

CONFERENCE REPORT

The Seventh West African Languages Congress was held in Lagos, Nigeria, from March 27 through March 31, 1967. The Congress was attended by three Research Fellows of the Institute of African Studies, all of whom presented papers:

- Dr. G. Ansre - Two Views of Noun Sub-classification in Two Languages (Akan and Ewe) (with Dr. L. Boadi)
- Miss M.E. Kropp - An Analysis of the Consonant System of Ga
- Dr. J.M. Stewart - A Deep Phonology of the Akan Monosyllabic Stem

The Linguistics Department of the University of Ghana was also represented by five members, three of whom presented papers:

- Dr. L. Boadi (1) paper presented with Dr. Ansre above.
- (2) Some Aspects of Akan Deep Syntax
- Dr. F. Dolphyne -
- Dr. A.S. Duthie - Notes on the phonology of Ewe
- Mr. H. Trutenau - Notes on the makeup of the Nominal in the Ga noun phrase

A set of the papers presented at the Congress has been deposited in the library of the Institute of African Studies.

Besides the opening session, there were four plenary sessions, held in the mornings, of which two were devoted to papers on phonology, one to papers on grammar and one to other topics. A highlight of the Congress was an address by the president of the West African Linguistic Society, Professor Joseph Greenberg of Stanford University, on Language Universals.

There were three working parties, on Oral Literature, the teaching of English and French, and on Benue-Congo languages. All of these were continuations of the working parties set up at last year's Congress. The present reporter attended the Benue-Congo group. This group is engaged in attempting a systematic comparison and definition of a large group of languages in the Eastern Nigeria-Camerouns area. Since last year, a great deal of work has been done in the collection of word lists and basic grammatical data. The collection was centred at the University of Ibadan where the data was correlated by Dr. Kay Williamson. This year the working party was engaged in trying to define what is uniquely characteristic of the Benue-Congo languages, on the basis of this data. Although these languages are not closely related to the languages of Ghana and its neighbours, it was felt that the method followed by the working party might be of interest in the future. From this point of view, the discussion on how to compare the noun class and concord systems was of particular interest, since eventually the comparison of the languages of this area will have to take account of the class and concord systems present in the Togo languages, and the traces of them that are found in most of the other languages of Ghana.

M.E. Kropp.