# Consonant Combinations in Annang and English Languages: A Look at Final Clusters

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## ABSTRACT

*This study explores consonant combinations in Annang and English languages with particular attention on final clusters. It also discusses existing similarities and differences inherent in the two languages. This study is a survey of Students from three secondary schools and two tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. For the sake of convenience, purposive sampling technique is used to select the sample. Questionnaire forms the major instrument for data collection. Twenty respondents each from the selected schools are randomly sampled and administered the research instrument. Frequency counts and simple percentage are used to analyze the data. Findings reveal among others that there are no final clusters in Annang: In English not more than four sequences of clusters are permitted: mpts: contempts. The affricates do not form clusters word finally in English. The plosives are more complex in their combinations word finally than initially. The segments /s/ and /f/ do not occur word finally in any known Annang word. At any level of phonological exposure, there is still some difficulty in recognising permitted or impossible structures. It is therefore concluded that all categories of persons involved in language matters should be careful in their handling of rules governing the use of particular languages especially sound combinations in natural languages. Hence, policy makers should make a more conscious effort by sponsoring and encouraging researches in language study, such as Annang and Ibibio, applied and sociolinguistics.*

***Keywords:*** *Final clusters, consonant combinations, Annang language, English language*

## INTRODUCTION

According to New Encyclopedia Britannica (2004) quoted in Ogwu, Agabnu and Ofordile (2010), language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. It is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a

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social group co-operates (Ogwu, Agabnu and Ofordile, 2010). Based on this, for proper understanding of any language, there is need to study the dynamics of such language; since it is the means of communication within such social group. Ogwu, Agabnu and Ofordile (2010) maintain that language is the principal and richest means of communication used by human beings. In their view, language is a sacred gift, developed in the course of human evolution. Language and grammaticality are inseparable and the entire process has been summed up by Riemsdijk and Williams (1986) cited in Udondata (2001) that we may thus regard a sentence as consisting of three things: its sound, its meaning, and it syntactic structure.

A grammar, then, is the rules for the formation of syntactic structures and associated sounds and meanings, and a language is the set of all such triples defined by the grammar: L = { ...(sound, syntactic structure, meaning)...} (Riemsdijk and Williams (1986) cited in Udonata, 2001). This idea sells the fact that language undergoes the process of development for it to be formidable and have appreciated meaning to it users. Emenanjo cited in Akpan and Oluwabamide (2006) classifies Nigerian language into developed, developing and underdeveloped. According to them, underdeveloped are those languages that have no standardized orthographies, no standard varieties, no written literature and no metalanguages while developing languages are those with recent traditions of writing, incipient standard varieties, some amount of written literature among other types of texts and nascent metalanguage. The developed are those with well established orthographies, standard written varieties, long traditions of writing, large and varied corpora of written literature among other types of texts and sophisticated and dynamic metalanguages.

The Annang or Anaang is a cultural and semi-Bantu speaking ethnic group that lives in the Coastal Southeast Nigeria (also known as Southeastern Nigeria or former Southeastern State of Nigeria). The Annang people are the second largest ethnic group in Akwa Ibom State of Southeast Nigeria (Akwa Ibom State Local Government Areas), occupying eight out of the thirty one Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria viz: Ikot Ekpene, Obot Akara, Essien Udim, Abak, Etim Ekpo, Oruk Anam, Ika and Ukanafun. Persons of Annang ethnic group call themselves "Owo" or (agwo Annang). The Annangs are known for the efficacy of their traditional spiritual powers (charms), prowess in trading, and their renowned art. This extends to mural paintings, raffia, masks, cement sculptures, markets, ceremonies and exceptional food *(https://kwekudee-tripdownmemorylane.blogspot.com.ng....)*.

Annang language is one of the languages spoken by the people of Akwa Ibom State. It is second to Ibibio language. Essien (1982) asserts that Annang is the next largest dialect in the Ibibio - Efik language cluster. Despite the fact that it has been in

existence for ages, it has not undergone a thorough medium of development. This informs its silent existence in the sphere of academics. There has been a lot of research on language study and a good deal has been said on grammar, morphology, syntax, semantics, phonetics and general phonology but the input on phonetics has been rather insignificant with the striking exception of Eka (1996), the question of the general properties of phonotactics was hardly ever raised or discussed by Nigerian language analysts. Also, with the effort of a work of this nature to complement the efforts of very few other scholars, the language - Annang, has advanced more in its ladder of metamorphosis. This work therefore looks at consonant combinations in Annang and English languages with particular focus on final clusters. It also intends to uncover the similarities and differences inherent in the two languages.

**Annang Final Clusters**

The study made use of the following consonants, some of which also feature in the initial clusters: k, m, t, p, f, n, b, r, ɸ, s /. These consonant sounds were selected with regard to their combinatorial possibilities word finally. Also the limited number of consonant sounds in Annang phonology did not permit us to work with a different set of sounds other than what features in test on initial clusters.

**English Final Clusters**

A consonant cluster is a group or sequence of consonants that appear together in a syllable without a vowel between them. In English consonants are found to be clustered in word initial, medial and word final positions. The consonant clusters/ sequence belonging to a single syllable are known as intra syllabic clusters whereas the consonant clusters belonging to two different syllables in a single word are known as inter-syllabic clusters (https://sites.google.com/site/.....). Thus, in linguistics, a consonant cluster also known as consonant blend is a group of consonants which have no intervening vowels in between them. The maximum possibility of consonant cluster is three consonants in the beginning and four in final position (https://sites.google.com/site/.....). The sequence of consonants in the final position of a word is called word final position consonant cluster. The following types of word final consonant clusters can be found:

a) CC Cluster: As for example, Slept, taps, caps, depth, jobs, robbed, books, looks, bags, watched, draft, craft, graphs, etc.
b) CCC cluster: As for example, Pushed, gasp, ask, test, restCamp, ramp, warmth, terms, rent, dent, bench, pens, gulp, bulb, film, gold, sold, told, solve, etc.

c) CCCC Cluster: As for example, Milked, tempt, arranged, whilst, jumps, months, acts, amongst, texts, sixths, prompts, etc (https://sites.google.com/site/.....).

With regard to final clusters in English, the following consonant sounds were used in the analysis: / m, ɲ, d, ð, n, g, p, k, t, s /. Sommerstein (1977) looks at phonotactics as "the principles governing the arrangement of phonemes (speech sound) relevant to one another". Sommerstein (1977) further observes that:

> *The phonotactics traces almost the whole sound system of a language except for allophonic variation. It gives a certain amount of information about the arrangement of components in segments … on the one hand in clusters, on the other hand in syllables.*

The common forms of final clusters possible with these sounds are discussed.

## METHOD

Data relating to final clusters in Annang and English were derived from test on well-formed sequences in both Annang and English. Twenty consonant sounds drawn from Annang and English were selected for the design of test items on final clusters. Respondents were asked to identify well-formed items among others in each slot that were ill formed. Test items were based on sounds lexical items common to the respondents. This was to make the responses less cumbersome. This study is a survey. Students from three secondary schools namely: Community Secondary School, Nkek, Ukanafun; Okon Secondary Commercial School, Okon, Essien Udim; and Lutheran High School, Ikot Obong Edong, Ikot Ekpene as well as students from the University of Uyo and Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic form the sample for this work. For the sake of convenience, purposive sampling technique is used to select the secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection. Twenty respondents each from the selected schools were randomly sampled and administered the research instrument. Frequency counts and simple percentage were used to analyze the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Annang Final Clusters*

These sounds and the corresponding words featured in the test on Annang final clusters:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| / k / Ebék , | / m / utóm | / t / tót, | |
| / p / Yippé, | / f / Àfá, | / n / Mbéen, | |
| / b / Kob, | /r/ Ibóró, | / ɲ / Inyan, | / s / sat |

The data shown above contain words of common core in Annang vocabulary. One hardly expected any poor response to the items. Yet performance was more impressive in English than in Annang. These sounds and lexical items featured in the test on final clusters in English:

| | |
|---|---|
| / m / Rumple | / ɲ / Banked |
| / ð / Rhythms | / n / Change |
| / g / Rigged | / p / Caps |
| / t / Clots | / s / wrestles |
| / d / Paddles | / k / Tests |

Like in Annang, the lexical items features in the test on final clusters in English were simple enough to be recognised by all categories of respondent. More so, with the exception of / ð / and / g /, all other consonants employed here exist in Annang. However, some word combinations proved rather difficult for some respondents to identify.

From the summary of general statistics on performance involving well formed clusters in Annang (Table 1), we observe that informants had some difficulties in recognising well-formed final clusters in Annang. The percentage of general performance appeared higher in English than in Annang.

The worst item in the discussion on Annang final clusters and in the entire analysis was the / s / cluster in sát (select). Less than 50% performance was recorded. A number of factors may have been responsible for the poor performance. The correct option, sát appears like an ill formed word, yet it is not and is a very common word used mostly at the domestic level. Respondents who missed this option did so perhaps by regarding it as an English word, the past tense of the verb sit. They may also have been confused by the fact that in Annang final cluster /t/ is unreleased. The other options: Kpekest, medisp, tosin, are ill formed and they contain final clusters which do not exist in Annang. Respondents who chose kpekest for instance were misled by the correct form kp é k é (cut off). Yet the st inflection in the above form is not a characteristic of Annang verb forms. Out of the number who erred in this test item, more than half came from the Secondary Schools. This goes to show the limited knowledge of our informants about Annang phonology and phonotactics.

Respondents could recognise the nasal clusters with a minimum of difficulty. The above average performance in / ɲ / Inyan, / m / Utom, and /n/ mbéen attests to this fact. Those who missed the correct options in each of the above instances preferred ill formed structures that contain impossible final clusters, a condition which does not apply to Annang. We observed for instance that in place of Inyán, respondents chose Abans with the / s / inflection. They may have mistaken this for Àbáng which had

already featured in the test on Annang vowel combinations. The error in mbéen can be accounted for in the sense that the presence of the double ee could have confused the respondents who regarded it as an ill formed word. In its place they chose Usans , still with the /s/ morpheme attached to it. It is possible to observe that only respondents who are aware of the process of doubting of vowels in Annang who made the right choice. Other structures in this item had their inflected forms or final clusters, thus making them ill formed through and through.

The performance in respect of the plosive was not very encouraging. We observed that in / p / the correct option Yippe was not a popular word among respondents. Those who missed the correct option did so in place of Tapba a corrupt form of Táppá (Scoop food). The presence of the pb clusters makes the above form a deviant one. Apart from the fact that there are no final clusters in Annang, the pb combination is rather obscure, even in English. Those who chose Mkpakopt , an equally ill formed word with the final clusters mistook the form for mkpakóp (imprisonment). The error could be traced to their poor perception of most Annang words.

The / t / segment also attracted a poor response from our informants. The correct items Tot (inform) was ignored in favour of other deviant forms that contain inflections or final clusters, for example Wets and mbatd. The students confusion could be explained in terms of the existence of Annang words wét (write) and mbát (dirt). Another reason is that Tot appears like a foreign word and in the Annang context it is used mostly by elderly people. The youth prefer Tán wód (inform). This is why respondents did not recognise Tót as an actual word in Annang.

The only well formed item in the / b / segment was kób. All the other options contained final clusters which are not allowed in Annang even at initial position. Some respondents chose Ukobt and Asobs. Their choices may have been influenced by the presence of actual Annang words Ukób (lock) and Àsób ("a knife is sharp", or "a person has made a fast journey") But the presence in these structure of the bt and s morphemes would have informed them of their ill formedness. No known Annang words are ever so inflected.

With respect to the velar consonant / k / clusters, we realized that apart from Èbék (Chin), other options contain faulty word combinations: Kekt , Idioks. The kt ks clusters are not in existence in Annang. Informant who missed the correct option for these ill formed words did so out of ignorance. This is a clear indication that our informants are not adequately trained in word formation in Annang, otherwise their competence would manifest effortlessly.

Responses to the fricative sound / f / in Àfá (new) were encouraging although by the nature of the word involved in the test, one would have expected a 100% performance. The word has no equivalent in the Annang terminology and is of common occurrence. Besides, the other words in this test item are so ill formed that any careful observer would not fail to note the differences. The clusters fs (Poffs), ft (coft) do not occur in Annang; besides the / f / sound does not end word in Annang.

Respondents were able (although not in all cases) to recognise / r / Ibóró which was juxtaposed with poorly formed words: Dakard , sert , Tard. We are aware that / r / does not end a word in Annang, neither does it form clusters initially. It means that respondents are not sure of the basic phonological structures in Annang like Tád (loosen), Dáká (leave) and séet (be revived). The knowledge of the fact that even in English / r / does not end a word, would have guided them to make a better choice.

### *English Final Clusters*

Table 2 reveals that informants had difficulty identifying some of the allowed combinations of English final clusters. In this section we discuss the actual final clusters in English as well as results of our investigation. The nasal / m, n, ɲ / vary considerably in their manner of clustering word finally. Specifically / m / is revealed to be more flexible than other nasals even word finally, the sequences presented here would suffice:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| mpts | - | contempts |
| mpst | - | glimsed |
| mplz | - | samples |
| mpl | - | ample |
| mpt | - | attempt |
| mbl | - | tremble |
| ms | - | items |
| mt | - | claimed |

As can be easily observed, at the final position, /m/ is capable of exhibiting as many as a four member cluster and as little as two. It is also seen that it has a high combinatorial possibility as it combines freely with plosives and fricatives. However, there is a restriction where the fricative /f/occurs. Also it combines with affricates, liquids, semi-vowels and other nasal word finally.

Its counterpart /n/ can display a four as well as a two member sequence. The analysis that follow are noticeable about /n/

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| nslz | - | pencils |
| ndlz | - | spindles |
| nts | - | ants |
| nθs | - | months |
| ndz | - | change |
| ndθ | - | thousandth |
| nt | - | pint |
| nz | - | signs |
| nd | - | bound |
| nθ | - | tenth. |

From the above sequences, it is obvious that / n / combines more freely with the dental sounds / t, d, θ / than with bilabials, example / b, p, /. It cannot form a final cluster with the fricatives / f /, the reason being that the production of / m / is particularly liable to be affected by the following consonant. For example, when followed by / f /, / n / cannot make a post alveolar contact. This often results in a consonant.

The velar nasal / ŋ / exhibits a noticeable number of final clusters ranging between four and two:

Its combinatorial possibilities are more regular than those of other classes of consonants, with the exception of / s /. There is a restriction with bilabials, alveolar and dental consonants.

Concerning the dental plosives / t, d /, we observed that they vary slightly in their distributional patterns. The voiceless sound / t / has a limited occurrence word finally, whereas its voiced counterpart / d / occurs more frequently. At final position, / t / clusters with the fricative / s / and the lateral / t / as in: ts - cats, tl - bottle

Word finally / t / does not form a cluster with / r / or any other consonants outside those shown above. An inflected word for example, bottles , may result in a three member cluster such as tlz / b ɒ tlz /.

Possible final clusters of the / d / sounds are presented below as:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| dst | - | midst |
| dlz | - | saddles |
| dn | - | burden |

Word finally / d / does not combine with other consonants in English.

The velar pair / k /, / g / show different sequences of combination word finally, / k / cannot form any clusters with the gliding consonant / r /, affricates, nasals and fricatives expect / s /:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | - | sixths |
| ksts | - | texts |
| kld | - | buckled |
| klz | - | buckles |
| kts | - | acts |
| ks | - | backs |

Combinations involving its voiced counterpart / g / include the following:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| gz | - | dogs |
| gd | - | bagged |
| gl | - | burgle |

A few issues emerge from the analysis shown above; finally / k / cannot combine with voiced consonants except / l /, / g / cannot form clusters with voiceless consonants.

Both / k / and / g / do not cluster with / r / but / g / is possible in an open syllable such as / gr / angry: / g r l /. There seems to be an opposition between / k / and / g / in their choice of final consonant clusters. The distributional patterns of the fricatives / s / and / ð / differ in certain respects at final word position. The / s / clusters are somewhat predictable since they consist of a stop / p, t,/ or / d / preceded by / s /. In this connection, it is noted that / s / phoneme has a relatively high frequentcy of word final occurrence especially where inflected forms occur.

In the examples that follow, / s / is the first compulsory element of the CCC clusters, followed by a stop or a nasal, then a liquid or a stop:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| stlz | - | pistol |
| slz | - | muscles |
| snt | - | recent |
| sts | - | nests |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| sks | - | asks |
| sps | - | grasps |
| snz | - | license |
| st | - | rest |
| sl | - | whistle |
| sp | - | wasp. |

As shown above, the fricatives-stop clusters are particularly sensitive to the nature of adjacent sound. / s / forms clusters more easily with simple stops, and tends to discriminate in its choice of liquids, so much that there are no sr clusters even word initially. The restriction to the formation as shown above is because of the presence of / s /. However, as a flexible consonant it forms clusters with both voiceless and voiced consonants. Final clusters involving the voiced fricative / ð / include the ones shown below:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ðmz | - | rhythms |
| ðt | - | bethrothal |
| ðz | - | clothes |
| ðd | - | writhed. |

It combines with nasals, voiced sounds and sometimes due to pronunciation defect it can be elided when followed by / z / as in clothes:- /k l əʊ(ð)z/ At final positions / p / is a very rigid consonant. It is limited in occurrence and depends a lot on inflectional suffixes and some forms of concord:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| pts | - | opts |
| plz | - | apples |
| ps | - | cups |
| pt | - | erupt |
| pl | - | ripple |

It occurs with voiced and voiceless consonants but there are restrictions where /r, b, d / occur. Generally it is observed that final clusters of plosives: / t, d, k, p, b, g / represent a suffixed morpheme which may occur in these forms: takes, kicked, rests, and maps

Table 2 reveals that informants had difficulty identifying some of the allowed combinations word finally in English. The sounds involved are: / ð, g, and t /. The performance in each case was ranged between 50% and 60%. Respondents were requested to identify only well formed items juxtaposed with ill formed ones. Findings reveal that some of our informants could not recognise the allowed sequences in the /

ð / cluster. The ill formed sequences in this slot are: / ðt, ðp / and the well formed is / ðmz / in the Rythms. Respondents rather chose clotht and Betrothp in place of the well formed items. In spite of the obnoxious sequence involved in the ill formed words, most of our Secondary School and Polytechnic informants preferred them to the allowed combinations. This exemplifies that as Annang - English bilinguals they are incapable of articulating some English words. The difficulty involved in the production of these deviant structures could have guided our respondents about their implausibility. For instance the choice of cloth as well formed is largely due to ignorance of allowed combinations in English. The voiced fricative / ð / cannot go with / t, p, or b / anywhere in English.

Performance in respect to the plosives / g / and / t / was almost at par: 58% and 55% respectively. The well formed option in the / g / clusters was Rigged. But respondents preferred Dogsz and Rigkle simply because they regarded the first as the plural form of the English word Dog , and the second as Riggle. They failed to realise that there are no sz clusters in English since / s / is often realised as / z /. So the two could never go together. The gk cluster in Rigkle does not conform to permitted combinations in English even word finally. The two sounds are opposing in themselves. Those who chose Rigkle may have been influenced by their pronunciation, or the word Riggle was beyond their comprehension.

The items featuring the / t / final clusters Clots appeared with these ill formed options: Bottln , Kitdies , with the tln and td clusters. These clusters are not well ordered. First, we are oblivious of the fact that / l / in the tln sequence cannot form clusters with / n /, and / t / cannot form with / d /. Moreso, / t / is a rather rigid consonant and finally it does not form clusters outside those involving / s / and / l /. The problem of choice can be explained in terms of articulation. Respondents know no better way of rendering Bottln and Kitdies , and so regarded them as Bottle and Kiddies. Also the word Clots could have appeared strange to our informants who made the wrong choice.

Like / t /, the / d / cluster are rather infrequent in English. The dlz clusters in Paddles occurred with Boardt and Burdem. From every indication, these forms are not well combined and dt and dm initial clusters do not occur in English. It is rather surprising that a common word like Board could not be recognized when it was ill formed as shown above. Informants who chose the correct form of the word Board are rather inconsistent in spelling. The choice of Burdem was perhaps confused with Burden. The nasal clusters attracted the highest level of performance in the analysis of English final clusters. Respondents could recognise the allowed sequences in test items that featured in the study:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| mpl | - | Rumple |
| | - | Banked |
| Ndz | - | chance |

The above structures occur frequently in English vocabulary so it was easy to recognise them as well formed against the ill formed ones. That notwithstanding, a few errors manifested in the analysis, showing that some of our informants had problem of recognition. Those who chose Attemptsz and Claimdt in the / m / clusters could have been misled by the English words Attempts and Claimed. In English Final clusters do not exceed four member sequences. The ill formed structures in Attemptsz: mptsz tend to defy this rule of final clustering in English. It is clear from this that most of our informants do not know a great deal about English phonotactics. The error detected in the / פ / and / n / final clusters is purely a phonological one: poor pronunciation. The word singkle and soundt were perhaps regarded as single and sound. There is a tendency among some Annang speakers of English to render / g / as / k / and to add / t / to the end of some English words.

Recognition of well formed final clusters regarding the plosives / p, k / was enhanced by the nature of the lexical items used in the test: caps and texts. The respondents are familiar with the words and so there was little room for error. Nevertheless, some respondents deviated from the correct options in favour of applre / snipzs and blackx / buckgle respectively. The following clusters are noticeable about these forms: plr / pzs, kx kgl. These are not possible in English because of the following reasons: / l / and / r / do not occur together: / x / is realized as / k / so it should not appear after / k /; between / k / and / g / there is a strong opposition. Respondents were misinformed due to the occurrence of similar words in English. They were unable to overcome pronunciation difficulty noticeable in the word texts. It could have been perceived as tests , a word respondents could recognise and spell.

Test item involving the / s / clusters also proved difficult to respondents. The correct option wrestles with the slz sequences, was ignored in the place of spt in waspt and stk in testk. The resulting spt and stk sequences could have been plausible if / t / were introduced after the first two sequences. Also / s / cannot go with / z / as counterparts in the same class of sound. It is possible to add that the abuting consonant / w / in the word wrestle posed a problem of recognition to some of our informants who missed the correct option. Their attention was drawn to waspb and testk which are far easier to articulate. Obviously the observed errors in the analysis of final clusters in English are due to some intrinsic factors. They include respondents' poor exposure to allowed combinations in the English and pronunciation defects.

**Similarities and Differences between Final Cluster in Annang and English**

Our study reveals that even when Annang consonant sounds appear to possess values similar to those of English; their distributional patterns are often different. We observe that / k, m, t, p, f, n, b, r, which also occur in English cannot form clusters in Annang with other consonants of any known class. The type of flexibility which exists in English is lacking in Annang. This may be accounted for in the sense that most Annang words begin with vowels. Moreso there is always an intervening vowel sound in a CVC or VCV structure: ɣàk (leave it); isi (undone).

The segments /s/ and /f/ do occur word finally in Annang. Eventhough these sounds occur in Annang and English, they do not experience the kind of restriction that applies to Annang. In English / s / exhibits clusters of two, three, and four segments at final positions. It also discriminates in its choice of consonants, so much that sb, sr, sd, sz final clusters are nonexistent in English. Whereas English permits four segment clusters as shown in mpts (prompt), not even a two member cluster exists in Annang word finally.

The fricatives / è / and / ð / are peculiar to English. One is capable of forming clusters initially, the other finally. Final clusters involving / tʃ, dz and z / are unknown in English and would amount to impossible combinations. Among the nasals, / m / clusters only with voiceless consonants, except mbl in tremble, / n / occurs with both voiceless and voiced consonants, / פ /occurs only with velar consonants / k, g /; ankle / angle. There are no / פs, פr, פd / clusters word finally.

With the exception of the semi-vowels / j, w /, liquid / r /, and fricative / h / all other consonants in English can occur word finally but not all can form actual clusters at this Position. The type of inflections known in English: plural morpheme and concord are not practicable in Annang, where inflected forms are usually indicated by doubling or by addition of the prefix mme. Annang consonants are highly restricted at final positions. The English plosives occur word finally and vary in their various forms of combination. The velar plosives / k , g / are more liberally distributed than either dental plosives / t , d /, or bilabials p , b . very few final clusters of the / b / sequences are known to occur in English: bt mobbed / m ɔ bt/ , bl, able / Ye bl /, ps: cups/kËps/.

**Table 1:** Recognition of well formed items in Annang

| Sounds | No. able | % able | No. not able | % not able |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| / k / | 60 | 60 | 40 | 40 |
| / m / | 68 | 68 | 32 | 32 |
| / t / | 45 | 45 | 55 | 55 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| / p / | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| / f / | 70 | 70 | 30 | 30 |
| / n / | 60 | 60 | 40 | 40 |
| / b / | 58 | 58 | 42 | 42 |
| / r / | 63 | 63 | 37 | 37 |
| / ɸ / | 70 | 70 | 30 | 30 |
| / s/ | 40 | 40 | 60 | 60 |

***Source:*** Survey 2017

**Table 2:** Recognition of well formed items in English

| Sound | No. able | % able | No. not able | % not able |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| / m / | 76 | 78 | 24 | 24 |
| / ɸ / | 80 | 80 | 20 | 20 |
| / d / | 63 | 63 | 37 | 37 |
| / ð / | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| / n / | 68 | 68 | 32 | 32 |
| / g / | 58 | 58 | 42 | 42 |
| / p / | 70 | 70 | 30 | 30 |
| / k / | 68 | 68 | 32 | 32 |
| / t / | 55 | 55 | 45 | 45 |
| / s/ | 65 | 65 | 35 | 35 |

***Source:*** Survey 2017

**Table 3:** Recognition Test: Annang final Clusters

| **WFS** | **ALIs** | **Meaning** | **RIFS** |
|---|---|---|---|
| / k -/ | Ebek | Chin | Kl, ks |
| / m -/ | Utom | work | ms, mt |
| / t -/ | Tot | inform | ts, td |
| / p -/ | Yippe | pinch | ps, pt |
| / f -/ | Afa | New | fz, ft |
| / n -/ | Mbeen | Edge | nt, nd |
| / b -/ | Kob | make secure | br, bt |
| / r -/ | Iboro | Response | rt, rd |
| /ɸ -/ | Inyan | River | ɸS, ɸK |
| / s -/ | Sat | Select | st, sp |

***Well formed sequences (WFS), Actual lexical items (ALIs), Result/ill Formed sequences (RIFS)***

***Source:*** Survey 2017

**Table 4:** Recognition Test: English Final Clusters

| WFS | ALIs | RIFS |
|---|---|---|
| / mpl -/ | Rumple | mpst , mpbl |
| /פkt -/ | Banked | פkz, פkgl |
| /dlz -/ | Paddles | dm , dt |
| / ðmz -/ | Rhythms | ðt , ðp, |
| / ndz -/ | Change | ndt, ndtl |
| / gd -/ | Rigged | gzt , gkl |
| / ps -/ | Caps | plr , pz |
| / ksts -/ | Texts | kz , |
| / ts -/ | Clots | tln , td |
| / slz -/ | Wrestles | spt , stk |

***Source:*** Survey 2017

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the whole, it is revealed that Annang does not have final clusters. Besides, the consonants: /f, s, r/ cannot be represented word finally even as single sounds. Any attempt to do so would result only in potential words: Naf, Bos, Mar. The reason is that unlike in English where sounds perform phonetic as well as phonological functions, very few sounds in Annang perform phonological functions. Example, we notice that / n / can occur as / n / in Nsek and / פ / in Nkón. The other consonant sounds operate in terms of the closed syllables as individual sounds:

Kék - cut down
Bóp - tie up
Múm - hold
Tát - open
Nkán - ribs
Tób - throw
Nnán - blind

The bilabial plosive / b / disagree with / p / in the sense that it can begin and end the same word: bób, but /p/ cannot. Some clusters could be possible at medial positions although only at morpheme junctures:

Bén di - bring it
Yák nim - keep it
Sik sán - shift

We could extract the clusters nd, ks, from the above illustration. These are only possible

word medially, not finally. The worst item in the analysis occurred in Annang under / s / clusters with the percentage of performance as 40%. Its English version attracted a more impressive performance of 60%. As evident in the study, secondary school respondents performed poorly especially where problematic consonants occur. Generally, performance tended to be better in nasal clusters than in other classes of consonants used in the study. It is therefore concluded that all categories of persons involved in language matters should be careful in their handling of rules governing the use of particular languages especially sound combinations in natural languages. Hence, policy makers should make a more conscious effort by sponsoring and encouraging researches in language study, such as Annang and Ibibio, applied and sociolinguistics.

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