

CHAPTER THREE

ANNANG ORTHOGRAPHY

3.1 SYSTEM OF SPELLING IN ANNANG

Ekah (2008) submits that the orthography of a language is principally the system of spelling “made up of symbols consisting of glyphs and diacritics adopted in writing”. The Annang spelling system maintains a degree of consistency. By consistency it denotes that Annang words are spelt the way the words are pronounced. Ashby (2011) calls this phenomenon “phonemic spelling” and explains that it is a situation whereby there is a spelling-to-sound-rule. Annang words such as Ima (love), Ebot (goat), Inwang (farmland), ekom (greetings), etc. point to the one-to-one correspondence that exists between the Annang sounds and its spelling system.

One frustration that a learner of English soon experiences is the inconsistency existing between English Orthography and pronunciation, (Udoka, Umoh and Etuk, 2018). That is to say, a large number of English words are not pronounced according to how they are spelt. This phenomenon poses a serious problem to some Nigerian bilinguals who may find it difficult to make the transition from the visual orientation towards words which they use to an aural perception. Such speakers tend to articulate a word from the point of view of the existing letters of the alphabet. They fail to realise that a phonetic spelling eliminates those letters that are not actual sounds and adds symbols which occur but are not represented in spelling.

Crystal (1974) and Enang, Urudzian, Udoka, (2013), recognises this fact and portrays the numerous misconceptions held about the nature of languages. The source refutes all the rules imposed on English by Traditional Grammar and warns that while carrying out a description of a language, “we must not impose findings from the description of some other language on another even if we have a strong preference for this other language” (p.13).

The Orthography of Annang language has been subjected to a number of scrutiny, amendments and modifications and subsequently “approved” by different Annang Intellectual groups represented by: Annang Study Panel (ASP), Annang Cultural Organization (ACO), Annang Literary Association of Nigeria (ALAN). Such attempts were vital having realised that Annang exhibits different characteristics which Efik and Ibibio (as clusters of the same language) could not account for. Annang being a tonal language makes it easier for the user to articulate the specific sounds accurately once the person is able to maintain the right melody.

Recently, **ANAAN PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY** has been published by Itoro Michael and Patricia Ijioma (2019) thus providing a permanent orthography for the study of Annang language. This publication by the eminent scholars has invariably settled to previous controversies surrounding the standardization of Annang orthography.

3.2 LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET IN ANNANG

The landmark achievement by Professor Michael and Dr. Ijioma (2019) has revealed that Annang Alphabets are based on the English Alphabets but they differ in both number and form from those of English. The English Alphabets consist of 26 (twenty six) letters, divided into the upper case and the lower case, namely; Aa, Bb, Cc, Dd, Ee, Ff, Gg, Hh, Ii, Jj, Kk, Ll, Mm, Nn, Oo, Pp, Qq, Rr, Ss, Tt, Uu, Vv, Ww, Xx, Yy, Zz, (Udoka, Enang, Utin, 2018).

Annang Alphabets also display the same features except for a few symbols which do not occur in English, as single sound combinations.

a, Bb, CH ch, Dd, Ee, Ff, GH gh, GW gw, Hh, Ii, Jj, Kk, KP kp, KW kw, Ll, Mm, Nn, NY ny, Nn,

NW nw, Oo, Oo, Pp, Rr, Ss, Tt, Uu, Uu, Ww, Yy.

From the above symbols, it is glaring that Annang Orthography has drastically increased following the inclusion of double letters such as ch, gh, gw, kp, kw, nw, and ny. Apparently, letters C, G, H, Q, V, X, Z, have no alphabet sounds of their own in Annang.

Annang language uses both written and spoken expressions which rely on the letters of the Alphabet or the spelling system and the sound symbols. Below is a list of Annang words showing the various positions they may occupy in an utterance.

Spelling and writing symbols				Pronunciation	Gloss
1	A	a	abe	abe	Pit
2	B	b	bed	bed	Wait
3	CH	ch	chak/sak	tsak/sak	Laugh
4	D	d	di	di	Come
5	E	e	eno	eno	Gift
6	F	f	fik	fik	Press
7	GH	gh	ngwaha/nwagha	nwagha	Torn
8	GW	gw	gwaak/waak	waak	Tear
9	H	h	ntaha	ntaha	Worn-out
10	I	l	iso	iso	Face
11	J	j	jiem	dziem	Search
12	K	k	kod	kod	Read
13	KP	kp	kpeke	kpeke	Cut
14	KW	kw	kwaat	kwaat	Scrape
15	L	l	leb/deb	leb/deb	Buy
16	M	m	mia	mia	Slap
17	N	n	ban	ban	Sharpen
18	NY	ny	nyanyaha	nyanyaha	Bamboo tree
19	- N	- n	ndo	ndo	Marriage
20	- NW	nw	nwed	nwed	Book
21	O	o	toro	toro	Praise
22	O	o	no	no	Give
23	I P	I p	tappa	tappa	Scoop
24	R	r	atara	atara	Melts
25	S	s	sin	sin	Put
26	T	t	ata	ata	Insect
27	U	u	ufok	ufok	House
28	U	u	nuk	nuk	Push
29	I W	I w	wed	wed	Write
30	I Y	I y	yed	yed	Wash

3.3 CONSONANT SOUNDS IN ANNANG

The following consonant sounds occur in Annang and they combine with vowel sounds to produce meaningful Annang words at different positions in a sentence. Note the examples below:

P, b, t, d, k, kp, kw, gw, m, n, ŋ, ŋk, n, β, s, f, R, tʃ, dʒ, l, r, r, w, j, k

Spelling and written consonant			Pronunciation	Gloss
1	/p/	peke	peke	Cut
2	/b/	aba	aba	Hole
3	/t/	tia	tia	Kick
4	/d/	edet	edet	Teeth
5	/k/	ekem	ekem	Enough
6	/kp/	kpeme	kpeme	Watch
7	/kw/	ukwak	ukwak	Metal
8	/gw/	gwere	gwere	Roll
9	/m/	nam	nam	Do
10	/n/	inua	inua	Mouth
11	/ŋ/	ekong	ekong	War
12	/mʃ/	mʃkʃporo	mʃkʃporo	Skull

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13	/ŋw/	nwan	nwan	Wife
14	/ŋk/	nkene	nkene	Basket
15	/β/	utebe	utebe	Odour
16	/s/	usiere	usiere	Dawn
17	/f/	fib	fib	Lick
18	/r/ /R/	daRa	daRa	Rejoice
19	/tʃ//s/	choi	choi/soi	Peel
20	/dʒ/	yiem	yiem	Search
21	/l//d/	ukuduk/ukuluk	ukuluk	Cassava
22	/r/	urua	urua	Market
23	/w/	iwat	iwat	Grey hair
24	/j/	ajei	adzei	Palm frond
25	/k/	tuk	tuk	Touch

It is important to note that some of these consonant sounds are not used by the indigenes of Ikot Ekpene and Obot Akara Local Government Areas. They are predominantly used by Annang indigenes of Abak, Essien Udim, Ika, Etim Ekpo, Ukanafun and Oruk Anam, due to dialectical differences.

3.4 VOWEL SOUNDS IN ANNANG

Vowel sounds in Annang are also derived from the English vowel system but they differ significantly in number and form. They also occur initially medially and finally as their distributional patterns permit. Note the following examples:

1.	aa	uyaayak	uyaayak	Local spice
2.	ee	deeme	deeme	Buy
3.	ii	tiim	tiim	Pound
4.	oo	dooro	dooro	Bring down
5.	oo	kood	kood	Call
6.	uu	ukuud	ukuud	Misfortune
7.	uu	tuud	tuud	Gather

These examples show that Annang vowel sounds occur mostly as single sound combinations, thus making them very distinct.

However, single vowel sounds also occur in Annang as the following examples portray:

8	/a/	kama	Kama	Keep
9	/i/	idib	Idib	Stomach
10	/e/	esa	Esa	Veranda
11	/u/	ukara	Ukara	Leadership
12	/ɔ/	iko	Iko	Word
13	/o/	mbomo	Mbomo	Breakable
14	/i:/	usid	Usi:d	Cover

3.5 DIPHTHONGS IN ANNANG

The occurrence of diphthongs in Annang reveals a close similarity to those of English. Note the examples below:

1	/ai/	daiya	daiya	Sleep
2	/ia/	tiam	tiam	Overflow
3	/oi/	ndoioyo	ndoio	Premature
4	/ue/	esuene	esuene	Disgrace
5	/iɔ/	jiok	dziok	Slice
6	/uɔ/	iduo	iduo	Fall
7	/ua/	suan	suan	Spread
8	/ei/	mei	mei	Bleat
9	/oi/	koi	koi	Fetch

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