po tenoyi e, te honton e po mo tho len fan ogbe e he dee nawe e he ylo son Yevotome mo tho gbe winyan ma hui we e he, tho bie tete ma tho gbe lo?

Does the fact that your sister who is in Chicago calls and still communicates smoothly in Ogu without feeling ashamed inspire you, your siblings and your friends to get more committed to speaking the language?

A: E ma yin fan n ma no tho; n mo go no tho na vikefu miton e...

Q: Be te medaho sin ki e no bayi gbon e ne na atho gbigbo e gbe winyan ma go de me...

A: E na athogbigbo o daadaa; winyan ho ma go de me we loo. Mi do na no flin fan Gunu wa mi, mi to,Gunu, mi no Gunu.

It is not that we've not been speaking it all along, and we've been speaking it with our children...

Q: Does your sister's attitude to the language encourage you and shake some shame off you? **...**

A: Yes, it does give me so much courage... we to must remember that we are Ogu, our father is an Ogu man, our mother is an Ogu woman.

Q: Ho devo de no thin na do ayiha tho kanse e bayi fan, do hoho whenu de me miton e tho yan Awonli, me dewhlen mo yan Yevotome...depe ehe lo na fan medaho e ton hotho tanyin e to yan Awonli natho yan bayi tanyin e ton sinvi sin flidom. Ki e tho je Awonli mo tho Gugbe, tanyin e ton sinvi na tho tite, tome e ho nii...ye fan ki ye na tho bayi to tafe sin flidom do Korodu, jan me e tho wa son Bakobe mo sin'an mo no jaya. Jan ye fan to tafe Jembete tho jete son hunme, kan e kan bio fan "bawo lawon eeyan mi se baje

bayi?" fan e no tho Gugbe wutu. Han mi yon fan sa e ne n ko me, mi sin me e len fan be me miton dee do nukon e tho no gbe fan na mi go tho gbe lo de, de mu e wa bie ton do gbeta; na mi gbo mo jo gbe lo tho bo. Mi o do 'ko na ha na pli lo kon. Be ki nuha e ne e tho wa dio; jan mi sin me e de o hle we mo do nukon, do ten gbogbo me e tho no go tii mo gbe no tho gbe lo, e o hen walo po linlen miton po dio tho pla ogbe miton ya? One other thing that I want to ask is this: in the yester years when our people travelled to Lagos, some travelled overseas... this young man told me that at a time, his elder brother went with their aunt to Lagos for the freedom ceremony of their cousin. By the time he arrived and spoke Ogu, his cousin got up and measured a dirty slap to him... it was narrated that when my uncle's freedom too was to be celebrated in Ikorodu, Lagos, my people went from Obakobe here to felicitate with him. By the time they got there and started making merry; chatting in Ogu, Tafe Jembete just disembarked and wailed "Why are my people this undisciplined?", apparently because they were speaking Ogu. Recall that then our Ogu people felt that, if their people who were that exposed would stop at nothing to discourage them from speaking Ogu, what wisdom could be there for those of them in the country (village) to insist on speaking the language? It would make a whole lot of sense to stop using the language. We are about rounding off but now that the orientation is changing, that our people who are very exposed and educated come to visit us and speak the language with us, has it changed our thought and attitude to our (Ogu) language?

Q: (Kodogbo Azinmagba) Jewhe na yido po mi po. Otho gbon-on e o gban son. De pe e he loho mo yido Geze sin yin da. Gunu whewhe e je Geze, Kadanu mo ne, e ma ka jivi we. Ki Ayonu e tho wa, ye yi ten son e si. Sa de me bie ha e jo de, sinthonu lo gbe do Geze ye mo yido jan Ago-Egun; maa tite tho nugo we e yo e zon hilo tho bu. Thoyiwhe thawe lo yin. Ki Yevo tho wa na tho she Amlon kwa gan depo yi, Thoyiwhe ye mo do hinne, mi sin me e mo she han tho pla e. Thogbon-on n lo o gban son amo Gugbe maa tho e ne yo, depoe depoe miton e na gbe; e do n me po go. Baba Aquila dee sin'an e ne bayi depo...

Interuption (Jidenu Hunmenu) Yon na bayi afikun vude. Be mi sin me dee do nukon e singan na wa do gbe lo tho kon kaka ye mo wa ble gbe lo yi tho do we plon, mo do we kan kon ya?

A: Thanthan ne me e mo no gbi thego do adusi amion. Han mi yon fan do hoho da me de

ma te bayi n de pepe do Gugbe me do Ledio ji. Vudevude nu e ne e tho be. Mi na go gbe go je hinne.

May God help us. It has been a foundational problem. This young man made a reference to Geze (Ado-Odo) the other time. It was an Ogu man that first settled at Geze; he was a Kada but he had no child. When the Yorùbá came, they choked him. When we were growing up, the site was still there in Geze and used to be called Ao-Egun. When nobody rose to calim the portion, it has been encroached on. His name was Thoyiwhe. When the white man came to impose his one pound tax, it was Thoyiwhe that they met there and a folk song was composed as a memento for that historical contact. It has been an aged issue but each of us must discourage our people's refusal to speak Ogu. We all have people who are guilty of it; see Baba Aquila there (referring to Akonthe Gbesu/Sunday), he is one of the people guilty of it...

Interuption (Jidenu Hunmenu) I want to chip in something here. Can our people who are now educated come to our aid so that Ogu will become a language of instruction in our schools?

A: It is compulsory and our people have been doing so much to achieve that. Recall that, before no radio programme was broadcast in Ogu but now we have a couple. It will take time.

Q: Depe (Ojo Jayeola) n gbe do ho de na kan se ayo kon. Be tho pla te noyidaho dee gbe go mo tho ogbe lo, e o hen-en mo to len fan ni o ma te no tho 'gbe lo da we, o mo wa no tho legethe na tho tho 'gbe lo mo go plon te vikefue ya?

Young man (referring to Ojo Jayeola), I still have a question for you. Does that attitude of your elder brother that comes visiting and still speaks the language make you think even if we didn't speak the language before, we need to start doing that and also teach our children.

A: (Ojo Jayeola) Mi mo ni to boda go jan mo wa do Glogbe tho kon, jo e go wa jo nu yoyo de do to nukunme fan gbeto jan e gbe go no tho Glogbe e mo bisin e to ganso Yevo e mo e no wazon he gbe bie dee do sinme ma singan tho so eto we. E ne e wa zon bie dee do sinme e tho wa no je tukla na mi to ni tho bisin so e ton.

Any time he comes home and begins to speak the language, it sounds strange to me that someone working with a white man could still speak Glogbe as fluently and impeccable like him and those of us who still interact day-in-day-out with other speakers cannot

command such a flawless version. That now compels us at home to make concerted efforts in order to polish whatever we now speak to measure up with his own standard.

Q: Tanyinno, de mu ayo mo tho ho lo go?

Big aunt (a jocular expression referring to a young girl), what is your own take on this issue?

A: (Hoteyin Taiwo) Ho de yon mo e yo e bayi fan ni gbeto je gbangba mo do gbe tho kon, ye mo jan fan "Egun le le yi", e mo hu winyan na...

Interuption: Q: Amo ni o kaa wa mo me dee hlewe mo do ten gbogbo me, mo do Chicago e ye mo wa sinme, mo do Gugbe tho gbe ye ma ku winyan we, na e bayi ne?

A: E vivi na. Ni mi je hide no plon azon de (vide n pipo no plon azon Gunu wa eyo), ni mi do 'gbe tho kon da, ye mo jan fan "e ti bere niyen eyin Egun" amo tii, ni mo bre 'gbe tho, ye mo jan fan na mi ni wa plon ye. Oyon sin ogan tete Badan to ne; tii e mo wa lo fan na wa plon ogbe yele tete; e vivi home ni ti.

What I can see is if one goes outside (finds oneself among other tribes, especially Yorùbá), and starts to speak language (i.e Ogu), they say "This one is an Egun", and it makes me feel bad...

Interuption: Q: But if you now listen to your elder ones who are well educated and well placed, who have travelled to Chicago, etc, speak Ogu and feel no shame about it, how does that affect you?

A: It makes me happy (proud). If I get to my work place before now (my colleague is also an Ogu girl) and we start speaking our language (meaning began to chat and gist in Ogu), they shunned us "You have started, you Egun?", but now whenever we begin to chart, they do request to be taught the language. My boss is an Ibadan woman and she too now indicates interest in knowing the language. I feel so happy about it...

Q: Please, n waze whe. Please, help me ask them, "Egun ni'wo, Egun le leyi", how is that an insult? Why is it that they feel bad when they hear that?

A: (Ojo Jayeola) Mi o lo ho lo da. Ni mi sin'an jan ye mo jan "Egun le le yi" nu de e wa jan thego e bayi fan "Egun ti o jale, oju lo n ro". Mi mo nu e ne ve na kaka. **(Sunday Akonthe)** N de vo e bayi fan ni Gunu tho Ayogbe, e me mlen, vle e vle, ye mo jan "eeeee atohun wa ni". Gbe ni e ble nu e ne e jan e to, n mo gbo mo na be. E ne wutu me e kuku wa mula na tho plon Anagogbe lo ni tho mesin ni e tho kaka Gugbe tho bu.

We have explained that before. The trappings of the expressions are more than the wordings. Whenever we sat then and people said, “This is an Egun”, the collocation or the complement would be “An Ogu that does not steal is always struggling against temptation to steal, meaning that it is simply in the nature of an Ogu to steal.” If you know how much that pained me! **(Sunday Akonthe)** One other reason (that is, baggage of that expression) is when an Ogu person speaks Yorùbá, it sounds/tastes sour (meaning that it carries incurable accents), then the Yorùbá would say, “I see, he is a Johnny Just Come”. Whenever these series of derogatory statements were raised we would definitely be silenced more by shame than even the denigrating remarks. That later forced the concerned Ogu to commit more time, interest and attention to Yoruba and in the courseof that Ogu became suppressed.

Q: Ki Gugbe lo tho bu mo yin fan me dee do nukon e eyo e go wa fon-en, na e no do te go Manu?

if your people who are based away come back and revive Ogu, how does it feel Emmanuel?

A: (Gbetoho Emmanuel) N thope na awansinsin e he ati mi sin me dee do nukon e dee go no je tukla na mi tho do ‘gbe miton tho kon. Nude gan-an e zon Gugbe thitho tho wa no vivi na yon e bayi fan yon po to’gan ati azonvi deepo e po n go naa wazon do East, pono e mo yan wle mi do mo ji. Ye tho ganja, amo n ka wa mo Hunthode do depo sin azonvon go. Mo sepo e mo jan boda Hunthode, e mo tho Gugbe na, Setogbe e no tho. N fan mi n go azonme ne we, mi sin me e we go wle mi ti. Agban de mi hen we waya dodo e de me. E fan e na she na; e mo yido o son me dee po e sin nukon n mo yan lo ho. N lo ni fan kua de ma do mi si de mi singan na. E mo wa yido me eton e fan me de ye mo e he, me eton ne gbe ye ma singan go juitho; na ye ni dike na mi ni son. Ki mi tho de tho, Yibo dee do moto me de mi jo no wazon do ‘gan depo lo the mo wa no lo fan be zun dee no zun o gbe ma tho ke be the me na e we be yon ma ne wa whlen e gan ti we? Ye fan pon n le dugan do eji. N do honto de do Port Harcourt e mo yido o mo lo na fan na no ho Adjhoui sin agban hlan e. E vivi nag an-an. To yenne e ti, o maa yido e ye nit ho ‘gbe devo ne; Gugbe ye na tho. Hinne n wa pon de fan ni me dee do nukon e kaa do’gbe lo tho kon e to, mu e jo gbe bie dee do sinme maa no tho we? Amo azon ka dee na mi.

This is why I am becoming happier and happier about speaking Ogu. My co-apprentices and our master were once travelling to the East to execute job. On the way, far in the East, we were arrested (to mean stopped) by the police. They put on their meshy helmet but I just sighted "Hunthode", an Ogu name on the uniform of one of them. I went nearer and called out "Brother Hunthode". He responded and spoke Seto to me. I told him we were going to do a project in the East and his colleagues just arrested (stopped) us. All we had in the vehicle were wires. He told me that God would bless me. He called me away from the others and we went a few metres from them to discuss. I told him we didn't have any money we could pay. He then called his other colleagues and told them that this person was his person (meaning brother/tribesman) and he could not leave him (meaning could not deprive him of an assistance (to allow the team go)) that they should allow us to go. When we moved, the Igbo on board, who were my colleagues began to blame themselves that when they abused me and I didn't mind them, was I not the one that saved them from that mess? They all confessed I just became their master. I have a friend in Port Hacourt who usually calls me and asks me to buy some of Yedenou Adjahoui's albums (Yedenou Adjahoui, pronounced Yedenu Ajawhi, was a Beninnoire Mase musician who died around 1995) and send to him. I feel proud about it. You won't call any of my paternal uncles and he will speak any other language than Ogu. So I conclude that if our elderly ones who are away still find it necessary to speak the language, why won't those of us at home be speaking it? But we have so much work to do on our young ones (our children).

A: (Azinmagbe Elizabeth) Na yon tete ni lo vude tho ho lo go. Bie sin baba e yo e ji mi tho Geze, e ma go do Gunu sin oyin na mi; Ayogbe sin yin dodo e yo e do na mi. Ki mi tho wa when ti e yo e tho no ve na mi fan n ma do Gugbe yin. "Aradagun" de e no jan e ne, "Alathako"ne. Gugbe tho wa le zun nu johun ti, e wa no ve na mi; mo wa no jodo bie tete na tho no tho.

I feel I should also lend my voice in the discussion. Our own father gave birth to us in Geze (Ado-Odo) and he didn't give us any Ogu name, just Yorùbá names. Now that we already aged, we are pained that we do not have Ogu names. That placed called "Aradagun" today used to be Alathako (a compound that belongs to the Alatha, an Ogu sub-clan). Now that Ogu has become something good (something much embraced intended), it pains that we don't have an Ogu name and we feel interested in speaking the language.

Q: Mi na ha kan na ho lo ti. Me miton e dee ka yan nukon mo hle we, di to noyi daho dee jede ti e he, dee yan nukon bo no wazon he yevo, dee yan nukon mo do Chicago e, jan ye mo no tho Gugbe, be ni mee ne e waa go son yovo tome, Awonlin, go son hide pepe, n mo mo e mo yon fan Gugbe tho kon e de ...be de go we wa son Abuja o...ni mi mo me dee wa son Abuja e, mo do Gugbe tho kon, ye mo no lo ho do foonu ji...Ajadanu fan san-an mo mi tho do ho ken... depe e he han o ka no sefu a? ...me miton e dee o hle we mo yan nukon, boo no wa'zon gbogbo...yede mi tho be da, yede lo mi na go tho ha afo na ho lo, dewhlen no wa'zon he yevo e, dewhlen do yevo tome, dewhlen do Abuja, ye do hi pete poe, ki e ye tho do , to, ten gbogbo me, mo yin fan ki ye tho wa no go ti o, Gugbe dodo yii ye no tho, be ni mi mo e, be sisi de mi do na e, ezon mo yin fan sa de me ye do awanme de, n ma jodo na no tho Ayogbe do nukunmen eton? Fan na e na se jan fan me dee wa son yovo tome, kavi to gbogbo me wa mo no tho Gugbe, be e zon mo yin fan ni mi tee do Ayogbe tho dodo mi no tho da, mi dio mo tho Gugbe do nukun e ton ji ya?

We need to conclude now. Our people who are educated and based abroad, like my elder brother (Jendele) that just arrived a couple of minutes ago still speak Ogu. Those who have travelled far and are working with the white men, who have travelled out and are based in Chicago are still speaking Ogu. If such people come back home from overseas, Lagos or wherever they are based, and we see them and hear them speak Ogu...maybe the one that returns from Abuja...if we find those who return from Abuja like this (Adebiaye Thosa Samson), speaking Ogu, on phone... multiple interruptions... Ajadanu fan san-an mo mi tho do ho ken (a cliché meaning, as I was saying).... young man (Mewhenu) ...our people who are learned and knowledgeable, are widely travelled and have good jobs, we started from them, we will also return to them. On a closing note; some of them are working with the white man, some of them are based abroad, some are based in Abuja, they are all over the world, they that are based in big cities of the world, occupy big and famous offices. Whenever they come home they communicate in Ogu without switching, if we see them, does our fear (maybe much like admiration but a bit stronger than that) for them make us refuse to speak Yorùbá except Ogu whenever they are around? Do the thought that how do people hear (meaning how do we justify) that the people who are based abroad or other big and heterogenous cities come back and speak Ogu and those of us at home cannot speak, compel us so much so that even if it is "pure" Yorùbá we were speaking before, we do change and resort to Ogu?

A: (Akonthe Sunday) Nue gbeto o plon ne, mi gbiyanju na tho tho Gugbe do me e ne e sin nukunme amo dio lo ka go bio e me tho mi.

This is waht has been mastered over the years, we try to speak it in their presence but the other one (meaning Yorùbá) still finds its way into it.

Q: Be ni mi pon onu di whe koo, koo-aton n ko hlan gotho, ki obu didi, kavi winyan kuku, kavi hunhunhun na me devo e de mi do do sa lo me, ni mi jede tho jede de me mi tii ton go, be tii ton o yanga hugan dio ya?

If we view twenty, twenty-five years ago, the fear or the intimidation that we did entertain from other tribes, has it reduced now?

A: (Kodogbo Azinmagba) E o yanga hungan-en gan-an... **(Akonthe Sunday):** E o yanga hugan-en gan-an tori me dewhlen o wa no jiya tori n lo wutu. E ne wutu, ye kuku wa gbo mo yi popo gbe fan tho jan ye ne tho gbe lo.

Q: Son ho de mi o lo ti e me, ho go aton de ton, dee zon Gunu e tho jo Gugbe tho. Mede e plon Ayogbe na e hu winyan na e na tho yin Gunu. Mede e plon Gugbe na ye nit ho se plon de me plonto e no plon e do wehome. Me dewhlen jo Gugbe thon a obudisi ogbe devo e dee le tho mi e wutu. Be mi pon tinnitinni, mi singan mo me dewhlen dee jo Gugbe thon a owalo Gunu dewhlen ton, kavi ki e ton do, kavi ki e bayi nu petepo do o?

A: (Akonthe Sunday) Do hoho da, Gunu e ma hle we, paka e du mo le gle. Ni nde tee yanjo, me de ma dee singan note tho lo ho mo gbija na me. Sugbon tii, mi o do Gunu dee bayi lawyer, na mi do Gunu dee bayi adajo tete sin de e yo e po mi no ho. Mi o no hle we tii. Do dad a, ni pono ton me de gbe gbe ye ma mo-en we, ye mo jan fan ye ni whle me de e mo, amo do tii, ni pono wa Gunu mo note mo kan sii fan, “Oyon gbe o ton ya?” Nime de gbe e ton ma do sinme, n mo lo ni fan “Son, ni e go n mo thowen-en e mo wa pla mi”. O da da ni Gunu mo pono, hon e lo. Sugbon tii, yin Gunu mo pono, e mo note.

APPENDIX 2

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION HELD ON THE 3RD OF JANUARY, 2016 AT IDI-IROKO, IPOKIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OGUN STATE

STARTED 4:06 **ENDED 6:18**

Name	**Profession**	**Age**
1. Asogba, S. Owhenayon	Teaching	45+
2. Nudegbesi Joshua	Civil Service	40+
3. Abiodun Theophilus	Teaching	35
4. Awanu Amos	Comm Dev.	48
5. Godonu Joseph	Farming	50+
6. Remi Tuthonu Kovobau	Civil Service	46
7. Mathew Sehubo Agbotuedo	Civil Service	45

Q: Agboni, ki medaho tho no lo ho, ye lo fan m ma yido me, kavi ye ni yido mi mi ni mo ze asanyin mo jan 'bawo ni? Se o ti jeun leni?' 'Na ne?' e yo mi na jan; n lo mo go vivi home na e kaka, e ma wa zon ye tho no zin nunkon do 'gbe lo thitho me. Be gbonvo na yede, mi go o mo hagbe de e do gotho e, di bie nko ha e le de e yinfan Gugbe de bie ha e gbe no tho, po 'ten de e me mi o je po ati nue Jewhe o wan a mi, be e zon ye gbe tho no tho vivenu, mo no tho 'gbe lo gbe e ma hu win-an na e ya?

Old one, when big brother was talking the other time, when you call or you are called on phone, you do not pick your phone and respond, 'How are you, have you eaten?' in Yorùbá.You usually respond in Ogu and that has always gladdened him and has equally encouraged him as a person, to keep on speaking the language. Apart from him, have you found some other young ones, say, youths of my age or below, who are now eager to speak the language without feeling ashamed about it simply because someone like you with your education, exposure, achievement and social standing still speak the language and do not feel embarrassed when others speak it to you?

A: (Kovobau) M mo fan win-an po 'm ma so e' po o no tonnon awanme, 'cause then, mi sin me e ma hle 'we but the level of education mi sin me e ton ti o no na encouragement mi sin noyi e. Nu e he misin me e tho no go tho gotho da e bai education... Tovi no bai registration do 'wehome, e mo no tata mo yido o fan amu ye na kan tho tribe sin tenme ya? N fan 'you must be very stupid for asking me such a question'. E ma yon tribe e ton we ne ya? E fan Ogu. N fan jan 'mu e wa no kan se o?

n do opportunity depo do to agboni the. If you did not speak it, he would go mad with you. E yo wutu to vikefu e singan tho ‘gbe lo anywhere they are. Inferiority complex is now dying down, our people are becoming exposed and the awareness is becoming high. Problem de mi do was that of location. Hide mi de ma favour mi ton pali pali.

I can see that shame and inferiority complex are beginning to fade fast. Because then, we had few people who were formally educated but now, our people’s level of education is a source of encouragement to our younger ones. What caused our backwardness initially was lack of formal education. My daughter was doing registration in school. She just called me and asked what she should write against ‘tribe’. I told her ‘You must be stupid for asking me such a question.’ ‘Don’t you know your tribe? She said Ogu. I asked, ‘So what are you asking me?

I had an opportunity with my father. If you did not speak Ogu, he would go mad with you. That is why my children can speak the language anywhere they are. Inferiority complex is now dying down, our people are becoming exposed and the awareness is becoming high. The problem we had was that of location; our location did not favour us at all.

A: (Agbotuedo) ‘Gugbe lo bai nde mo vivi home na gbe kosi hide na de gbe maa tho. Now ‘Gugbe e ne mo wa ndewhlen na koja nopa to yenne sin vi, e mo wa no zon yede tete tho no tho ‘gbe lo tii; me de e ma se da e no tho tii. A mu e jo? To yenne sinvi n go nay an bai passport. E yido o, mo lo ni fan ni nde pepe de e face do hunmo ni mo dike na se. E mo yan. Ye me dee dote na tho ‘we lo so kande. Ki Jewhe na tho wazon e ton, ogbe Jewhe tho pali azon lo poun. Me lo tho n pon ‘we me, e mo mo Sewanu. E mo yido number lo fan me e yinto ya? E mo ton. Ki e tho je hinne, ‘Gugbe e tho ni, e mo reply. ‘He to e wa e?’ E fan Poka. ‘Gunu e wa e ya?’ E fan hen-en. E fan yodo do uncle de de e no wa zon do he ele ele; ni dike na ye ni yido e ni lo’ho piipo. E mo ze phone na mo lo’ho hee. E fan yodo o lo ni fan ni yan sinme, e je nken gbe ni mo wa yi ‘wema e ton. Do gbeto plan plan me, e yo e koko yi ‘we lo. E tho tonnon hinne, e mo yido o. ki n tho wa yan e whe, e noyi peyi dee ma se ‘Gugbe e fan yede tete na plon ‘gbe lo.

‘Gu language is something whose speaking makes me so happy that I speak it everywhere. That language did something for me concerning a cousin. Because of this, they have all developed interest in speaking the language. Those of them who could

not speak the language before now speak it. How did it happen? My paternal uncle's daughter was going to get her international passport. She told me and I asked her to go and keep me posted about whatever the situation was at the immigration office. She went and discovered that they were about 40 that were waiting to get the passport. When God would work His wonders, it was through Ogu language that He perfected everything. The person that would attend to them was going through the list when he saw 'Sewanu.' He called the number and asked whose name it was. My cousin stepped forward and went to him. When she got there, it was Ogu he spoke to her and she replied in it. 'Where are you from?' She said 'Poka', that is, Ipokia. 'Are you an Ogu girl?' 'Yes', she responded. She even told him that she had an uncle working in so and so place and she would want him to speak with the uncle. She called me and gave him the phone to speak with me. The person said he had told her to go back home and return the following day for her passport. Out of several people, she was the first to get her passport. When she returned home, she called me. When I later went there, even her younger siblings that could not speak the language then said they wanted to learn it.

Now, do to azonme, m me aton e wa Gunu. Depo ma ka se. Ni mi me awe de epo e mo mi nozo, e pen te mi, 'Gugbe mi na do thitho kon. Atonte de e yin yonsi ma ka se we. E wa pla mi do gbedepo fan yodo ma se 'gbe ene we moo. O yon e gbe nde nin-in ki n tho ble azon do hinne. 'Hunponu' ye no yido e jan. Ki n tho je hinne, n fan 'o no thale ne, Hunponu ne?' Mo se yinko lo correct do ogba. E vivi na e yo tete, nun e ton mo wa leblanu na. Gbedepo e wa pla n me awe de e po mo veve na mi fan whepo mi na tho kata, na mi dike yede tete ni se 'gbe lo bo. Ogbe lo she nunkon yan.

Again at my work place, we are three Ogu- speaking people but the third person who is a woman cannot speak it. Whenever we see each other, it is Ogu we speak. One day she came to us and pleaded that before she or we are transferred from there or, she should have also have attained some competence in Ogu. I was the one who discouraged something the moment I resumed there. When I got there, she was being called 'Húnpónú' with the upper tone marker on the three vowel letters (this obviously corrupts the pronunciation). I asked her when I got there 'Are you okay?' The name is 'Hùnpónú'. I began to correct the other colleagues around. She became happy about this.

De mi no lo fan ‘m ma so e’, ene yo n jo da, amo e o no ha afo son awanme. He o na je tii mo do ‘gbe tho kon gbe maa tho we? Yovogbe o na tho gbe maa tho ya? Ayogbe o na tho gbe maa tho ya? Too na tho gbe o ma gan se. Plus ene yin na yon we...

Concerning inferiority complex, that was before but it is now declining. Where will I get to and will not speak my language? Is it English you will speak that I cannot speak? Is it Yorùbá you will speak that I cannot speak? It is when I speak mine that others may not understand and that is a plus for me.

Ogbe lo go bai ndepo. N go waze son Awonlin mo wa je hide ye mo do mi te. Vikefu de e do moto me mo no tho ’Gugbe. Ki yetho do mi te, vikefu lo e mo she kwa de ton, e jo fan ye o yon nue ye bai. N fan ni mi de kwa de ton do hinne..... Ye ma yon fan Gunu e wa o; n sheshe go waze son azonme ne po to suit po ati tie. Ye mo kleun mo kanse fan ‘boda na mi jan?’ N fan ni mi yi gandepo jo nae, m mo mo nde na bai na mi. Ye mo de ye me aton lo e ton mo she ‘ho kan se e. Ye fan he e son? Ye fan Tube. Mi de mo wa tho Ayogbe fan n mo ‘m mo na kwa e na mi do sinson kon bo kavi mi na do mi te ne?’ Mo wa je te, n fan ‘ye o lo na mi fan hi ele ele ye tonnon, n mo no se neu ye no jan mo yon fan ye ma wa Ayonu we. Be hide sin yin ye no yido ene bie je hilo pony a? Ye fan ye ma yan pon. Mo wa lo fan ye ni jo e tho fan ‘to lo me yon tete son’ Ki tukla e ton tho hugan, mo yan pla ogan e ton. Ashe Gbagi to ne. Mo wa lo ni fan ‘owalo ehe ma johun. Ayo do hito oya mo no ji te noyi peyi e; he e wa Tube, he e wa Gbagi?’ Ki mi tho go bio‘hunme, ogbe lo mi no tho kaka tho go bio ‘Diroko to me. Ye fan ‘boda, m ma yon fan ‘Gunu e wa e we moo; gbeto ma singan yon gbede.’ E mo wa le zun gigo depo na vikefu lo e tete. N wa lo na e fan, hide pepe de mi de, mi do mi sin ‘gbe tho kon. Nu e Jewhe yi tho nugben na mi son olonme ne. Ni mi yii sedo, n mo gble home na Jewhe.

Ene ne. Na mi na wa gbon tho do kan jada...?

The language did one other thing. I was returning from Lagos and we got to a check point where we were stopped. Some youths were speaking Ogu in the bus. Immediately we were stopped, these youths began to bring out money; it was like they already knew the ritual. I thundered, ‘If you dare bring out any money there...’ They did not know I was an Ogu man; I was just returning from work on suit with my tie properly laced and knotted. They became scared and asked for confirmation, ‘Big brother what did you say?’ I repeated what I said, ‘If you give them any penny, you

will not like what I will do to you.' The immigration officers asked the three of them to get down and they began to interrogate them. They asked them where they were from and they said they were from Tube. At this time, someone was saying in Yorùbá 'Give them some money and let us go or are we going to remain here forever?'

I then got down and went to see the officers, 'These guys have told you they are from so and so place, you can understand what they are saying and you know they are not of the Yorùbá stock. What is it you want again? The place they mentioned, have you been to that place before? They said no. I told them, 'Leave these children; I am also from that part of the country they just mentioned to you.' When they were not cooperating, I went to see their boss inside the shed. Surprisingly, their boss was an Ogu man from Badagry. I told him, 'This is unfair. You are here and your younger ones are being maltreated by your boys. What is the difference between the people of Badagry and the people of Tube?' By the time we got back into the bus, it was Ogu language we were speaking till we got to Idi-Iroko. They said 'Big brother, we never knew you were an Ogu man; nobody could have ever suspected.' It was a sort of glory to the guys that day. I then told them, 'wherever you are, you should learn to speak your language because that is what God has put into your mouth. If you hide it, you will offend God. That is that. How do we develop a writing system for the language...?

A: (Awanu) ni me de e jenunkon na bie e o ze afo de zekon bie de tii, gbe nue ha 'Gugbe maa ha e we. Amo 'ho lo o no dio tii gan-anm especially son me de e do gotho na bi e the, ho pla afo de bi e ha e le no ze po 'Gugbe po. N do 'Gugbegban wunme wunme mo ho do ta azonpa me ati hide pepe... (a phone call interrupts with one of Nougbozoukou's tracks)...mi go gblehome de amo ho e lo kon n de lo ne...

If the generation ahead of us had put on the kind of attitude we are now putting on, Ogu language would not have suffered such a terrible fate. But now, there is serious improvement, especially from the younger ones because of how we see and regard the language in their presence. I have as many Ogu music records as possible and I play them in my office, anywhere...(a phone call interrupts with one of Nougbozoukou's tracks) ...sorry for the disruption but that is what I am saying...

APPENDIX 3

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION CONDUCTED IN JAVIE, BADAGRY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF LAGOS STATE, ON THE 28TH OF FEBRUARY, 2016.

The discussion commenced with 12 members at about 5:23pm and ended at 6:28pm

	Members	**Sex**	**Age**	**Occupation**
1.	Bodehuse Oluwafemi Jijoho	M	27	Undergraduate
2.	Dairo Sakiu Sunday	M	20	Artisan
3.	Hotowanu Peseton	M	24	Artisan
4.	Sunday Hunsunu	M	30	Bricklayer
5.	Wusu Samson	M	34	Welder
6.	Hunvo Gabriel Semako	M	40	Aluminium Fabricator
7.	Adukonu Mauton	M	20	Student
8.	Agosu Funke	F	20	Trader
9.	Hunvo George	M	25	Aluminium Fabricator
10.	Avonse Ezekiel	M	16	Student
11.	Hoteyin Gideon Midomiton	M	18	Student
12.	Sejodo Noah	M	16	Student

Challenges

a. Some of the people we had made appointment with did not turn up, especially women. This affected the structure of the group, in terms of age and gender.

b. Some of the respondents (about 4 of them) can only understand Ogu; they cannot speak.

c. The third issue which is not a challenge but needs to be pointed out is the fact that the majority of the respondents spoke the dialect of Ogu called Seto.

Question: Years back, it was discovered that it was the Ogu sons and daughters who were relatively more exposed than those in the village that did not want to speak Ogu or be spoken to in Ogu. That is changing now. It has become obvious that when Ogu people that have made it now come back to the village, they speak Ogu with their people. Whether they do that when they come visiting or when they call or are called from outside, how do we feel about that?

Answer (Bodehuse Femi): Na oho de mi kan bio, ni odo se do ye no tho Gugbe, e vivi home na. Nu mo ni yin tintan do Nigeria le, Gbagi yemepo gbon tho bio Nigeria. E me mo ni o yan nukon le, n do kwa, ngo do oten gbohun me, ni ye tho Gugbe na do sun n

tho na e ye n go gblon do Egu me, do singan yi e tho yi baba po iya po na Gugbe lo wutu.
As for the question you asked, whenever I hear someone speak Ogu, it gladdens me. All the first landmarks in Nigeria came in through Badagry. The moment I am able to find someone who is enlightened, educated and okay (that is rich/wealthy) speak Ogu language to me, I respond in the language. If he speaks back to me in the language, I will take the person to be my father or mother because of the language.

Answer (Dairo Sakiu): Inu mi maa n dun ti n ba ri awon eniyan to n so Egun. Ti awon ara wa ni Cotonou ba wa sise ni Nigeria ti won si ri awon eniyan ti won nso Egun, inu won maa n dun won si maa n fawon mora gidi. Eleyi maa n mu iwuri wa fun mi lopolopo.
I am always happy when I come across the who are speaking Ogu. If our tribesman and women from Cotonou come to Nigeria to work, and hear people speaking Ogu, they feel very elated and feel highly drawn to such people. This brings so much encouragement to me.

Question: Iru iwo yi ni sin-in, oo le so Ogu daradara sugbon o ripe awon ara wa ni Kutonu to ba wa sise ni Nigeria ti won ba ri awon to n so Ogu, won maa n fawon mora. Kinni ohun ti iru nkan bee n se ninu aye e?

Please, someone like you cannot speak the language very well but you can see that our Beninese tribesmen that come to work in Nigeria feel great about those who speak the language. Does that usually generate any feeling in you at all?

Answer: O ma n mu inu mi dun. Oun lo si wa n je ki o maa wun mi nisin pe ki n mo Egun so.

It makes me happy. That is why I am now beginning to wish that I should develop higher proficiency in the language.

Answer (Wusu Samson): Egu ni wa ‘do. Baba mo ni jio po iya mo ni ji o po Gunu yeyin. Do ma ze ogbe to sedo do hide pepe. Do sun do medaho de le mo ni do gbeji tho no wa ozon. Ni ye ka yido, Gugbe jan ye o tho. Do wapon do, ni medaho to mo ni do Yibo ‘gbeji n do Hausa ‘gbeji le po akota devo le po, ni ye do ‘gbe lo tho ten, then, nu na tho ni wa ‘gbelo.

I am an Ogu young man. My parents are Ogu ; so I don’t hide my language anywhere. I still have older sibling who are based outside Lagos. Whenever they call, it is Ogu they speak. Then I feel that if my elder ones who are not even with us around, who are among other tribes like Igbo, Hausa, etc. can be speaking the language from where they are, the language deserves my loyal patronage.

Question: Mo mi e de, ogbe lo vivi na mi. Nu mo medaho miton mo ni do gbeji le go no bayi tho gbon gbe lo thali vivi na mi. Mi n jale bo; mi losun do novi le po ovi miton le po. Be nu mo medaho miton le no bayi wa zon bo mi n tho do ogan e ton ho na sevu miton po novi miton le po do ogbe na tho ni wa 'Gugbe ya?

As you are, the language makes you happy. Your elder siblings' attitude to the language also impresses you. Please, you have younger ones as well, and you also have children. Has your elder siblings' attitude to the language made you to continually ring its bell in your children and younger ones hearing that Ogu language is a language to speak anywhere?

Answer: Ni odo de ke, mi o tii mary, mi o sin tii bi mo, amo ni do wa jivi, confirm ne do ye na no tho Egugbe taun. Gbonvo na ovi to le, novi to le do na no tho 'gbe lo than than.
As you see me, I am not yet married, but once I have children, it is automatic that they will proudly speak the language. Apart from my children, my younger ones have to learn to speak the language wherever they are.

Question (Hunvo Semako): Na do, landlord to ni bayi taya no. Mobile police officer ne mo e ma do hin-on me; 'gbeji ide. Ni a ka yido kavi e yido a, hide pepe mo i de, e ma na tho Yevo 'gbe kavi ogbe devo ne wa moo; 'Gugbe I na tho. Ni a tho Ayogbe ni, n kan bio a do a ma yin Gunu ne ya? E lo ni zon, sevu to le, yedo ye ni do Yevo gbe tho do wehome ten. Ye na tho Yevogbe po Ayogbe po do fon, amo ni ye go wa hin-on me, 'Gugbe ne moo. Do go o do na iya to do 'Gugbe ye ni nit ho na sevu to le. Do ton ne do 'ho to me kokodoko loo ,,, General laughter.

As for me, my landlord is my motivation. He is a mobile police based away, but whenever you call or he calls, wherever he is, he will neither speak English nor any other language; it is Ogu he will speak. If you dare speak Yorùbá to him he will ask you immediately if you are not Ogu. For that reason, even though the approved language in my children's school is English language, at home it is Ogu language. They may speak Yorùbá and English at school but once they are at home, it is Ogu. I have also told my mother to always speak my language with my children. That is my own policy in my house... laughter (do ho to me kokodoko) is a humorous way of saying what Joshua said in the Bible concerning his household.

Answer (Agosu Funke): Gbati emi wa ni primary school, a se inter-house sport. Nigbati awon cultural group nkorin, orin Yorùbá ni won nko. Awon alaga wa n bere wipe se ko si

awon Egun ni'lewe na ti won le korin Egun ni? Nigba yen lawon teacher wa n sope "elo sara yin eyin Egun, abi ee gbo ni?" Bi a se sa ara wa jo niyen o. nigbati a sin jo, a pa owo ju awon to jo ijo Yorùbá lo. Oun lo je ki n wa maa bi 'rami pe, Egun ti e dara ni awujo to yi!

Ohun kan tun sele ni 2014. Anti mi to wa l'Eko lo so fun mi pe Egun ma daa gan-an o. mo ni ki lode to fi so bee? O ni ole wa si ile to wa legbe'le won l'Eko. Baba ati iya gbo Egun sugbon awon omo ko gbo. Bi won ti n so fun awon omo pe "mi yan tudu avun tho te, mi yan tudu avun tho te", awon omo o gbo.

When I was in primary school, we held an inter-house sports competition. When the cultural dancers were dancing, it was all Yorùbá songs and drumming. The guests could not bear it any longer, so they asked if there were no Ogu pupils in the school that could entertain the guests with Ogu cultural music and dancing. It was then that the teachers said, "Go and gather yourselves, you Egun or didn't you hear the complaint of our guests?" That was how we gathered ourselves. We presented ours that day to the taste of the guests and even realized more money than the Yorùbá cultural group. Then I reasoned within myself, "So Ogu is this esteemed in our society!"

Again, something happened in 2014. It was my sister who is based in Lagos that told me it is good to understand Ogu. I asked her why she said so. She then told me that thieves invaded an apartment beside theirs in Lagos. The parents understood Ogu but the children did not. As they were telling the children in Ogu to go and let the dogs loose, the children did not understand.

Answer (Hoteyin Jijoho Midomiton): Odo ma ku winyan; hide pepe mo do je, yoba singan dohen, president singan do hen, da tho Egugbe to janne... Mo do tho do primary school, mi shan Egugbe sin 'nuhogbe de. Jede de wa so ye n wa do na mile primary school ke n do Gbagi le bi na mi way an ho nu do Keja. Mile ni ze first.

I am not ashamed of my language. Wherever I am, Yorùbá may be there, the president may be there. I will speak my Ogu language if there is someone that can speak it with me. In my school, it is Ogu that my other friend and I speak. When I was in primary school, we put an Ogu music band together. A time came when all the primary schools in Badagry were invited to go and play at Ikeja. We took the very first position.

Radio mo ni bayi tito yeton le do Egugbe me da do ma gisi nu mo I jo; ye me bi ma go no tho 'Gugbe zantantan ba. Tito Radio Wheke ton bi da, Egugbe me ye bayi de n go ho

Egugban le. Amo tete, depo depo ne. ni zon bo odo ma tho go no se glan glan de ba.
It is unfortunate that many of the radio stations that once transmitted their programmes in Ogu language hardly do so nowadays. I don't know why. All Radio Wheke's programmes were once broadcast in Ogu but now, it is once in a while. That is why I no more listen to it any more (Note: I had once come across a complaint like this in my own community. A young man had lamented that he no longer listened to that radio station because a presenter that did his programmes in Ogu before either no more works with the station or something).

Question: Radio Wheke gbe tin-in ne?

Does Radio Wheke still exist?

Answer: I gbe tin-in amo Yevogbe po Ayogbe po ye no tho do hen tete. Depo depo ni bayi Egugban po Egu sin tito le po.

Yes, it still exists but now transmits more in French and Yorùbá .Ogu programmes are now once in a while.

Question: Na mu eme le se do mo ye tho gbe bayi tito Egugbe ton da?
What was the people's reception of the station then?

Answer: Do ma gan do hi mo nip o le ton wa loo, amo do hongbo mie ton me, me le bi ni se; tori meho le ni su do hen.

I cannot give an authoritative response about other households but in our own compound (a very big one), all of us did listen to the station. This was because old people were very many then.