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**The Linguistic Analysis of the Phonological Deviations in Anaang Language:  
A Stratified Lower Cross Language Development**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This Study aims at the linguistic analysis of the phonological deviations of Anaang language. To achieve this goal, we used the survey and library sources; stratified random sampling with 64 Anaang indigenes using Ibadan 400 wordlist. Employing comparative analysis, it was realized that phonological deviations were distinct. The deviations are found in regions of alveolar tap /ɾ/, realized in Anaang Central Dialect (ACD) including Abak, Etim Ekpo and Essien Udim, the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ found in Anaang Northern Dialect (AND) which includes Ikot Ekpene and Obot Akara; the voiced alveolar plosive /d/ found in Ika. The alveolar lateral /l/ found in Anaang West Dialect (AWD) which includes Oruk Anam and Ukanafun. The realization of this linguistic deviation will create an understanding in communicating with Anaang people and enhanced proper development in the lower cross zone. Finally, to enable successful growth of the language more researches should be embarked on the semantic and syntactic areas of the language as more facts will be discovered in this rich language. Moreover, the process of standardization should commence. This is because a language with divergent or varying forms without a standard variant cannot develop meaningfully.*

**KEYWORDS: Anaang Language, Phonology, Deviation Lower Cross Development**

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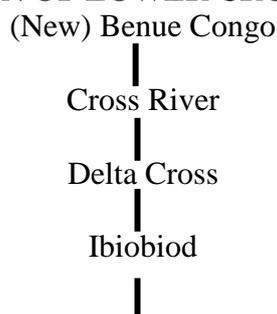
**Introduction**

Anaang belongs to the Lower Cross subgroup of languages, which is one of the groups traceable to the Benue-Congo group of the Niger-Congo language family. The Niger-Congo is one of the four language families in Africa among others namely, Hamito-Semitic, the Nilo Saharan and the Khoisan. This study aims at investigating the phonological deviation in Anaang language.

**Linguistic Background**

Anaang is a language spoken by the Anaang people, an ethnic group in Akwa Ibom State. The Anaang language belongs to the Benue Congo sub-family group of languages of the Niger Congo as stated by Greenberg (1966). Recently, Urua (2003:3) regrouped Anaang, Ibibio, Iko, Ibeno, Ibiono, Itu Mbon-Uso, Ito, Nkara, Ukwa, Ekit, Oro, Okobo, Efik, Ebughu, Ewang-Uda, Etebi, Mbo (Efai) into Ibibio of the Lower Cross languages.

**Figure 1: THE CLASSIFICATION OF LOWER CROSS LANGUAGES**



Iko, Ibeno, Ibuoro, Itu Mbon Uso, Ito, Nkari, Anaang, Efik, Ibibio, Ukwa, Ekit, Oro, Okobo, Ebughu, Ilue, Ewang-Uda, Ekit, Etebi, Mbo (Efai) Urua (2000:3).

Derived from the definition of language by Trudgil (1983:3) who describes language as a collection of mutually intelligible dialects, similarly, Anaang, Ibibio and Efik languages, which are dialect clusters over the years, have possessed qualities of languages. Moreover, since every language like English, Goelin, French, etc, came from the same proto language, Indo-European, but today, are different languages, similarly Anaang, Ibibio and Efik, etc., which emanated from the same stock have developed some mutually intelligible dialects thus attaining the status of different languages. These three sisters languages have now developed some distinct characteristics and there are some lexical items that are beginning to differ from each other, for instance

**Table 1:**

Gloss	Annang	Ibibio	Efik
Faeces	afid	uduañ	ifuo
Okra	nkolo	atike	etighi
Cap	iten	itam	itam

Moreover, phonologically, according to Udondata (1993:203) Anaang has seven monophthongs, thirteen diphthongs and twenty-one consonants; Ibibio has ten vowels and fifteen consonants (Essien, 1990:26).

Furthermore, from their cognates (words with similar meaning) we know gained proper features of languages. In the same vein, with the availability of Annang orthography, by Michael and Obot, 2001 and Idem and Udondata, 2002, Anaang language has alongside Ibibio and Efik attained the full status of a language.

However, Urua (2003:3) groups Anaang among the Ibibio of Lower Cross language, which is a sub-family of the (New) Benue Congo.

**Limitation of Scope**

The varieties of Anaang language is a broad topic, because it embodies, phonological, semantic and syntactic areas. For the purpose of clarity and efficiency of studies, we have limited the scope of this research only to the phonological varieties of the Anaang language. Though in the course of this research, we will still delve a little into other areas but it will just be for purposes of illustration and mention.

## Statement of the Problem

A language without a written standard variety is not a developed language. If such a language is allowed to remain so for a long time, it may eventually be swallowed up by another language and it may fade away. When a particular language is “dead”, the culture, tradition and the integrity of the people fade away too. This is because it is only the written record of a particular language that preserves and empowers the language. This fact has made it pertinent to study and carry out research on the phonological deviation of the Anaang language in order to give room for a standard variety in the future. This standard variety will then be used in writing literary works and keeping formal records.

In the national language policy, the Federal Government has specified that the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community be used as the language of instruction in the first three years of education in the primary schools, (National Language Policy, 1997:3). This cannot be achieved if work is not done on a language in order to produce an acceptable and standardized variety to be used in teaching, studying and writing. These needs have called for an academic study and research on Anaang language. The few works done are not adequate for the development of Anaang language. Though, there is an orthography, one of the major hindrances of the literary development of Anaang language is the diverse dialectal variation. In this study, we will attempt to find out the phonological deviation, which may then be a step to develop the standard form of the language that shall be used in writing.

## Significance of the Study

The study of the dialectal variation in Anaang language will be a great contribution to the study and development of the Anaang language. It will help in the establishment of a standard variety, which shall encourage the emergence of literary works in the language. Furthermore, this work will add to the intellectual development of the language, which will help in the preservation of the tradition and culture of the Anaang people. Therefore, there is a need for an accurate description of the Anaang language varieties. Moreover, this work will help Anaang students to speak, write and read in their language. Their children need to read literature with the rich tradition blended with intellectual proverbs in the Anaang language. This can only be done in the Anaang language because language is the only conveyor of tradition and culture.

Furthermore, the teachers will use the standard form of the language to teach as spelt out in the language policy. Linguists will make use of the data from the different phonological deviation to carry out more research on the language. As such, through this work, Anaang language shall grow and be approved in the curriculum of the Ministry of Education for students to study. Mostly, linguists will use the comparative wordlist presented at the appendix for linguistic studies in the language. This wordlist too will be used as a demi dictionary for those who do not know the language.

## Methodology

- i. This study shall use the survey and library-based as its research method.
- ii. The population that will be used in this research shall include Anaang indigenes resident in the five zones of the Anaang language speaking community.

- iii. Sample and sampling technique: The stratified random sampling shall be used interview Anaang indigenes resident in the eight Local Government Areas of Anaang land.
- iv. Development of instrument: Ibadan 400 wordlist will be used to collect data on the language.
- v. Analysis of Data: a comparative analysis of data shall be adopted in this study.

### Material

The primary methodology for this study was a survey method using the Ibadan 400 hundred-wordlist, 20 Anaang wordlist and five simple sentences to interview sixty-four, eight resident in each of the eight Anaang speaking Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Akwa Ibom State.

### Information

From the geographical location and population distribution of Anaang, there are eight Anaang speaking Local Government Areas. In order to find out the varieties available, we used the Ibadan 400-wordlist and five sentences to interview eight people in each of the eight Local Government Areas. The informants were traditional chiefs, businessmen, Secondary School teachers and some tertiary institution lecturers ranging from the ages of thirty to seventy years. Twenty-four out of sixty-four were female while forty were men. These are citizens who spent the greater part of their life in Anaang locality.

### Procedure

The use of the Ibadan 400 wordlist and 20 Anaang wordlist for an individual interview were employed. In this face-to-face interview it was not possible for the individual to stay all throughout the day without other engagements so we spent two days with an informant. This is the reason this process took about four months and eight days. While interviewing, the informants were asked to pronounce the items in the wordlist in their respective varieties. When they realized the items, it was transcribed directly. Some learned ones simply translated the items in the wordlists themselves.

### Phonological Variation of Anaang Language

Deduced from the interview of the sixty-four Anaang indigenes from Anaang Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State using the Ibadan 400 wordlist and 20 Anaang wordlist we collated data numerically first from each LGA for comparative analysis. After this analysis, we realized that all informants in each LGA pronounced words almost in the same manner.

Later, the result from LGAs were collated and a comparative analysis was conducted to find out the total number of available in Anaang language. Few examples are shown in table 1 below.

**Table 2**

L.G.A's	River	Market	Mortar	Teeth	back
ABAK	ir̩im	ur̩ua	eka ur̩uŋ	er̩ed	er̩em
ESSIEN UDIM	ir̩im	ur̩ua	eka ur̩uŋ	er̩ed	er̩em
ETIM EKPO	ir̩im	ur̩ua	eka ur̩uŋ	er̩ed	er̩em
IKA	idim	udua	ekaúdun̩	édèd	édèm



using the alveolar tap /ɾ/ and the voiced alveolar plosive /d/. These are shown below: teeth/eled/, market/ulua/, mortar/ulun/.

Eventually, after sorting out and grouping the Local Governments with similar sounds together we have realized that Anaang indigenes from the Local Governments which are located in the same geographical area realize the sound in the same manner.

After a careful comparative analysis of the data provided by the respondent, we identified four phonological varieties of Anaang language. These varieties were then grouped together geographical according to their dialect. They are Anaang Central Dialect (ACD) made up of Abak, Etim Ekpo and Essien Udim; Anaang Northern Dialect (AND) consisting of Ikot Ekpene and Obot Akara; Anaang Western Dialect (AWD) comprising Ika people and Anaang Southern Dialect (ASD) comprising Ukanafun and Oruk Anam.

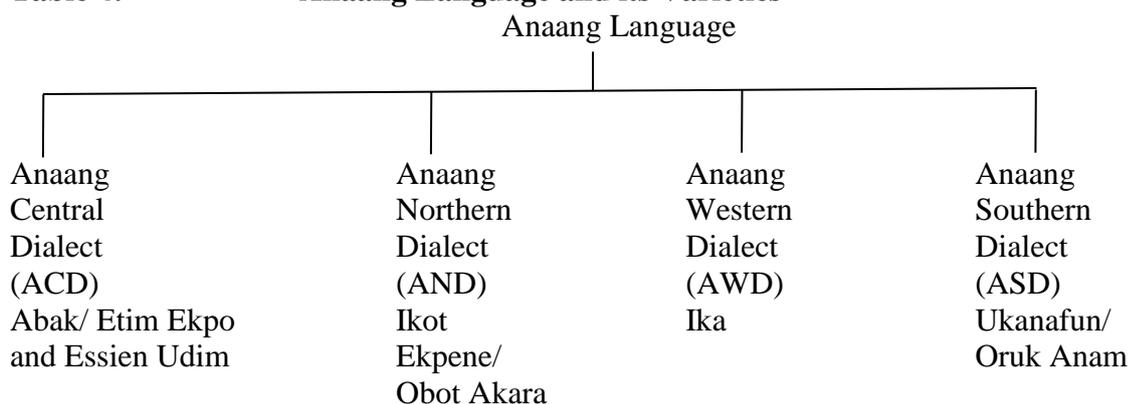
1. From the study, we realized that indigenes of Abak, Etim Ekpo and Essien Udim make use of a similar sound, the alveolar tap /ɾ/ in producing items in the place where other Local Government Areas use the alveolar lateral /l/ or voiced alveolar plosive /d/. These three Local Government Areas belong to the same Central geo-political zone of Anaang land. They shall be grouped together in this study and their variety shall be called Anaang Central Dialect, abbreviated as ACD.
2. Ikot Ekpene and Obot Akara, were formerly in the same Local Government Area before the creation of the latter. The two Local Government Areas are located along the Northern zone of Anaang land. In this study, they shall be grouped together because they share a sound variety, the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/. Their variety shall be referred to in this study as Anaang North Dialect and shall be abbreviated as AND.
3. Ika is a Local Government which has special identification because of her variety, the people of this variety are very particular in the use of voiced alveolar plosive /d/ as an alternative sound in items where other LGA's use the alveolar tap /ɾ/ or the alveolar lateral /l/. Ika is located along Western part of Anaang and their variety shall be called Anaang Western Dialect (AWD).

Finally, Oruk Anam and Ukanafun are Local Government Areas, which were together before the creation of the former from Ukanafun. In their variety, they use the alveolar lateral /l/ in places other varieties use the alveolar tap /ɾ/ or the alveolar lateral /l/. These Local Government Areas are located along the Southern part of Anaang land. In this study, they shall be grouped together and their variety shall be called Anaang Southern Dialect and shall be abbreviated ASD. See appendix below.

Consequently, it has been realized that the alveolar tap /ɾ/, alveolar lateral /l/ and voiced alveolar plosive /d/ are phonemic because they form minimal pairs. Moreover, the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ and the voiceless labial velar plosive /kp/ are also phonemic, likewise the voiceless palate affricate /tʃ/ and the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/.

In this study the classification of Anaang dialects into four varieties is for convenience in identifying all phonological traits in order to properly group them into their closest dialectal patterns for accurate consideration for a standard variety. This does not mean that the dialects are mutually unintelligible. All the dialects spoken in Anaang are mutually intelligible, as the Anaang people understand each other. However, these diverse dialects may pose a problem to people from other tribes who may understand one variety without the others.

**Table 4: Anaang Language and its Varieties**



**Anaang Central Dialect (ACD)**

Anaang people living in the North Central region of Anaang land are indigenes of Abak, Etim Ekpo and Essien Udim Local Government Areas. It should be noted that these three Local Government Areas are living in the central part of Anaang land. They are close together and share a lot of things in common. They sell in the same market obo Anaang, they intermarry and share common boundary, as such, there are lots of similarities in their ways of life. Their variety is called Anaang Central Dialect as a result of their geographical location.

They engage in farming, trading, pottery, blacksmithing and refining of local gins. They also participate in politics and academic engagement. Most of them have specialized in educational professions such as law, engineering, education and medicine.

Linguistically, the three Local Government Areas are grouped together as Anaang Central Dialect due to their similarity in sound realization. From the analysis, we have shown that the features which makes ACD variety distinct is the alveolar tap /r/ as a substitute for alveolar lateral /l/ and voiced alveolar plosive /d/ used by other groups.

**Table 5: Anaang Central Dialect (ACD)**

S/NO	GLOSS	
		/r/
1.	river	ìrìm
2.	market	úrúa
3.	mortal	ùrùŋ
4.	teeth	èrèd
5.	back	èrèm
6.	nail	mbara
7.	blood	ùbàrá
8.	soup	àfèré
9.	oil	àrà̀n
10.	cassava/fofo	ùkùmùrò'k

**Anaang Northern Dialect (AND)**

This variety comprises people from Ikot Ekpene and Obot Akara Local Government Areas. They are grouped into Anaang Northern zone because of their geographical location and are categorized together because of their linguistic similarity.

This region is bounded in the East by the Igbo living in the eastern part of Abia State. Ikot Ekpene and Obot Akara people are specialists in raffia works, this gives rise to the nickname of Ikot Ekpene town as the *raffia city*. Moreover, their farmers specialize in mixed farming, palm oil drilling and palm wine tapping. They also engage in politics and academic pursuits. Most of them are successful politicians as well as professionals in educational attainment.

The outstanding phonological trait of the AND variety is the use of the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ in the place of voiceless labial velar plosive /kp/ as use in words by other varieties. This is reflected in words such as:

**Table 6: Anaang Northern Dialect (AND)**

S/NO	Gloss	/p/
1.	jaw	ápó'mbán
2.	skin	ípáídèm
3.	maize	àpàpà
4.	fat	ápó'η
5.	bark	ípó'kétò
6.	calabash	ìpó'k
7.	bag	èpàd
8.	shoe	ípáúkòd
9.	thing	m'p'ɔ
10.	he goat	àpóébòd

#### **Anaang Western Dialect (AWD)**

The phonological variety of this region is spoken by the people of Ika Local Government Area. Their variety is called Anaang Western Dialect (AWD) because of their geophysical location. They are bounded on the Northwest by the Azumini of Igbo tribe.

Most people from this Local Government Area are traders, extensive farmers and warriors. Most of the time they are in constant clashes with their neighbours over land conflict. However, some are successful politicians and academics professionals.

From our analysis, we realize that the Anaang people in this variety use voiced alveolar plosive /d/, as the substitute for alveolar tap /r/ and alveolar lateral /l/ use by other groups. The examples are as below:

**Table 7: Anaang Western Dialect (AWD)**

S/NO	Gloss	/d/
1.	river	ìdìm
2.	market	údúa
3.	mortal	ùdùη
4.	teeth	èdèd
5.	back	èdèm
6.	nail	m'bkàda
7.	blood	ùbàdá
8.	soup	àfèdé
9.	oil	àdàn
10.	cassava	ùkùdòk

### Anaang Southern Dialect (ASD)

Anaang people in the Southern part of Anaang are indigenes of Ukanafun and Oruk Anam Local Government Areas. Despite the fact that they are different Local Government Areas today, initially, they were one Local Government Area. As such, they share many things in common including the same variety of Anaang language. Their variety is called Anaang Southern Dialect (ASD) because of their geographical location and they are grouped together because of their similar linguistic background.

People from this region are mainly farmers who engage in palm oil production as their major occupation and cassava production in addition. Moreover, they are also traders who engage in the sales of palm oil to their neighbours in Rivers State. They share boundary with the Ogonis and the Andonis of Rivers State on the West, and the Ibibios on the South.

Derived from the analysis, Anaang people in this group use the alveolar lateral /l/ as a substitute for alveolar tap /ɾ/ and voiced alveolar plosive /d/ use by other groups.

**Table 8: Anaang Southern Dialect (ASD)**

S/no	Gloss	/l/
1.	river	ìlìm
2.	market	úlúa
3.	mortal	ùlùṅ
4.	teeth	èlèd
5.	back	èlèm
6.	nail	mbàla
7.	blood	ùbàlá
8.	soup	àfèlé
9.	oil	àlàn
10.	cassava	ùkùlòk

### Vowel Variation

From our study, few vowel variations are noticed in Anaang language phonological varieties. These variations are noticeable in all the zones of Anaang land. In ACD the informants call plantain/ṅlìyòṅ/ AND uses /ṅlòyòṅ/ showing the substitution of /i/ to /ò/. AWD uses /ndiyòṅ/, while ASD uses /ukom/. AWD substitute of /ò/ to /d/ while ASD takes a special name *ukom*.

*Onions* has some vowel variations noticeable in two areas: ACD, AND and AWD call it /ajim/ while ASD uses /ajò/. The /aj/ is maintained but there is a substitute of /im/ for /ò/ sound.

Consonant and vowel variation noticed above entail the change of a particular consonant or vowel sounds for another of the same word by different dialects. This change, which occurs as illustrated above, constitutes to the variation noticed in Anaang dialect. Thus creating different variants of the same word. These sounds, which are changing, are as follows

**Table 9: VOWEL AND CONSONANTS VARIATIONS IN ANAANG LANGUAGE**

S/N	SOUNDS	GLOSS	ANAANG	VARIANTS	SUBSTITUTED	WORDS	VARIANTS
1.	/i/	plantain	nliyɔŋ	ACD	/ɔ/	nloɔyɔŋ	AND
2.	/l/	onions	ajim	ACD, AND, AWD	/ɔ/	ajɔ	ASD
3.	/ɔ/	crayfish	awɔ	ACD, AWD	/u/	awu	ASD
4.	/e/	elbow	itudɛkwɔŋo	ACD, AND	/a/	Itudakwɔŋo	AWD
5.	/u/	hip	Ifuko	ASD	/ɔ/	ifɔkɔ	AND
6.	/r/	riyer	Irim	ACD	/l/	lirim	ASD
7.	/d/	riyer	Idim	AWD	/d/	idim	AWD
8.	/l/	riyer	Ilim	ASW	/r/	irim	ACD
9.	/kp/	maize	akpakpa	ACD, AWD, ASD	/p/	apapa	AND
10	/tʃ/	thorns	nʃan	AND, AWD, ASD	/s/	Nsan	ACD(part)
11	/k/	Hip	Ifuko	ASD	/h/	Ifuho	ACD, AND, AWD

### Conclusion

The variations noticed in Anaang language as discussed and tabulated above occur on the phonology of the language as it patterns to changes in the vowel and consonants sounds of the same words as used by the different dialects. As tabulated above there are substitutions of phonemic items in words either singles or double but what is paramount is that these changes have brought about different variants spoken by groups, which make them mutually intelligible dialects of the same language.

### Recommendations

With a close observation, strict study and consideration of the four phonological varieties found in Anaang language a study of semantic and syntactic area of the language should be embarked upon. Moreover, the process of standardization should commence. When the standard variety is established it can be used in developing the language and enriching its vocabulary through borrowings. Therefore, through the establishment of a standard variety, Anaang language will be used as one of the developed languages for literary works. Also it will be adopted as a language of instruction, and studies in schools, communication and other social contacts worldwide.

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