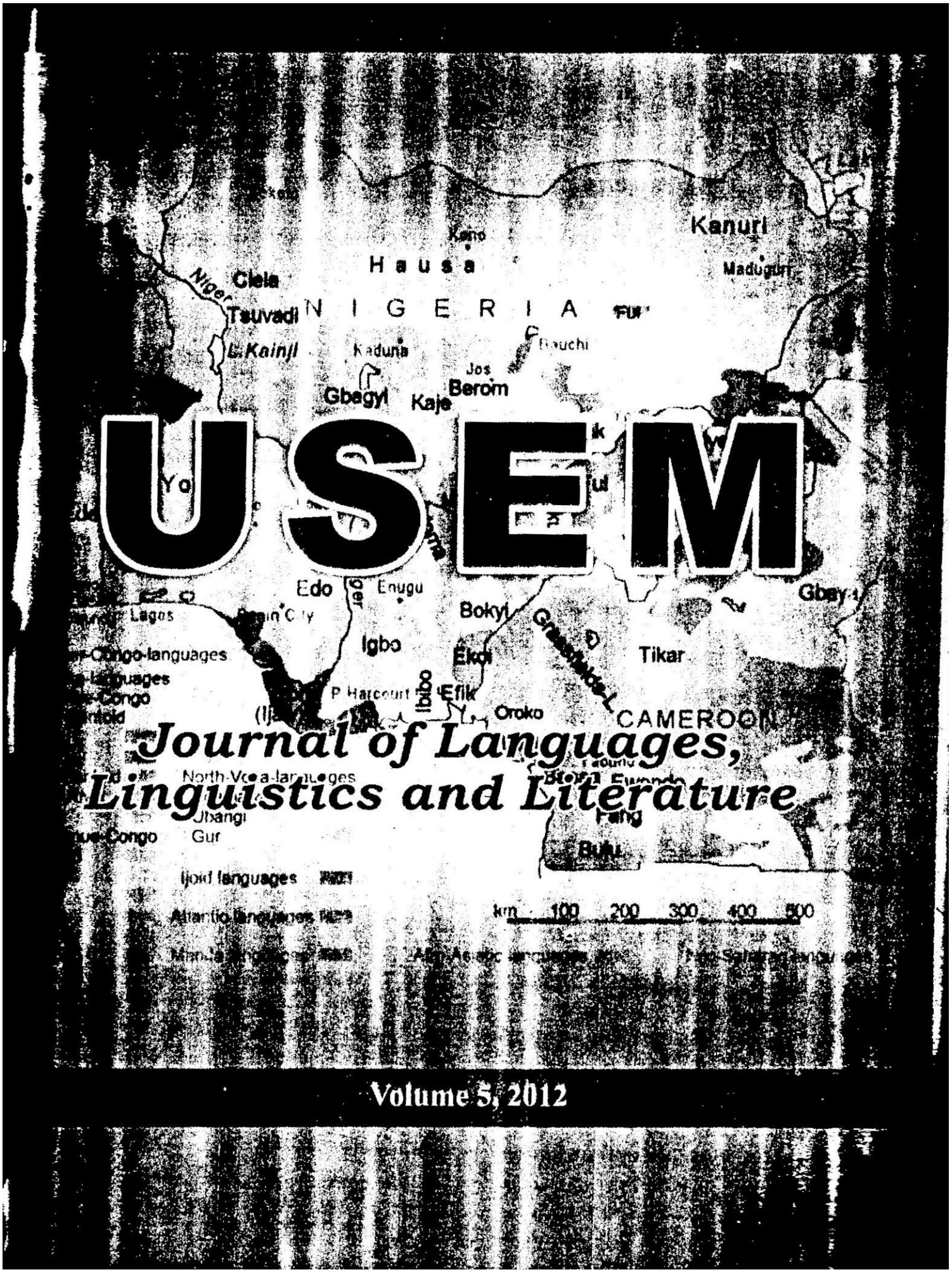


USEM

Journal of Languages, Linguistics and Literature

Volume 5, 2012

Suffixation as Word Formation Strategy in Anaang and English

Maurice Udom
Department of General Studies
Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic
Ikot Osurua
Akwa Ibom State
maurice.udom@yahoo.com

Abstract.

This paper treats suffixation as a word formation strategy in Anaang. Anaang speakers of English tend to differ in word formation strategy in Anaang because of identifiable differences in word building processes of Anaang and English. Besides, Anaang has dialectal variants, which tend to express different meanings at some grammatical levels. However, the knowledge of English word formation cannot be applied in Anaang. It is pertinent to note that lack of adequate knowledge of word formation processes affects spelling ability of learners of these languages. For instance, in English, the suffix '-s' is used to form plural nouns: example teacher(s) whereas in Annang, there are cases of vowel doubling which in some nouns lead to plural and to be singular in others, examples: n-teem 'cooking many things '(plural); Akwook, (a bee) singular. Thus, the individual language peculiarities of word building necessitate this study. The purpose is to ascertain the extent to which the knowledge of Anaang word formation strategies can influence the performance of Anaang learners of English; and to highlight the similarities and differences between Anaang and English word formation strategies. Sixty respondents of Anaang native speakers were selected from eight local government areas of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, through a stratified random sampling method. An achievement test to examine their knowledge of inflexional[1] and derivational suffixation strategies in Anaang and English words was administered to them. Aronoff and Fudeman (2005) analytic and synthetic morphological approaches were used to analyse data because they assert breaking words down before using theory construction for analysis.

[1] Inflexion- This spelling is modified by Gimson's Pronunciation of English 7th Edition (revised by Alan Crutenden 2008).

1. Introduction

Unlike English, Anaang is a language of the people who comprise eight local government areas of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. Anaang is mutually intelligible with Ibibio and Efik, which makes it dialectal in outlook but spoken in geo-communities. Besides, Anaang has within its domain of use, dialectal differences in the meanings expressed at some grammatical levels. For instance, Ukanafun and Etim Ekpo regions, the voiced alveolar lateral [l] and the voiceless palato-alveolar affricate [ʧ] occur in phonological inventory to express words as ulua and *nliche* meaning 'market' and 'photograph' respectively. In contrast, Abak and Oruk Anam districts use the voiced alveolar consonant (gliding consonant) [r] and the voiceless alveolar fricative[s] sounds to replace[l] and [ʧ]. Thus [ùlúa] and [nlíʧé] are pronounced [ùruá] and [ndíse']. Consequently, the [d] in [ndíse'] instead of [l] shows that [d] and [l] are in free variation. These differences, however, hinder performance of Anaang speakers/learners of English. It is on this premise that this study attempts to define the knowledge of morphological boundary between Anaang and English to ascertain the degree of influence on Anaang speakers of English as a second language.

Suffixation in Annang is mainly through an inflexional phenomenon which can be used to form verbal categories like the morpheme negation: [pe].This can be used as a suffix in the root verb [dép] 'buy' to form [í-dép-pé] 'He has not purchased'. Again, there are extensional suffixes in plural formation: [dèm-mè], 'to buy many things'; [fóm-mó] 'to burn many things'. English inflects for number by adding the morpheme {-s} to the noun stem. However, the [s] morpheme changes its nature depending on the phonological environment where it occurs, (cf. Udofot, 2005:8). Besides, the three sets of {s} morpheme are generally referred to with one umbrella term the Z- morpheme,(cf Gleason, 1969:96), when the Z- morpheme relates to plural formation, it is referred to as Z_1 morpheme. Consequently, the word [cat] has its plural [cats] {kæts} because the allomorph /s/ occurs with words ending in voiceless sounds except/s/, /ʃ/, and /tʃ/. We observe that there are peculiarities in plural formation in English and Anaang.

However, we note that English, an intonational language belongs to the Germanic group while Anaang, a tonal one belongs to the Lower Cross group of languages, (cf Essien 1973; Udofot 1991; Udondata 1993). This paper identifies

the differences and similarities in Anaang and English linguistic features so that the findings can provide teachers with study materials that would enhance effective teaching and learning of the languages which is the aim of this paper. Finally, this study accounts for certain word formation strategies in Anaang and English to recommend ways of improving the performance of Anaang learner of English with regard to word building through suffixation.

1.1. Method of Data Collection

Data were collected through questionnaire from sixty respondents who were educated Anaang speakers of English. On the questionnaire, test items were structured to elicit answers from inflexional and derivational suffixation in Anaang and English word formation. Before the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents who were selected through a simple random sampling method to cover a uniform spread of age, gender and educational qualification, the researcher asked them to confirm that they were native speakers of Anaang before giving them the questionnaire. The researcher also explained the terms: inflexions and derivations to the respondents. This is because as technical terms, the younger informants may not understand them easily. The informants were asked to form plurals, past tense, possessive nouns, among others. The data collected were tallied, and calculated using simple percentage and presented on graphs and charts. Other sources of data collection included textbooks, journals and encyclopedia.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical background adopted for the study is the analytical approach to morphology. The analytic approach to word formation is usually associated with American Structuralist Linguistics of the first half of the twentieth century,(cf Aronoff & Fudeman, 2005:12).This approach guided these linguists to deal with languages that they had never encountered before, nor were there written grammar of these languages to guide them. Analytic methods provide explicit methods of linguistic analysis that are independent of the structures, a researcher examines.

In English, the aspect of this approach that relates to this work is the analytic principles which propagate, among others, morphological forms with the same meaning but different sound shapes which may be instances of the same morphemes if their distributions do not overlap. For instance, the regular plural

marker in English has several allomorphs,e.g./s/ and /z/ as in seat-/s/ /si:ts/ and shade/z//ʃeidz/. The distribution of these forms do not overlap and they all have the same meaning. We can infer that /s/ and /z/ are instances of the same morpheme which are used to mark plurals. In Anaang, we acknowledge the forms with the same meaning and the same sound shape in all their occurrences are instances of the same morpheme. For instance, in the negation formation in Anaang, the morpheme '-ke' is usually suffixed with different roots to form negation (see 22 & 23 examples).

2. Suffixation in Annang

Suffixation in Anaang is through the process of inflexion, derivational, and agglutinating processes. Those suffixes however are morphological parts usually added after the root words which do signal phonological and syntactic phenomena.

2.1. Morphophonological Suffixation

Naturally, the distinctive characteristics of morphology are that they have many evidence of being enmeshed with phonology. Matthew (1974:233) refers to it as morphophonology which is the relation between representations in terms of morphemes and their realizations in terms of phonemes. We find out that during phonological processes, changes occur in environments where morphemes are combined to form words. The segments of neighbouring morphemes become blended in such circumstances. The meaning of a segment may change depending on the position it finds itself. (cf. Udondata, 2006).

Example: *ádé* (It is); ídéghé (It is not).To form the negative, we note that the /á/ in *ádé* has changed to/ í/ in ídéghé .These phonological factors which call for changes may be vowel harmony, tone marking, consonant intersection, weakening and free variation, among others.

2.1.1. Consonant Intersection (Overlapping)

Consonant intersection (overlapping) is concerned with a situation where a particular phoneme assumes the position of another phoneme in a particular environment ,(Udondata, 2006:48).

For example:

1. Ufok 'house' + ibok 'medicine' = ufoghibok 'hospital'

2. Efaak 'location' + ura 'market' = efaaghura 'a corner of the market'
3. Efok 'nest'+ inuen 'bird' = efoghinuen 'birdnest'
4. Efok 'cover' + ikwa 'matchet' = efoghikwa 'matchet scabbard'

The velar stop/k/ contact is particularly sensitive to the nature of the following vowel. With the vowels /i/ and /u/ for instance,the realization of /k/ will be made on the most forward part of the soft palate and may even overlap on to the hard palate. Thus, we observe that during formation process of *ufok* + *ibok* to form *ufoghibok,* 'hospital' the glottal fricative / ɦ / overlaps the velar plosive /k/ in *ufok* because it has the usual effect of shortening the vowel /i:/ as in *ibok,* for adequate realization of the formation: *ufoghibok.* In this consonant intersection therefore,the glottal fricative /ɦ/ intersects with the velar plosive /k/ in the environment of a vowel.

However, the alveolar plosive/d/ often overlaps with the alveolar tap/r/ as in the following examples:

5. echid 'inside' + ikod 'forest'= ẹchirikod 'inside forest'
6. mkpad 'foot' + eniin 'elephant' = mkpareniin 'elephant's foot'
7. itiad 'stone'+ udi 'tomb'=itiarudi 'tomb stone'
8. utud 'end + ini = uturini 'end time'

We note that the post-vocalic /r/ is a linking form when the following word begins with a vowel.The examples above demonstrate that the environment is phonetically justified with the /r/ link inserted before a suffix. This phonological phenomenon is recommended based on one of the principles of elision with states that: the insertion of /r/ is obligatory before a suffix beginning with a vowel, where the /r/ is historically justified,(cf Cruttenden, 2008:306).

3. Inflexional Suffix Formation in Anaang

In Anaang, certain suffixes are used to form the negative with verb roots of the CVC structure. The selection of these suffixes requires the CV form. This is because with the CV roots, the form of the negative suffix must be CV with a high tone. This is formed by the gemination of the final consonant and harmonization of the vowel of the suffix with the vowel of the root. Vowel harmony is restricted

to verb not only with one syllable but also with one morpheme,(cf Essien 1990:42).

9. ka 'go' + pa = kappa 'go the other way'
10. kop 'hang' + po = koppo 'remove from where it hung'
11. rok 'harvest' + ko =(i)rokko 'he has not harvested'.
12. nam 'do it' + ma =(n)namma 'I am not doing it.'
13. dep 'buy' + pe = (i)deppe 'He has not purchased'

4. Derivational Suffixes Formation in Anaang

Anaang can derive certain verb roots by suffixation. These verbs and verbal extensions can be analysed through the process of reflexive, reversive and negative forming extensions., (Udoudom 1996:150),example:

14. [sáng]+ [á] = [sánghá] (verb) meaning 'walk'.

We note that Anaang agglutinates; a tendency for morphemes to correlate with morphs and single words to form many morphemes glued together as in Turkish and Ibibio (Udofot, 2005:28), example:

15. [ka] 'go' [(íkí)kaíyáké] ' They did not go'

4.1. Reflexive Extension

Reflexive extension is usually phonetically realised as (ne, na, ke, no). Phonemically though, they are best represented as harmonic vowels, since they are formed by germinating the final consonant of the root and harmonising the vowel of the suffix with that of the root, (Udom, 1999: 47),examples:

16 sin 'put' + ne = sinne 'put it on yourself'
17 yan 'stretch' na = yanna 'stretch your self'

At times, the formation of this extension involves consonant weakening in Anaang.

18 nuk 'bend' + o = nuho 'bend yourself'

4.2. Reversive Extension

Second, the reversive extension is a verbal affix formed by the same process as reflexive but here there is absence of the agent, Essien (1990:11; Udom 1999: 48), example:

19 biom 'carry' + mo = biommo 'put it down'

4.3. Negative Formation

We also observe that Anaang employs suffixes in extending the verb root to form negatives. We note a peculiarity in the suffixation formation process by negative extension in which personal pronoun as prefix is attached to the verb root for the purpose of concord.

Examples:

20 mfon['mfón] + no[nó] 'good' = mfonno['mfónnó] 'I am not good'

21 seeme[sèemé]+ke[ké]'lament' =(n)seemeke[(n)sèeméké] 'I am not lamenting'

22 kpeke[kpéké] + ke 'cut' = (m)kpekeke [(m) kpékéké] 'I am not cutting'

23 daka[dáká] + ke 'leave' = (n) dakake[(n) dákáké] 'I am not leaving'

24 mum [mùm] + mo 'hold' = [(n)mùmmó] 'I am not holding'

We note that negation in Anaang is through CV and –ke suffixes. In the case of CV suffix, the actual phonological shape is determined by vowel harmony. We also observe that the vowel in the suffix is not higher than the vowel in the root.

5. English Inflexional Suffix Formation:

Suffixes may be added to a root, eg: *nation +al = national.* They may be added to an already combined root plus suffix, eg: *national +ist = nationalist.*Those parts of words to which suffixes are added are called stems.We observe that some suffixes have no effect on the accentual pattern of stems, and are called accent-neutral (cf Cruttenden, 2008:240), for instance, the word:

25 `bitter' + ness = `bitterness

And,some inflexions are non-syllabic,e.g.

26. thrill + s = thrills

5.1. Nouns and Nominals

To inflect for plural, possessives and third person singular present tense items are modified by adding, /iz/ if the stem ends in a sibilant /s,z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ (cf Cruttenden 2008: 260) e.g.:

27. `address +es = `addresses /ə`dres; ə`dresiz/
28. `judge + s = `judges / `dʒɲdʒ; `dʒɲdʒiz/

And, if the stem ends in any non –sibilant voiced sound, add/z/ eg.

29. `pattern +s = `patterns / `
30. `regard +s = `regards /ri`ga:d; ri`a:dz/

Finally, if the stem ends in any non-sibilant voiceless sonorant, add /s/ as in present tense:

31. laugh +s = laughs /la:f, la:fs/
32. pick + s = picks /pik,piks/
33. re`sort +s = re`sorts /ri`zɔ:t, ri`zɔ:ts/.

We note that in examples (15 and 16) the inflexions are non- syllabic.

5.2. Present Participle

We observe that in the use of present participle, the morpheme /iŋ/ is added in all cases. Consequently, with the suffixation the accentual pattern of the stem is retained.

34. sing + ing = `singing /siŋ, `siŋiŋ/
35. trim +ing = `trimming/ trim, `trimiŋ/

We note that in the case of words which end in/a:,ɔ:,ʒ:ə,iə,eə,ʊə/ which are usually corresponding to an <r> in spelling, an /r/ -link is regularly inserted between the final vowel of the stem and any initial vowel of the suffix.

36. se`cure +ing =se`curing / si`kjʊə, si`kjʊəiŋ/
37. store + ing = storing /steə, steəiŋ/

5.3. Past Tense

We observe that for regular verbs in which the past tense is indicated by the addition of an – ed ending, the following rules of realization apply (a) if the stem ends in /t/ or /d/, /id/ is added, eg:

38. ex`clude +ed =excluded /iks`klu:d, iks`klu:did/

39. `target +ed =targeted / `ta:git,`ta:gitid/

(b) if the stem ends in any voiced sound (apart from /d/), /-d/ is added, eg:

40. kill +ed =killed /kil,kild/
41. `listen + ed = `listened /`lisn, `lisnd/

(c) if the stem ends in any voiceless consonant (apart from /t/), /t/ is added, eg:

42. arch +ed = arched /a:tʃ, a:tʃt/
43. kick +ed = kicked / kik,kikt/

5.4. Comparison of Adjectives

We observe that those adjectives whose comparative and superlative degrees are formed by the suffixing of -er and –est respectively, the realization of the stem remains unchanged except in the case of stem ending in /ŋ/ or /r/. Thus, when the comparative and superlative suffixes are added to the stems ending in /ŋ/, a /g/ is inserted, e.g.:

44. long + er = longer /lɒŋ, lɒŋgə/
45. long +est = longest / lɒŋ, lɒŋgist/.

For /r/ see (19 and 20 above)

But for /ə/ and/ ist/ they are regularly added as in

46. easy +er = easier /izi, i:zi:ə/
47. easy +est = easiest / izi, i:zi:ist/

6. Derivational Suffix in English.

6.1. Nominalization by Derivation

Nouns in English may be derived from verbs, adjectives and nouns. This process involves the affixation of the morpheme to the base/stem. However, we observe that many common derivational suffixes are accent- neutral with ending in –y or –ie (e.g. –ary, -ery, -ory,-cy,-acy, -ty,-ish,-ism,-ment,-hood) as in

48. `difficult(adj) + y = `difficulty(n)
49. `celibate(v) + y = `celibacy(n)
50. dis`agree(v) + ment = `disagreement(n)
51. `child (n) +hood = `childhood

We observe that some common derivational suffixes are accent-attracting. These suffixes which take the accent themselves are in the categories of (-ade,-eer, -esque, -ette and- ation) as in

52. `mountain(n) + eer = mountain`eer (n)
53. `picture (n) + esque = pictur`esque (n)

There are also suffixes that have the effect of fixing the accent on a particular syllable of the stem. These accent-fixing phenomena could be on the final syllable of the stem or on the penultimate syllable of the stem. However, we note that there are complexities in the manner accent are placed on word and syllable.E.g.

54. `chaos(n) + ic = cha`otic (adj) (final syllable of the stem)
55. `curious(adj) + ity = curi`ousity(n) (penultimate syllable of the stem)

7. Comparison and Predications

In view of the uniqueness of word formation strategies in languages, we observe a degree of similarity and differences between Anaang and English suffixation. First, we note a remarkable difference in the way English language indicates plurals. Accordingly, nouns are indicated by adding the morphemes [-s] to the roots. This suffixation is approached through the allomorphic variation of the z morpheme which changes its nature depending on the phonological environment in which it occurs (see details in 27-41 analysis). We observe that plural in Anaang are formed through the process of germination of the vowel/or vowel doubling. (See details in graph 1).We note that Anaang employs suffixes in extending the verb root to form negatives, and this cannot be achieved grammatically without the use of personal pronoun. These differ in English as verbs can be derived through nouns.

In view of the uniqueness of word formation strategies in languages, we observe a degree of similarity and differences between Anaang and English suffixation. First, we note a remarkable difference in the way English language indicates plurals. Accordingly, nouns are indicated by adding the morphemes [-s] to the roots. This suffixation is approached through the allomorphic variation of the z morpheme which changes its nature depending on the phonological environment in which it occurs (see details in 27-41 analysis). We observe that plural in Anaang are formed through process of germination of the vowel/or

vowel doubling. (See details in graph 1).We note that Anaang employs suffixes in extending the verb root to form negatives, and this cannot be achieved grammatically without the use of personal pronoun. These differ in English as verbs can be derived through nouns.

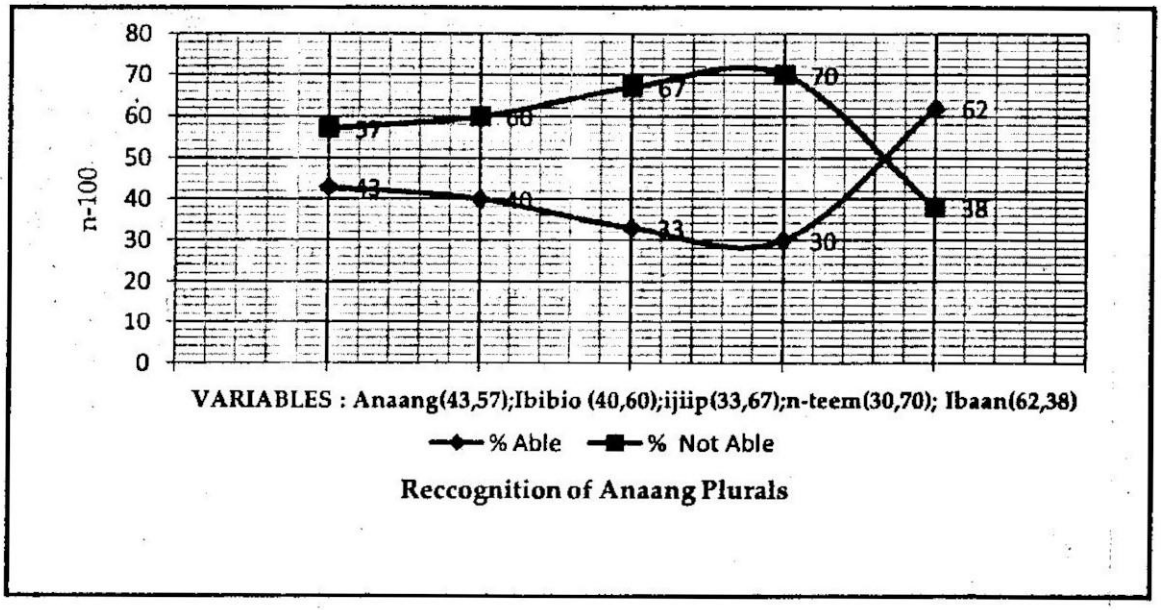
Although a language is built around some unique characteristics, we observe that certain features are similar in word formation strategy between Anaang and English. We note that there is zero plural formation in Anaang as well as English. Examples: 'Anaang,Ibibio, ijiib' are nouns in Anaang with zero plural formation.(see graph 1). Equally in English: 'sheep, salmon' are nouns with zero morphemes. Notably, English and Anaang use suffixation in the formation of certain verbs, nouns and adverbs. Nevertheless, this study reveals that in spite of these similarities, each language achieves its process of suffixation in a particular method.

For instance, in Anaang, there is a peculiarity in the suffixation formation process by negative extension in which a personal pronoun as a prefix is attached to the verb root for concord. (see details 20- 24 analyses) Whereas in English, we observe accent-neutral, a case where some suffixes have no effect on the accentual pattern of stems. We note a striking difference, where there is no prefixation attached to the root for concord in English as is common in Anaang.

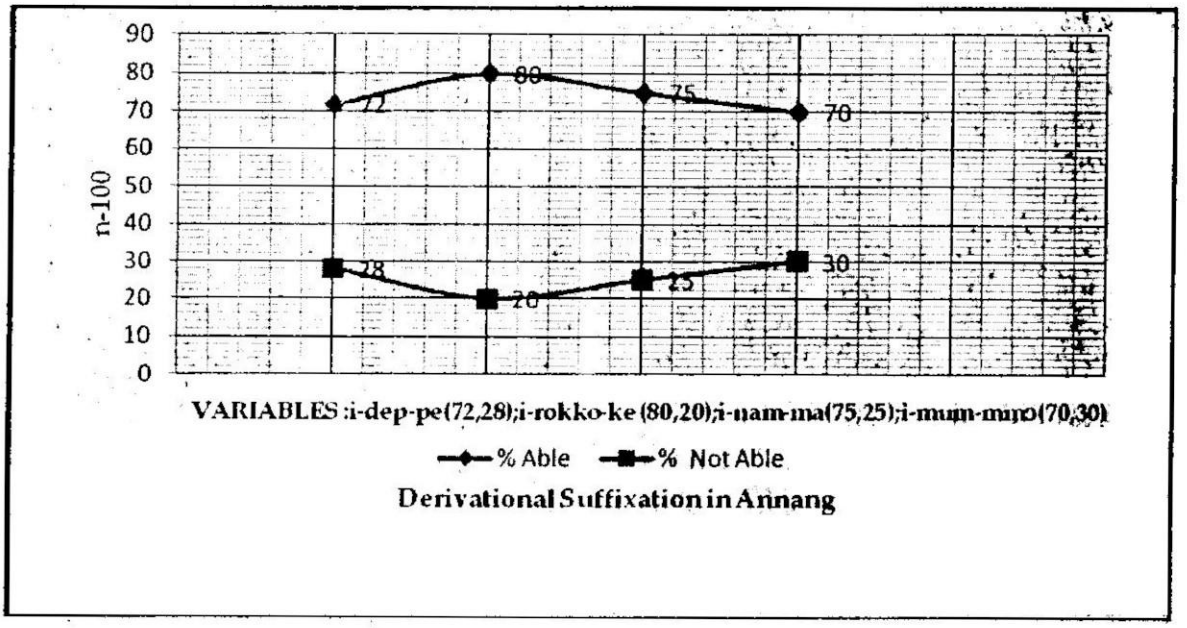
8. Results

The results examine the informants' knowledge of suffixation in Anaang and English. In Graph 2, the test items were to test whether the informants' could derive new words by reflexive extension which is usually phonetically realised in Anaang. In Graph 1, the items also tested the informants' disposition of plural formation in Anaang by the process of doubling the vowel roots. Generally, the average score of all the items stood at (80%) eighty percent which shows that their performances were successful. These excellent results were traceable to the fact that the items are part of the active vocabulary of Anaang users.

Graph 1



Graph 2



In English, similar results were obtained asserting the informant's disposition to the process of plural nouns, possessives, past time and singular verbs formation. A score of 75% (seventy five percent) was traced to the informants' understanding of plural formation except in possessive nouns and pronouns where we recorded below average of 41% (forty one percent): an indication of poor knowledge of possessive nouns and pronouns (see charts i,ii, iii for details).

Chart 1

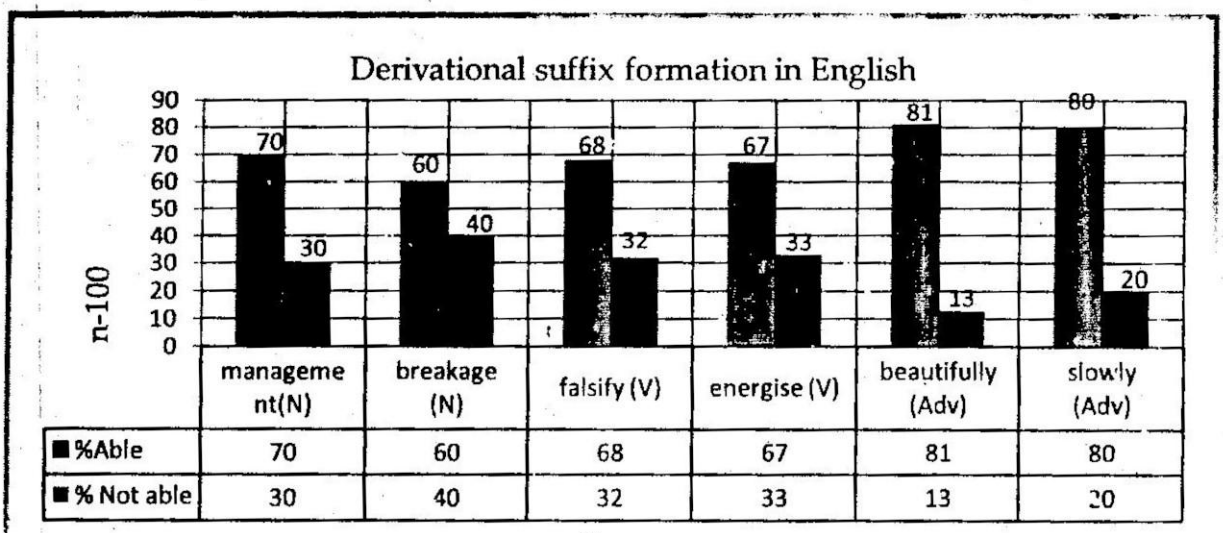
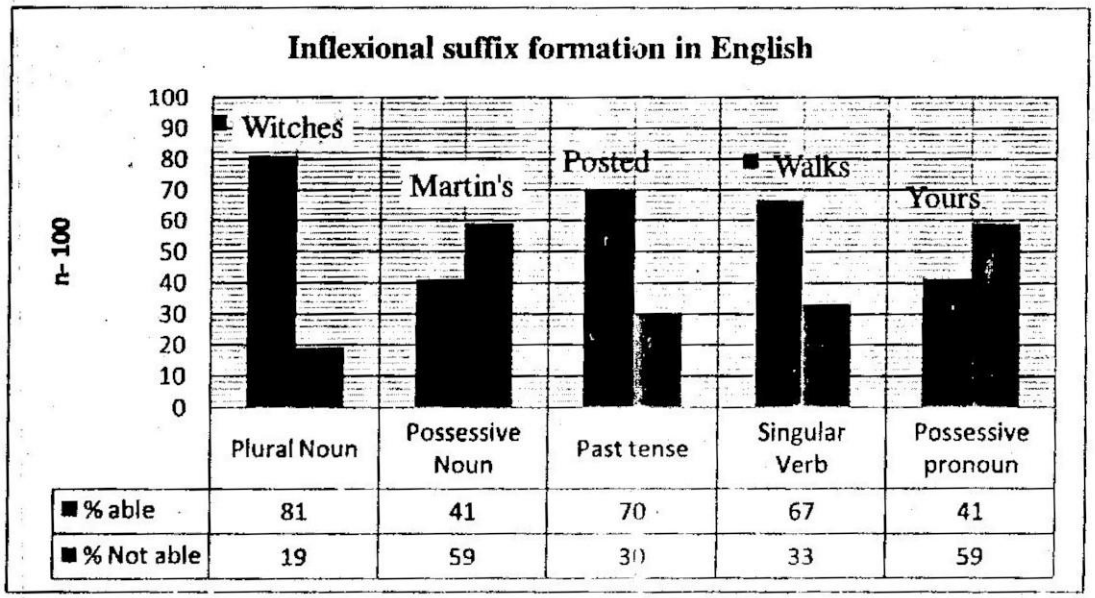


Chart 2



9. Discussion

Our informants showed good knowledge of zero plural formation in Anaang with an average of about 75% which is an indication that the rule of plural formation in English has exerted a lot of positive influence on Anaang speakers of English. We note that those who form plurals of [Anaang, Ibibio] as [Anaangs and Ibibios] are influenced negatively by the formation of plural in English with the [-s] morphemes. In chart I, the items were to test the informants' ability to create new words. We recorded about 80% eighty percent successful performance which cut across all the categories of the informants in the study. We note low percentage facilitations on all the items as reflected in Graphs 1 and may be attributed to the fact that not all the informants could employ suffixation in Anaang, though they could speak the language fluently. Those who recorded these poor performances were respondents from the category of students.

In English, the result as shown in graph II (about 80% eighty percent average)indicates a high degree of understanding of plural formation of [-s] morpheme. We also note that the 56% average which gave wrong answers came from the category of students traceable to the fact that the informants are not conversant with the usage of plural formation, especially the possessive pronoun. Derivational suffixation in English as shown in graph I indicates the informants' good understanding of class changing word formation. We observe a negligible poor performance of class changing performance, especially deriving verbs from nouns, a denominalization process. Generally, the average results indicate a good performance of suffixation in English and a poor one in Anaang which is perhaps because Anaang is not taught in schools.

10. Conclusion

Anaang is largely agglutinating, a tendency for morphemes to be glued together. We observe that each of the glued morphemes can be separated and still have lexical meaning. This process is mainly through suffixation. Similarly, English marks adjective formation by suffixation. We note that the manner through with suffixation is achieved differs partly because Anaang is a tonal language while English is an intonational one. We observe that English being a target and official language in outlook where most of its grammatical items have been documented,

it had a lot of influence on the informants' mother tongue Anaang which is largely spoken. We suggest further work in Anaang to highlight the problems Anaang-English bilinguals are likely to have because of these differing linguistic features.

References

Aronoff, M. & Fudeman, 2005. What is morphology.Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

Cruttenden, A. 2008. Gimson's pronunciation of English.London: Hodder Education

Essien, E. 1990. A grammar of the Ibibio Language.Ibadan: University Press Limited

Essien,E. 1973. Anang in the Polyglotta Africana. In D. Dalby (ed.), *African Language Review*, Vol.9,London :Frank Cass

Gleason, H. A. 1961. An introduction to descriptive linguistics, New York: Holt,Rinehart and Winston

Lobner, S. 2002. Understanding semantics. London: Hodder Education

Matthew, P. 1974. Morphology: Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Udofot, I. 1991. A contrastive analysis of English and Ibibio phonological systems. M.A Thesis , University of Uyo.

Udofot, I. 2005. An introduction to the morphology of English. Ikot Ekpene: Universal Consortia

Udom, M. 1999. Annang and English morphological systems: a comparative study, M.A Thesis , University of Uyo.

Udondata, J. 1993. English and Anaan phonological systems: a camparative study. M A Thesis of the University of Uyo.

Udondata, J. 2006. A grammar of Anaan language. Ikot Ekpene: Joe Graph Publications

Udoudom, J. 1996. Ibibio and English morphological systems: a contrastive analysis. M A Thesis, University of Uyo.