

## LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF WORLD CLASS TONAL LANGUAGE

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### ABSTRACT

*The varieties found in Anaang tones give world class beautiful rendition to the language almost as the sulfa notation in music. Anaang language belongs to the Benue Congo sub-family group of languages of Niger Congo as Stated by Greensberg (1963). Tones play a major role in the definition and understanding of Anaang language because a change in the tone produces a change in the meaning. Therefore, in this study personal intuition as an Anaang indigene and speaker comes to play. To confirm this work, we used a voice tape to interview twenty Anaang indigenes resident in the speech community randomly. Eventually, it was realized that the tone in Anaang varies from low-High, low-low, High-High, low-High-High-low, low-High - High, High-low - low, low, high- high- high, high- low-low- low etc. Moreover, in the tonal process, we have discovered the presence of down down-drift, tonal deletion, realignment and down-glide. In further investigation, we realized that the intonation in Anaang plays a great significant effect in classifying the sentences from declarative to the exclamatory ones.*

### Introduction

Apparently, pitch is ascertained from the sound produced, whereas, tone is perceived as sound with reference to the Pitch, quality and duration. According to Crystal (1991:355) tone is a distinctive level of a syllable. It is associated with the flow of pitch pattern displayed on the syllable of sounds in speeches. The syllable where the tone is prominent or stressed is strengthened and lengthened while others weakened. Lyons (1968:206) describes tone as associated with the flow of the pitch pattern in speech sound, which is related to the rate of vibration of the vocal cord. Lyons also pointed out that a syllable has a pitch. Ejele 1996:76

says that "Tone is the significant, contrastive but relative pitch on each syllable. It is the distinctive pitch level of a syllable found in languages of Sub-Saharan African languages. The tone carried by a Word is an essential feature of the meaning of the words".

Moreover, tone is related to the syllable of a word by indicating the pitch of a particular syllable. It means that there is a pointer to the degree and extend of the voicing which is the variety of the pitch. The variety of voicing and its degree in the syllables are then shown by the manifestation of different tones, such as high (´), low (˘), low-High (˘´) High-low (˘^), down stepped High tone!

Varying tones refer to the varieties of tones found in Anaang language. According to Nyarks (2022:3) "Tones in Anaang are very useful since it is a tonal language. It is the diverse tones that make the listener to decode what the speaker encoded". As already illustrated above, we have L (Low), H (High) , L-L (Low Low), H L (High Low), H-H (High High), L-H (Low High), L H H (Low High High), L, -H-H, H(Low High High High)-H-L L (High Low Low), etc. The reason for this influx of variations in Anaang is because Anaang as well as other African languages is a tonal language and the tones are marked and fixed in accordance with the pitch embedded in it, according to Essien (1990:5). Tone has been defined as a contrastive pitch. Pitch itself is caused by the liberation of the vocal bands located in the larynx or the "voice box". Pitch contrast means that the changes or variations in pitch affect the meaning of word. Moreover, there are lexical and grammatical contrasts based on tonal differences.

#### Lexical contrast

awasi	[àwàsi]	-	God
awasi	[àwási]	-	Sneezing
awọ	[àwó]	-	lobster
awọ	[àwó]	-	dust
bon	[bòn]	-	to beget
bon	[bòn]	-	put together
mkpa	[mkpá]	-	death
mkpa	[mkpá]	-	skin of leaf

#### Contour tones

A contour tone is an integration of the two level tones: high and low due to phonetics, phonological and morphological processes.

These contours high-low (HL) and low-high (LH), similar to the down step high tones, possesses a limited distribution. They may not be found on prefixes unless the prefix has a long vowel likewise the stem initial syllables. According to Goldsmith (1990:39-40).

The possibility of many tones- association between one tier and another, opens up the possibility of treating rising and falling tones as sequences of level tone (High, mid, low, etc) associated with single vowel... rising and falling tones are generally referred to as contour tones or dynamic tones. In a language with high and low tones it is common to find falling and rising and rising tones in addition and among African tone languages, it has been demonstrated in countless cases that these tonal patterns are best treated as sequences of high-low and low-high, respectively.

The low-high contour tone which is often found in Anaang language may develop on single syllable verbs with final long vowels or on short vowels where vowel deletion had taken place or due to the outcome of melody levels. The high-low contour tone also crop up on monosyllabic stems after a prefix. According to Urua (2000:62), level tones contrast with contour tones. The low-high contour tone, which is not too frequent... may only occur on monosyllabic verbs with final long vowels or short vowels where there has been vowel deletion

or as a result of melody levels.... The high-low contour also occurs on monosyllabic stems after a prefix.

Moreover, Udodata (1993:126) states that intonation involves the rise or fall in voice occasioned by modification in pitch. He emphasized that this phenomenon produces tones. Stressing that his study had identified tones which feature in Anaang, which are rising and falling tones (Sic).

Examples of contour tones are:

**Low-high contour tone**

- i. kǎ - go
- ii. frě - forget
- iii. brě - play

**The high-low contour tone**

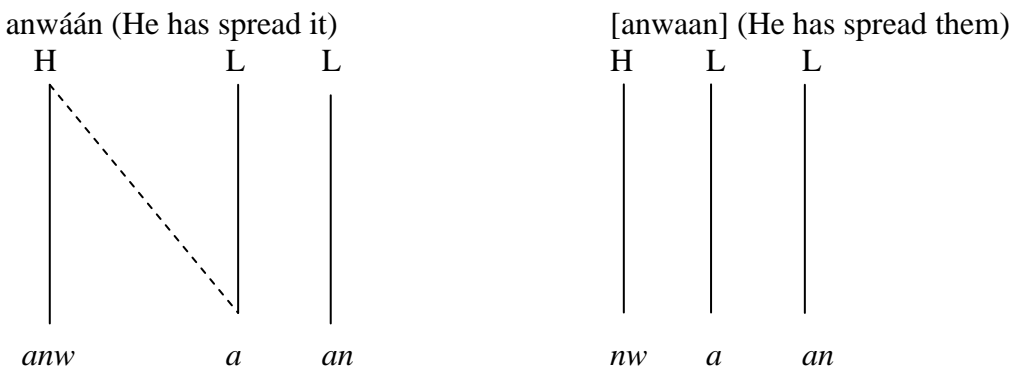
- i. ítô - impotent person
- ii. àṅwâ - cat

**Tonal spreading:** This process involves Anaang nouns. However it occurs when nouns with high and low tones patterns are produced phonetically as high tone followed by a fall from high. According to Urua (2000:174) " A HL Contour tone is created on the second tone bearing unit of the item" this situation occurs due to the fact that the first high tone has spread to the low tone in front. Examples:

- i. → mmian [mmian] (little ugly animal)
- ii. → akok [ákok] (chewing stick)

In Anaang it is realized when plurality is shown in nouns. Sometimes, when it involves long vowel, spreading extends to the two vowels instead of it spreading on one vowel. Example is shown below:

anwáán (He has spread it) [anwaan] (He has spread them)



**Fig. 24: Illustration of tonal spreading**

**Tonal processes**

**The down stepped high tone**

Unlike the high and low tones which occur in word initial, medial or final, the down-stepped high tone has a limited distribution. It may neither be found in the prefix nor stem initial in the ordinary situation but may exist in this position following a preceding high tone and may not be accompanied directly by another high tone unless there is another high tone which interrupts. It is usually indicated with an exclamatory sign.

According to Udoh (1998:129) The down-step features deserve special mention. It is supposed to occur only after a H and when it occurs, it is very close to the initial H in pitch at the

beginning of the utterance in a short utterance, like a phonological phrase. However, the longer the utterance, the lower the H becomes. Several examples of the down-stepped high tone abound in Anaang and other members with which it is grouped.

Down-step is a process whereby sequence of high tone, the non-initial high tones becomes lower without the intervening low tone. This lowering in pitch level comes due to the floating, deletion, lost or assimilated low tone. As such, the down-step feature tonal spread takes place after a high tone and the high tone is often close to the first high tone. Urua (1990:170) describes that as follows: Down-step is a phenomenon whereby in a sequence of two high tones, the second high is lowered without a perceptible motivation for such lowering. Generally, the consensus among linguists is that such a lowering is as a result of the loss of floating low tones. In Essien (2007), he states that the Anaang tones are almost like the Ibibio tones. Essien (1985:78-79) observes that Ibibio has two level tones, high and low. He adds that other tones emerged as a combination or modification of these basic tones. Stressing, he mentions down-step as one of such modification which involves the high tone which can be lowered by an abstract phenomenon. He gave his examples as ù!kó: yonder, ù!keh? "where" noting that in the above examples the pitch on the second syllable of the words is slightly lowered tone than the pitch on the first syllable. According to him, such slightly lowered tone is referred to as a down-stepped high tone or simply a down -stepped tone. However, some people usually mistake it to be mid tone.

**H!** This is a down - step with only a high tone following down - step.

mmọ,	[m!mmọ]	-	where is it?
ọbọñ,	[ɔ!bọñ]	-	chief
mbọk,	[m!bọk]	-	please
ngwen,	[n!gwen]	-	another
asọp,	[á!sọp]	-	is lost
ìnem,	[ì!nem]	-	palatable
abọp,	[á!bọp]	-	has built
uli,	[u!li]	-	bone liniment
uko,	[u!kó]	-	great man

**H!H:** This is an example of a down -step with two high tone sequence.

nasak,	[n!sásák]	-	a bird
uchọrọ,	[ù!tjọrọ]	-	festival
mmaha,	[m!máhá]	-	i don't like it
ukaha,	[ù!káhá]	-	you have not gone
ufada,	[ù!fadá]	-	you have not kissed
itaha,	[i!tahá]	-	it does not eat
ikaaka,	[i!kááká]	-	he is not tired

**H!:** A down-step can manifest in two places one after a high tone and another in the prefix after another high tone has interrupted.

uwada,	[ù!wádá]	-	you don't ride
utada,	[ù!tá!dá]	-	you don't open
itighe,	[i!ti!ghe]	-	won't he stay
imiagha,	[i!miá!ghá]	-	has he not slapped him?

**Downdrift:** Downdrift is a phonetical process which concerns a situation where a sequence of high tones are produced on similar level to the final high tone until there is a little raising of the final high tone. In the sequence for the low tone, it is produced on similar level till it gets to the final low tone where there is an immediate fall (Urua 2000:165). Examples are shown below:

- High tones sequence uchɔrɔ [utʃɔrɔ] → /----/ /---/
- low tones sequence nkolo [ɲkɔlɔ] → /----/ /---/

However, phonologically downdrift is a process whereby a high tone followed by a low tone in Anaang words is lowered. Let us look at some examples in Anaang:

ùrɔk              ámmi              ábiabiák              -              my hand is paining me [ˈ...ˈ]

### Tonal deletion and realignment

Moreover, there are some other aspects like deletion.

Deletion is the omission of the tonal segment in a jointed speech. Examples are:

- uwa+afɔ: ùwà+áfó → ùwàfó (your distress). There is a tonal and segmental deletion, /à/
- ala+àmi → àlǎǎm (this one). There is a tonal and segment deletion, /i/
- ilàha+àmi → ilàhǎm (right now). There is deletion in the first segment of /àmi/ but the tone is realigned whereas in the last segment the first and the last segments are deleted.
- bɔ+ànyé → bɔɲè. The segment /a/ is deleted while the tone realigns.

**Downglide:** This process concerns the lowering of the final tones. According to Urua(2000:173) downglide is said to occur when "a lexical item with a final low uttered in isolation exhibits a sharp fall from the tone of the preceding low". However, it also affects phrases too with similar low tones in the final position. Let us see some examples in Anaang language.

- èkà /-=>/ / /-)/ (mother)
- ìbà /-=>/ / /-)/ (two)
- ìfu /->-/ / /-)/ (a lazy man)
- ɲjàɔɔ /->-/ / /-)/ (I will give)

### Intonation

Intonation concerns the extent of raising the voice. It involves the rise and fall of the voice in speaking. According to Ejele (1996:79), "intonation refers to the distinctive use of patterns of pitch or melody, and is found in stress, tone and pitch accent languages".

Intonation occurs in different ways. In Anaang there are two ways which are the rising and falling. Udondata (1993:126) confirms that two tunes occur in Anaang; he identifies them to be rising and falling tunes.

According to Hyman in Essien (1990:60) "In most cases, discussions of intonation of African tone languages are limited to the phenomenon of down drift". However, Essien (1990:60) comments that "it certainly does employ intonation for certain syntactic/semantic function, as other languages such as English do" Furthermore, as one of the functions of intonation, Essien (1990:61) points out that tone plays a prominent role in expressing modality (By modality he means the speakers attitude or involvement in what he says).

Consequently, Anaang as a tonal language employs intonation a lot because it is the way one tunes his voice that you will understand what he says: whether he is asking questions or making a statement, request or command.

### Types of intonation in Anaang

As already mentioned above, intonation in Anaang is synonymous with the function of a sentence or the types of messages. Intonations have something to do with tune and since

Anaang language is a tonal language, the message communicated in sequence changes the tones to intonation. The rise and the fall in the pronunciation of "messages convey the type of message we want. Put another way, In Anaang, tone is used in realizing syllables to convey meaning whereas when these syllables are combined to form words and words are put together to form sentences, we use tunes to mark the meaning of our messages. As such when this is done some of the tones may change from its original standard when it was a single syllable. According to Ejele (1996:79), "In some, the patterns of pitch are seen as cartoons.... in others the patterns (SCC) are seen as tone units, or tone groups. In fact, intonation performs several activities in language. Its most important one is a signal of grammatical structure".

However, concerning the types of intonation in Anaang, there are four types which are declarative, imperative, interrogative and the exclamatory almost like English language. Udoh (1998:46) confirms "we have reduced the tunes in Anaang to four broad groups (i) declarative (ii) the O-tune (iii) the imperative (iv) the interrogative. "It is discovered that rising tone occurs in interrogative sentences and some aspects imperative sentences when it concerns commands while falling tones is prevalent in declarative sentences.

### **Declarative sentence**

This is an intonation used in making statements.

aminde Akpan / ámindéákpán.

I am the first born.

Eteamiadem/ étéamiádèm.

This is my father.

### **Imperative sentence**

This is an intonation used in making appeals or commands

kpeke-e - Please, cut it.

nno..o. - Please, give me.

nno. - give me

nnompo- give me something

sianadzak - leave it!

### **Interrogative sentence**

This is intonation which concerns questions. Some are single words others are sentences.

Adelia - àdéliá

What has happened?

akaulua - → aka ùlùrà.

Are you going to the market?

awoetim →- awo Etim?

You mean Etim?

One word questions often attracts a suffix to indicate the question:

adze-e?

Where is she?

### **The "O" suffix intonation**

This pattern occurs in special wishes, appeals or greetings, emphasis and exclamations.

tie do /tie do/

tie do -o /tie dó-o/

aneanam well done

aneanam-o /ànéànàm-o/

nne-ami---o Oh my mother---o

iya mmi-o Oh-my poor self

## Stress

This is a conspicuous pronouncement of one of the syllable in word. This is to say that a stress is a great force used in the gesticulation of successive syllables in a word or an utterance that is in a word of more than one syllable. In this case, one of the syllables would be realized with a higher or lower sound than others. The affected syllable is said to carry a primary or main stress. According to Ejele (1996:73).

Phonemically, stress functions mainly to provide a means of distinguishing degree of emphasis or contrasts in sentences, (in which case it is sentence stress), and words as literal or words as stress. Phonologically, stress refers to the degree of force used in producing a syllable.

The prominence in the realization of a particular syllable makes it stressed syllable and the others are unstressed ones. This syllable stress is found on the vowel. There are two types of stresses. These are the free stress and fixed stress.

Free stress is a stress whose prominence could be found in the various positions of a word. Fixed stress is one whose stress is made on a specific syllable in the word. In this regard, stress is non-phonemic. According to Ejele (1996:75).

In languages with free stress, prominence can occur in different syllables, therefore the placement of stress depends on the word. For instance, in Russian the words muka "fortune" and muka "flow" are distinguished on the basis of the prominence on the first and second syllables respectively. In a language with fixed stress, the placement of stress is on a particular syllable within a word.

Deduced from the illustration above, Anaang is a free stress language because it is phonemic and the stress differs from syllable to syllable and this determines the meaning of the words. In this study, the primary stressed syllable will be indicated with capital words.

### Examples:

Mkpoadē	-	That thing
aWAsi	-	sneezing
uMIAna	-	blood
NSEade	-	what is that?
nTATAafiong	-	stars

## Accent

Accent and stress are very closely related. The difference between them is that stress deals with the loudness for the listener while pitch accent shows the extent to which the voice is raised.

According to Udondata (2001:131), Accentuation is the quality of giving prominence to some aspects of an utterance at the expense of others. Such factors as length and pitch or a combination of these contribute to accentuation. If a word has more than one syllable, one of these syllables is usually given more prominence. The syllable that is given prominence is said to be accented.

## Conclusion

Anaang language is understood according to the tones imbued in it. This confirms the fact that Anaang is a tonal language. The display of the varying patterns of this language connotes different meaning and gives direction to proper understanding.

## Recommendation:

Tones should be properly marked and studied while studying Anaang language so as to enable proper understanding of the language. Also, further studies should be undertaken on tones in order to reveal more developments in the language.

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