

# Samuel Akinbo

He/him/his

## Contact info



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@akinbosk

## About me

I am a documentary linguist with interests in phonological theory, phonetics and interfaces with morpho-syntax. I have deep experience doing community-engaged research on endangered and under-resourced languages of Sub-Saharan Africa. My approach to linguistic research considers various modes of human communication that are based on language, so my research also focuses on language-music connections (e.g., talking drums) and language-based cultural aesthetics.

## Language skills

Yorùbá

Naija (Nigerian Pidgin)

English

Fungwa

Nigerian Sign Language



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Updated on March 21, 2024

## Interests

Phonological theory, Phonetics, Language-Music Connections, Documentary Linguistics in community context and African languages.

## Education

2014-2021 PhD Linguistics

*University of British Columbia (UBC)*

Thesis topic

Vowel Harmony and Some Related Processes in Fungwa

Supervisor: Douglas Pulleyblank

2009-2012 BA Linguistics

*University of Ibadan*

Honours thesis

Cerebral localisation of tone in Yorùbá

Supervisor: 'Demola Lewis

## Technical skills

- Imaging*: Ultrasound tongue imaging
- Speech Analysis*: Praat; Speech Analyzer
- Annotation*: ELAN; FLex
- Statistics*: R (Working knowledge)
- Image Analysis*: EdgeTrak; ImageJ
- Programming*: Python (Working knowledge)
- Cartography*: QGIS
- Text*: Latex
- Office*: Word; Excel; PowerPoint

## Community-Based Language Documentation

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Ghana 2018        | Ultrasound study of Dàgáárè vowels and velar tap<br>Dàgáárè morphology and phonology, Music and folktales |
| Nigeria 2018      | Documented the representation of Yorùbá tone in talking drum  |
| Nigeria 2018      | Ultrasound experiment on Yorùbá high vowels and velar   |
| Nigeria 2015-2018 | Documentation of Fungwa folktales   |
| Canada 2015       | Gitxsan, for Field methods class at University of British Columbia  |
| Nigeria 2011      | Idoma, for Field methods class at the University of Ibadan  |

## Grants

- 2016-2017 Documentation of Fungwa folktales, Endangered Language Development Program, SOAS, University of London (#SG0406), PI: Douglas Pulleyblank (Primary researcher: wrote proposal, conducted fieldwork, managed budget.).
- 2015 Documentation of tone system in Fungwa, Arts Graduate Research Awards, UBC, Vancouver, BC (#12R23797), PI: Douglas Pulleyblank (Primary researcher: wrote proposal, conducted fieldwork, managed budget.).

## Awards

- 2015-2021 International Partial Tuition Scholarship, UBC, Vancouver, BC
- 2014-2018 Faculty of Arts Graduate Award, UBC, Vancouver, BC
- 2012 Dr. Raymond Zard's Prize for the best Graduating student Linguistics, University of Ibadan
- 2012 University of Ibadan (UI), Linguistics' fund for best Graduating student

## Publications

### REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

- 2024 Akinbo, Samuel & Bulkaam Michael. Iconicity as the motivation for the signification and locality of deictic grammatical tones in Tal. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics*.
- 2023 Akinbo, Samuel, Avery Ozburn, Gerald Nweya & Douglas Pulleyblank. Imilike Igbo as Eleven Vowels with ATR and RTR Schwa. *Journal of International Phonetic Association*.
- 2023 Avery Ozburn, Gianna Francesca Giovio Canavesi & Samuel Akinbo. Perception of ATR in Dàgáàrè [dàgáàrì]. *Laboratory Phonology*.
- 2023 Akinbo, Samuel. Reduplication and Sound symbolism in Fungwa. *Phonological Data & Analysis*.
- 2023 Akinbo, Samuel. Sound-Meaning mapping: Verbal imitation of Super Mario Music by Yorùbá Gamers. *Language Sciences*, 98, 101553.
- 2022 Akinbo, Samuel, Olanrewaju Samuel, Iyabo Alaga & Olawale Akingbade. An acoustic study of vocal expression in two genres of Yoruba oral poetry. *Frontiers in Communication*.
- 2021 Akinbo, Samuel. Featural affixation and sound symbolism in Fungwa. *Phonology* 38, 1–33.
- 2021 Akinbo, Samuel. The Language of Gángan, a Yorùbá Talking Drum. *Frontiers in Communication*.
- 2020 Angsongna, Alexander & Samuel Akinbo. (2020). Dàgáàrè (Central). *Journal of International Phonetic Association*, 1-27.
- 2019 Akinbo, Samuel. Representation of Yorùbá Tones by a Talking Drum: An Acoustic Analysis. *Linguistique et Langues Africaines*, 5, 11-23.
- 2014 Lewis, Demola & Samuel Akinbo. (2014). EEG cerebral localization of tone. *Journal of West African Languages XLI*, 2, 118.

### PROCEEDINGS (peer-reviewed by abstract)

- 2019 Akinbo, Samuel, Alexander Angsongna, Avery Ozburn, Murray Schellenberg & Douglas Pulleyblank. Velar Tap in Dàgáàrè. Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL 49). Michigan.
- 2019 Akinbo, Samuel. Minimality and Onset Conditions Interact with Vowel Harmony in Fungwa. Hout, Katherine, Anna Mai, Adam McCollum, Sharon Rose & Matthew Zaslansky (eds), *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting on Phonology 2018*, Linguistic Society of America.
- 2019 Ozburn, Avery, Samuel Akinbo, Alexander Angsongna, Murray Schellenberg & Douglas Pulleyblank. Dàgáàrè [a] Is Not Neutral To ATR Harmony. *Canadian Acoustics*, 46(4), 36-37.
- 2015 Keough, Meagan, Avery Ozburn, Elise McClay, Michael Schwan, Murray Schellenberg, Samuel Akinbo & Bryan Gick. Acoustic and articulatory qualities of smiled speech. *Canadian Acoustics*, 43(3).

### WORKS IN PROGRESS AND UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS

- Submitted Ozburn, Avery & Samuel Akinbo. Rounding Harmony and Loanword Epenthesis in Yoruba. *Phonology*.
- Submitted Akinbo, Samuel. Grammaticalised Sound Symbolism, Reduplication and Tone polarity in Naija, aka Nigerian Pidgin. *Journal of Linguistics*.
- Submitted Akinbo, Samuel & Phillip O. Ekiugbo. Morphophonological Metatehsis and Truncation as Grammaticalised Iconicity in Naija, aka Nigerian Pidgin. *Open Linguistics*.
- Submitted Akinbo, Samuel, Avery Ozburn, Alexander Angsongna, Angelina Lloy & Douglas Pulleyblank. Phonetics and Phonology of ATR harmony in Dàgáàrè. *Phonetica*.
- In prep. Akinbo, Samuel & Onyinye Anulika Chiemezie. Grammaticalisation of Iconic Tone Polarity. to be submitted to *Linguistics*.
- In prep. Akinbo, Samuel, Michael Bulkaam & Tongpan Rabo Fwangwar. Gerundive Formation and tone polarity. to be submitted to *Languages*.
- In prep. Akinbo, Samuel & Tongpan Rabo Fwangwar. Derivation of verbs from ideophones with grammatical tones.

## CONFERENCE & SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 *Grammaticalised Iconicity, Deixis and Phonological Locality in Tal* with Michael Bulkaam, Annual Meeting of Phonology, Johns Hopkins University (Oct 20-22, 2023)
- 2023 *Morphophonological Exchange as Grammaticalised Iconicity in Naijá, aka Nigerian Pidgin* with Phillip Ekiugbo, LING Lecture Series, York University (Sept 28, 2023)
- 2023 *Integrating iconic tone polarity into grammar* with Onyinye Anulika Chiemezie, SPF Workshop, University of Toronto (July 5, 2023)
- 2023 *Ènà: An iterative affixation game in Yoruba* with Avery Ozburn, CLA conference, York University (May 31, 2023)
- 2023 *Climate Change and its Impacts on Indigenous peoples of North America and Africa* with Mskwaankwad Rice, Environmental Studies, Macalester College (March 23, 2023)
- 2023 *Grammaticalised sound symbolism in Naijá, aka Nigerian Pidgin*, Paris 8 University and the CNRS lab: Structures Formelles du langage (Online on Feb. 15th, 2023)
- 2023 *Sound-Meaning Mapping: Verbal Imitation of Super Mario Music by Yorùbá Gamers*, Séminaires de Recherches en Phonétique et Phonologie, Sorbonne-Nouvelle University, (Online on Feb. 3, 2023)

## CONFERENCE & SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS (*continuation*)

- 2022 *Methodological challenges and successes in investigating ATR in African languages during Covid*, LabPhon 18, Online (June. 22-25, 2022)
- 2022 *Rounding harmony and loanword epenthesis in Yoruba*, CLA conference, Online (June. 1-4, 2022).
- 2022 *Evaluative and Noun-class in Fungwa*, Fieldwork Forum (FForum), UC Berkley (April 27, 2022).
- 2022 *Perception of ATR in Dàgáárè*, Annual Conference on African Linguistics 53, UC San Diego (Feb. 28-March 1, 2022).
- 2022 *Non-Arbitrary Sound-Meaning Mapping in Language*, PFP Spring Research Symposium, University of Minnesota (Feb. 28-March 1, 2022).
- 2021 *Voicing Ìjálá: An acoustic analysis of vocal expression in Yorùbá oral poem*, PALA Conference, the University of Nottingham (July 7-9, 2021 (Online)).
- 2021 *Evaluative morphology in Fungwa*, 51<sup>st</sup> Northwest Linguistics Conference, UBC Vancouver (May 14-16, 2021 (Online)).
- 2021 *Linguistic Imitation of Super Mario Theme Songs by Yorùbá Gamers*, Expression, Language, and Music at UConn (May 13-15, 2021, but cancelled due to COVID-19).
- 2020 *Featural affixation in Fungwa*, 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference on African Linguistics at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ (May 21-24, 2020 but cancelled due to COVID-19).
- 2019 *An Onset Condition on Multiple Reduplication in Fungwa*, Conference of the Canadian Linguistic Association at UBC (June, 2019).
- 2019 *The representation of Yorùbá tone by talking drum: An acoustic analysis*, 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on African Linguistics at UBC (May, 2019).
- 2018 *Dàgáárè [a] is not neutral to ATR harmony*, 176<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA)/the Acoustics Week in Canada, Victoria, BC (November, 2018).
- 2018 *Backness harmony in Fungwa*, Annual Meeting of Phonology at the University of California, San Diego (October, 2018).
- 2017 An earlier version of *Backness Harmony in Fungwa*, Research Seminar & Colloquia at the University of British Columbia (September, 2017).
- 2016 *The syntax of ná: Focus, relative, and associative constructions in Cifungwa*, 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on African Linguistics at the University of California, Berkley (March, 2016).
- 2015 *Labialization in Gitxsan*, Ling 531/532 (Field Methods) at UBC, Vancouver, BC (March, 2015).
- 2013 *Cerebral localization of tone in Yorùbá*, Joint Conference of the West African Linguistic Society and the Linguistic Association of Nigeria, Ibadan, Nigeria (July, 2013).

## GUEST LECTURES

- Vowel harmony in Yorùbá*, Graduate Seminar at University of Ibadan. Instructor: Dr. Clement Odoje, (2021).
- Evaluative morphology in Fungwa and cross-linguistic comparison*, in LING530B : Syntax-phonology interface at UBC. Instructor: Dr. Rose-Marie Déchaine, (2021).
- Tone and talking drum in Africa*, in LING308: Languages of the World at UBC. Instructor: Dr. Joash Gambarage (2021).
- Phonological Feature: Root-vowel mutations and Reduplication in Fungwa*, in LING101: Languages of the World at UBC. Instructor: Dr. Strang Burton (2018).
- Endangered languages: Phonology of Fungwa*, in LING101: Languages of the World at UBC. Instructor: Dr. Amanda Cardoso (2017).
- Morphology of Nigerian Pidgin*, in LING410: Advanced Phonology at UBC. Instructor: Prof. Douglas Pulleyblank. (2015)

## LANGUAGE RESOURCES

- Akinbo, Samuel. 2019. Documentation of CiFungwa Folktales. In *Endangered Languages Archive*, (ELAR), <https://elar.soas.ac.uk>.
- Oyeleke, Clement, Samuel Akinbo, Emeka Onwuegbuzia, 2019, Narratives in Ibadan Yorùbá. In *CoNila*, <https://doi.org/10.5683/SP2/VTGWQF>, Scholars Portal Dataverse, V3
- Fungwa Dictionary*. Creator and manager. URL://[fungwa.webonary.org/browse/browse-vernacular/](http://fungwa.webonary.org/browse/browse-vernacular/) (August, 2018).
- Database on Dàgáárè language*. Contributor, database organisation at the West African Vowel Project Laboratory of Douglas Pulleyblank (2018-till date).
- Corpora of Nigerian languages*. Contributor, curator and database organisation, in *CoNila*, <https://doi.org/10.5683/SP2/VTGWQF>, Scholars Portal Dataverse, V3 (2019).

## MENTORSHIP EXPERIENCE

*Samuel Timothy. Documentation of Bassa (Kainji, Benue-Congo), University of Ibadan (On-going).*

*Katie van Baarsen. Foot structure in Dàgáárè, African Vowel Laboratory, organised by Douglas Pulleyblank at UBC (On-going).*

*Musa Toyib. POS Labelled and text-aligned audio-visual corpus of Yorùbá narratives, University of Lagos (On-going).*

*Adele Kwok. Sound system of Hiligaynon, (On-going).*

*Angelina Lloy. Dàgáárè low vowels: a Possible tenth Vowel in the phonological inventory of an understudied language, Multi-disciplinary Undergraduate Research Conference (MURC), UBC (March, 2019).*

*Laura Griffin. Fungwa orthography, Multidisciplinary Undergraduate Research Conference (MURC), UBC (March, 2018).*

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### INSTRUCTOR

Winter	2024	LIN229H Phonological Patterns in Language, University of Toronto (UofT)
Fall	2023	LIN1221H Non-segmental Morphemes, University of Toronto (UofT)
Fall	2022	LING 5105/8105 Field Methods in Linguistics, University of Minnesota (UMN)
Spring	2022	LING 1800 Topics in Linguistics: African Languages & Language-Based Music, University of Minnesota (UMN)

### TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP

Summer	2021	LING 100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Eva Csipak)
Spring	2021	LING 100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Oksana Tkachman & Danica Reid)
Fall	2020	LING 100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Neda Todorovic)
Summer	2020	LING 101: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Zoe Lam)
Fall	2019	LING 100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Amanda Cardoso)
Summer	2019	LING 101: Languages of the World, UBC (for Dr. Strang Burton)
Spring	2019	LING 311: Introduction to Phonological Analysis and Theory, UBC (for Dr. Douglas Pulleyblank)
Fall	2018	LING 311: Introduction to Phonological Analysis and Theory, UBC (for Dr. Douglas Pulleyblank)
Spring	2017	LING 100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Neda Todorovic)
Fall	2016	LING100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Strang Burton)
Spring	2016	Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Martina Wiltschko)
Fall	2015	LING100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Hotze Rullmann)
Spring	2015	LING100: Introduction to Language and Linguistics, UBC (for Dr. Hotze Rullmann)
Harmattan	2013	Acoustic Phonetics, University of Ilorin (Unilorin) (for Dr. Rafiu, K. Adewale)
Harmattan	2013	Lexicography, Unilorin (for Dr. Bolanle Arokoyo)
Harmattan	2010-12	Introduction to Yorùbá Grammar, University of Ibadan (volunteer tutor for adult learners)

## RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP

2016–2021 Douglas Pulleyblank, UBC, Vancouver, BC, West African vowel systems: the emergence of phonological patterns, SSHRC Insight grant (#435-2016-0369). Lab. coordinator

2011–2012 Francis Egbokhare, UI, Ibadan, Nigeria, Management of Edoid database.

2009–2012 'Demola Lewis, UI, Ibadan, Nigeria, Management of Edoid database.

## REVIEW

2024	Music Perception
2023	Music Perception
2023	Linguistics and Language Compass
2023	Studies in African linguistics
2023	Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
2023	Journal of Linguistics
2022	Phonology
2021	Frontiers in Communication

## LABS AND RESEARCH GROUP

2018           Dissertators Working Group, organised by Rose-Marie Déchaine.  
2017-till date   African Vowels Laboratory, organised by Douglas Pulleyblank  
2019-till date   UBC Language Sciences Initiative

## OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

2019           Co-organiser, 50th Annual Conference on African Linguistics,  
Department of Linguistics, UBC, Vancouver, BC, 22–25 May 2019  
2008           *A Co-Presenter* on Teenage Rampage, a TV Program on African Magic, DSTV  
2006–2007   *Actor* on Childrens' Court, produced by Kola Obadimu Playhouse, Nigeria

## EMPLOYMENT

July 2023–present       Assistant Professor  
Department of Linguistics, University of Toronto  
Mentor: Nathan Sanders

Nov 2021–June 2023     Postdoctoral Associate  
Department of Linguistics, University of Minnesota  
Mentor: Claire Halpert

Aug 2015–July 2021     Teaching Assistant  
Department of Linguistics, University of British Columbia  
Supervisor: Douglas Pulleyblank

Aug 2014–Oct 2021     Research Assistant  
Department of Linguistics, University of British Columbia  
Supervisor: Douglas Pulleyblank

Feb 2013–Feb 2014     Research Assistant  
Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ilorin  
Supervisor: Bolanle Arokoyo

## Reference

Douglas Pulleyblank, Professor of Linguistics,  
Department of Linguistics,  
University of British Columbia,  
604-822-2063, douglas.pulleyblank@ubc.ca  
(*Supervisor*)

Gunnar Hansson, Associate Professor of Linguistics,  
Department of Linguistics,  
University of British Columbia,  
604-822-4658, gunnar.hansson@ubc.ca  
(*Member of Dissertation Committee*)

Claire Halpert, Associate Professor of Linguistics,  
Institute of Linguistics,  
University of Minnesota,  
612-626-5400, halpert@umn.edu  
(*Postdoc Mentor*)

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2022–2023           Laboratory Phonology  
2019-till date       Canadian Linguistic Association  
2018               Linguistic Society of America  
2016–2022         Association of Contemporary African Linguistics  
2013               West African Linguistic Society