# TENSE AND ASPECT IN ÀKÙNGBÁ-ÀKÓKÓ DIALECT OF OǸDÓ STATE

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## Abstract

The functors tense and aspect are parts of grammatical categories that appear in-between the subject noun phrase and the verb phrase in sentences inYorùbá language. It was realised that research findings on these functors in Àkùngbá-Àkókó dialect (AAD) have been invariably neglected in the literature. Therefore, the study investigated these grammatical categories of tense and aspect in Àkùngbá-Àkókó dialect in Oǹdó state. Audio recorded interviews were conducted involving eight native speakers whose age ranged from 40 to 80 years. X-bar theory was used to explain the collected data. The findings revealed that 'á' is the future tense marker in AAD where 'á' and 'yóò' occurred in Standard Yorùbá (SY); items 'á' and 'í' are habitual aspect markers in AAD while marker 'máa ń' are used in SY. The markers 'í' is the progressive aspect marker in the dialect where marker 'ń' is used in SY. In addition, 'ká' remains the perfect aspect marker in AAD where 'ti' is used in SY. The paper founded that two types of tense and three types of aspect occurred in AAD. More so, the similarities and differences exist between the markers of the functors. The study therefore recommended that future researchers should work on how item 'á' occurs as the future tense marker and progressive aspect marker in AAD where they have distinct markers in SY.

**Keywords:** Tense, aspect, markers, Àkùngbá-Àkókó dialect, standard Yorùbá.

## Introduction

Yorùbá language is one of the major languages in Nigeria. It is widely spoken within and outside Nigeria. Its speakers can be found mainly in the following states: Ọ̀yọ́, Ògùn, Oǹdó, Èkìtì, Lagos, Kwara and part of Kogi States. Àkókóland is in Oǹdó state where they are speaking Àkókó dialects. Àkókóland is referred to as the most linguistically diverse area of Yorùbáland and there are several other languages spoken in the area because their settlers came from different communities. This means that many dialects exist in the region because there is no single Àkókó dialect (Fádọrọ̀, 2014:198; Olúmúyìwá, & Oshodi, 2012:1). Among the Àkókó dialects are Ọ̀bà, Ọ̀kà, Àkùngbá, Ìkàrẹ̀, Ìbàrapa,

Ayégúnlẹ́, Súpàrè, Ìkàrẹ́, and Ìfira. The dialects spoken are being named by the name of the towns or communities. Àkùngbá-Àkókó is located in Àkókó Southwest Local Government Area of Oǹdó State.

In everyday conversation, language is used as a medium of exchanging ideas, feelings, thoughts and emotion which may be in form of written or oral. When there is a relationship between two persons, there is always a reference to the time when an action or event takes place. This is why Ògúnmọ̀dímú (2013:5-6) states that 'Tense is a grammaticalised expression of location in time'. It shows when an action takes place. There are inflections such as –s, -ed, -ing, attached to the main verb for indicating the time of an event in English language. Such inflectional morphemes do not occur in Yorùbá language because Yorùbá has zero morphological realisation of time. This means that Yorùbá does not have morpheme to indicate time of an action, the use of 'yóò' 'will/shall' exists to indicate future tense in Yorùbá language. In addition, there is always a reference to an event when it is ongoing, happening at all times or the event that has already completed which is known as aspect. Therefore, tense and aspect are inter-related but it is not easy to keep them apart (Fábùnmi, 2001:4).

## X-Bar Theory

X-Bar theory is propounded by Noam Chomsky (1981). It is one of the modules of Government and Binding theory. It is a universal theory and its focus is that all syntactically complex categories of every human language are formed according to universal structural principles (Bussman, 1998:527). This means that the syntactic categories or lexical words such as Noun, Verb, Pronoun, etc., are structured to form phrasal category and phrases are merged together to form a sentence. It shows that there is a relationship between the head of a phrase and its complement(s).
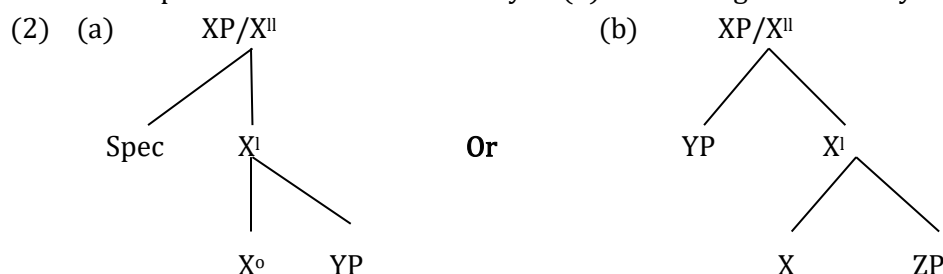
The head of a phrase can be parts of speech such as Noun, Verb, Pronoun, etc., and it is obligatory while its complement is optional. This is why Haegeman (1998:104-105) states that the part of the grammar regulating the structure of phrase is known as X-Bar theory. In addition, all phrases are headed by one head in order to meet up the presentation of endocenticity requirement. This is a situation whereby every phrase has a head element as the only obligatory constituent. N projects NP, V projects VP while P projects PP (prepositional Phrase). X-bar theory describes different phrasal structures in relation to head parameter.

In X-bar theory, there is also a projection principle which Ouhalla (1999:111) explains that projection principle means representation at which syntactic levels are projected from the lexicon, in that they observe the subcategorisation properties of lexical item. It means that the topmost node is the highest projection of the lower node. All the heads are terminal nodes and zero projection at the word level. This is used as $X^o$ (X without bar). The combination of X and its complement formed the intermediate projection ($X^I$)

while Specifier (Spec) and X$^l$ are combined to form the maximal projection (XP/X$^{ll}$) as shown below..

(1)    XP/X$^{ll}$  ⟶  Spec, X$^l$

   X$^l$  ⟶  X, YP

   The presentation of the summary in (1) can be diagrammatically seen.

(2)  (a)    XP/X$^{ll}$                    (b)    XP/X$^{ll}$

   Spec    X$^l$         **Or**         YP    X$^l$

         X$^o$    YP                  X    ZP

   (Haegeman, 1998:105)              (Ouhalla, 1999:115: Carnie, 2007:188)

   In (2a & b), XP/X$^{ll}$ is the maximal projection. Spec is a functional term which is regarded as daughter of XP/X$^{ll}$, and sister to X$^l$. This means that Spec and X$^l$ are the daughters of the same mother 'XP/X$^{ll}$'. X$^{ll}$ is a mother's node. Spec occurs as the subject, therefore, X$^l$ is the intermediate projection (or single-bar projection) because it occurs between the topmost phrasal category and head (word level, X$^o$ /X). The levels of projection can be shown below.

(3)    X$^{ll}$  ⟶  Maximal projection (phrasal level)

   X$^l$  ⟶  Intermediate projection

   X$^o$ /X  ⟶  Head/ word Level

   In (3), X$^{ll}$ represents phrasal level such as Noun Phrase (NP), Verb Phrase (VP), Prepositional Phrase (PP), Adverbial Phrase (AP), etc. X$^{ll}$ represents the intermediate projection which occurs in between the phrasal level and word level while X is a head. Therefore, this theory is useful for the analysis of tense and aspect in Àkùngbá-Àkókó dialect (AAD).

### Tense and Aspect in Standard Yorùbá (SY)

Ajóńgólò (2005:118) explains that tense is a grammatical category that relates the time of an event to the moment of utterance. This means that tense deals with the relationship which exists between the times when an event takes place in a particular speech. There are two tenses in Standard Yorùbá which are future and non-future tenses (Bámgbóṣé, 2010:167). Future tense (FUT) refers to an action that is about to happen after the time of speech. The auxiliary verbs are used for it. They are 'yóò/máa/á' 'shall/ will' as its indicators. It means that an action has not happened at the moment of speech and it has not taken place before it (Ajíbóyè, 2010/2011:39). This can be exemplified here.

(4)    (i)    Olú á gbé e          'Olú will carry it'

   (ii)    Òjó yóò sùn          'Òjó will sleep'

Oshòdì (2010:5-6) explains that non-future tense indicates an action that has taken place in times past or that is happening presently in SY. It contains the meaning of the present as well as the past time. This can be shown below.

(5)   (i)      Délé ga         'Délé is tall'
      (ii)     Ọmọ náà kúrú      'The child is short'

Aspect is a grammatical category that deals with whether a particular event is ongoing or happening at all times or the event has already completed. Three types of aspect are identified in SY, these are unmarked aspect, imperfective aspect and perfective aspect (The unmarked aspect (UMA) can be past or neutral. It is past if its verb is an action verb such as 'lọ' 'go', 'rìn' 'walk', 'rà' 'buy', 'lò' 'use' etc., as shown in (6a).  Also, UMA may be neutral if its verb is not an action verb such as 'mọ̀' 'know', 'tóbi' 'big', 'ní' has/have, etc (Bàmgbóṣe, 1986:27; 2010:167; Ọláògún, 2014:125). This can be seen below:.

(6)   (a)   (i)      Adé pè wọ́n         'Ade called them'
            (ii)     Adé rí mi          'Ade saw me'
      (b)   (i)      Mo mọ gbogbo wọn   'I knew all of them'
            (ii)     A gbàgbé ọ̀rọ̀ náà   'We forgot the word'   (Bàmgbóṣe, 2010:167)

Imperfective aspect focuses on the internal structure of an action or as it relates to time (Bàmgbóṣe 2010:167). This means that an event is seen within the time of an action. This may be progressive or habitual. Progressive aspect addresses an ongoing event. It means that an action is still in progress. Its marker in SY is 'ń' (which bears a high tone) as being demonstrated below.

(7)   (i)      Mò ń lọ 'I am going'
      (ii)     À ń jẹun         'We are eating'

Habitual aspect expresses that an action is usually happening at all times which means that the event is usually taking place every time or always. Its markers in SY are 'máa ń', 'a máa' 'always' as seen below.

(8)   (i)      Ó máa ń purọ́      'He/she always tell lie'
      (ii)     Wálé a máa pọnmi    'Wale always fetch water' (Ajíbóyè, 2010/2011)

Perfective aspect (PAS) is concerned with the relationship in a state of event. It means that the event has taken place before making reference to it. There are two types of PAS in SY. These are present and past perfect aspects. Present perfect aspect refers to an event in which its beginning has been ended and the work is still going on. Its markers are 'á ti máa, ti máa' and 'ti ń' (Fábùnmi, 2012:104). This can be exemplified.

(9)   (i)      À á ti máa lọ         "We would have been going"
      (ii)     Wọ́n ti máa bọ̀       'They might have been coming'
      (iii)    Olù ti ń kọrin       'Olú has been singing'  (Bámgbóṣe,    2010:169-170).

Past perfect aspect (PAS) indicates that an event described has completed or an action is already concluded. Item 'ti' is its marker in SY (Olúmúyìwá, 2012:5). This can be seen here.

(10)  (i)      Adé ti jẹun          'Ade had eaten.
      (ii)     Ayọ̀ ti sún          ´Ayọ̀ has slept'

### Tense and Aspect in Àkùngbá-Àkókó Dialect (AAD)

Future tense (FUT) expresses an action that is about to happen after the time of speech. It indicates that an action has not happened at the time of speaking. Its marker in Àkùngbá-Àkókó Dialect is 'á' as shown.

**AAD**                    **SY**

(11)  (i)   Iye/yeye mi  á  wá  Ìyá   mi  á  wá
            Mother  my  FUT  come  Mother  my  FUT  come  'My mother will come'

      (ii)  Ọma   á  gbọ́           Ọmọ   á   gbọ́
            Child  FUT  hear          Child  FUT  hear        'Child shall hear'

      (iii)  A   á  gbè-é/ gìré        A   ó   lọ/ A á lọ
             We  FUT  go          We FUT  go                'We shall go'

In (11i-iii), noun phrase (NP) occurred at the subject position in each sentence. The future tense marker 'á' occurred after the NP-subject and preceded the verb phrase while the marker      'ó'/ yóò' is used in SY in (11iii). The formation of each lexical word is derived from the lexicon in the dialect. There is no NP-object position in the presented data. The occurrence of FUT in AAD can be shown diagrammatically here.

(12)      Iye/ Yeye mi á wá     (SY: Ìyá mi á wá)      'My mother will come'



            Iye/Yeye        mi      á        wá
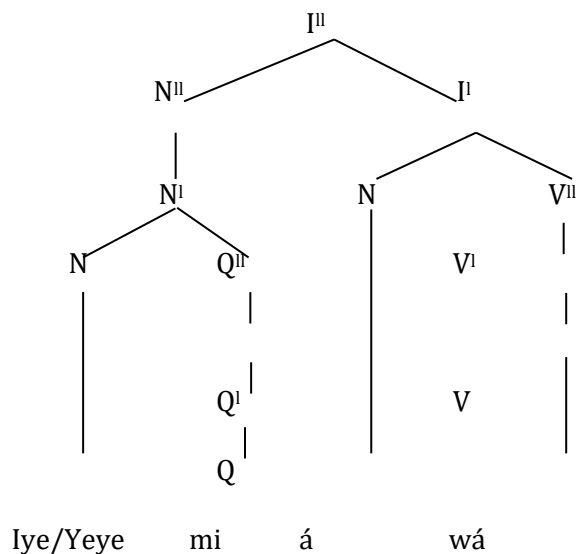
In (12), it was observed that the Inflectional Phrase (I$^{ll}$) is the maximal projection which occurs as a sentence. I$^{ll}$ dominates N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$.Also, I$^{ll}$ is a mother's node for N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$ which occur as another different phrases. N$^{l}$ is the intermediate projection between N$^{ll}$ and N (the word level). In addition, N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$ are the daughters of I$^{ll}$. N$^{ll}$ is the sister to I$^{l.}$. 'Iye/Yeye mi' is in the Specifier (Spec), 'Iye/Yeye' is at the word level and it takes Pronoun 'mi' as its complement.

'Iye/Yeye' is the head word which is the name of the phrase. I$^I$ dominates I ´á' and V$^{II}$ which is another phrase. V$^{II}$ dominates V$^I$, while 'wá' 'come' is the head word which gives the name to the verb phrase (V$^{II}$).

### Non-Future Tense in AAD

Non-future tense shows that an action has occurred before the time of reporting to someone about it. It means that non-future tense refers to the event that has happened in AAD. This tense does not have any marker in the dialect as shown here.

|  | AAD | | SY | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (13) | (i) | Ó nẹ́ àtú/ ó nátùú | Ó ní fìlà | |
|  |  | He/she has cap | He/she has cap | 'He/she has a cap' |
|  | (ii) | Ọma náà gùn | Ọmọ náà ga | |
|  |  | Child the tall | Child the tall | 'The child is tall' |
|  | (iii) | Ḿ/Ń mọ̀ | Ḿ/Ń mọ̀ | |
|  |  | I know | I know | 'I know' |
|  | (iv) | Alẹ́/ ẹlẹ́ lẹ́ | Ilẹ̀ sú | 'It is dawn' |
|  |  | Evening night | Land night | |

It is noticed in (13) that NP and VP are structured together in the formation of each sentence. NP-subject preceded VP. Each word is selected from the lexicon for making the grammatical sentence. There is no maker between the NP-subject and VP in the sentence formation in AAD. In addition, V 'ní' is changed to 'nẹ́' as a result of vowel shifting hypothesis in AAD. The study exemplified diagrammatically the occurrence of non-future tense below.

(14) Ó nẹ́ àtú   (SY: Ó ní fìlà)   'He/she has a cap'
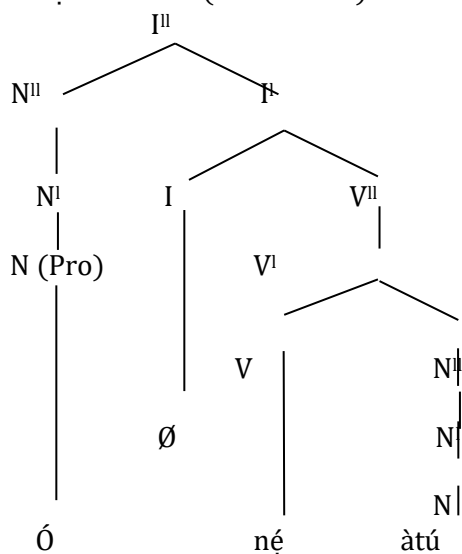
In (14), I$^{ll}$ is the maximal projection and dominates N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$. It is the mother's node for both of them. N$^{ll}$ is a non-branching node and occupies the Spec position. N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$ 'nẹ́ fílà' are daughters of I$^{ll}$ and that N$^{l}$ is the sister to I$^{l}$. N$^{l}$ occurs as the intermediate projection because it is between N$^{ll}$ and N (Pro) while 'Ó' 'Pronoun' 'He/she' occurs at the word level. It is the head word that gives the name hence we have the noun phrase (N$^{ll}$). On the other hand, I$^{l}$ dominates V$^{ll}$ because I is unmarked. V$^{l}$ occurs as the intermediate projection and is a branching node which dominates V ''nẹ́' 'has' and N$^{l}$ is the intermediate projection while N 'àtú' occurs at the word level.

### Aspect in Àkùngbá-Àkókó Dialect (AAD)

Aspect has to do with the way by which an event relates with time. This means that aspect depicts the time at which an event occurs in the examined dialect. There are three types of aspect in AAD, they are unmarked aspect, imperfective aspect and perfective aspect.
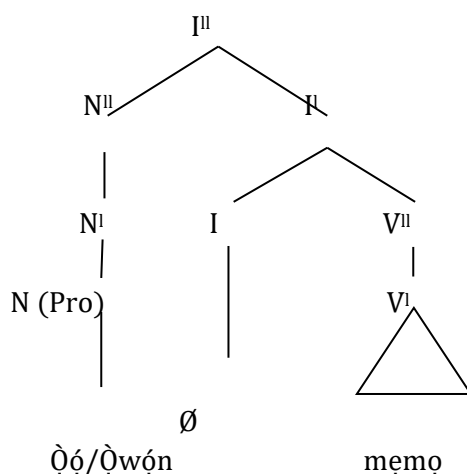
(a) **Unmarked Aspect (UMA) in AAD**

This type of aspect usually indicates the past event if its verb is an action verb or main verb such as 'mu' 'drink', 'rí' 'see', 'pọ́n' 'ripe', 'rìn' 'walk', 'jẹun' 'eat', etc. The paper presented the occurrence of this in (15a). This aspect can be neutral if its verb is stative i.e. not comparable such as 'mọ̀' 'know', 'tóbi', 'big', 'wọ́n' 'costly', etc as shown.

|  | AAD | SY |
|---|---|---|

(15a) (i)     Ọ̀ọ́/Ọ̀wọ́n memọ     Wọ́n mu ẹmu
          They     drink-palm-wine     They drink-palm-wine 'They drank palm-wine'

(ii)     Ipakẹ̀kẹ̀ náà pọ́n         Èso náà pọ́n
      Fruit    the ripe            Fruit the ripe       'The fruit is ripe'

(b) (i)     Ḿ/Ń mọ̀            Mo mọ̀

      Isg.    know            Isg. Know       'I know/ I knew'

(ii)     Ita    ghọ́n         Ata    wọ́n
      Pepper costly           Pepper costly       'Pepper is costly'

In (15a & b), it shows that each of the sentence structures contains NP and VP. NP preceded VP without marker to indicate unmarked aspect in the dialect. In (15a,i), Ọ̀ọ́/Ọ̀wọ́n 'They' is a pronoun which occurred in the NP-subject position.

VP 'mẹmọ' is the combination of V 'mọ' and NP-object position 'ẹmọ'. This can be shown diagrammatically below.

(16)          Ọ̀ọ́/Ọ̀wọ́n mẹmọ          (SY: Wọ́n mu ẹmu)          'They drank palm-wine'



In (16), I$^{ll}$ is the maximal projection, I$^{ll}$ dominates N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$, it is also the mother's node for N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$,; N$^{ll}$ and I$^{l}$ are the daughters for I$^{l}$, and that N$^{ll}$ is a sister to I$^{l}$,. N$^{ll}$ occupies the Spec position, N$^{l}$ is the intermediate projection while N (Pro) 'Ọ̀ọ́/Ọ̀wọ́n' 'They' occurs at the word level. It is head word which gives the name to the phrase. In addition, 'I' is a null category, V$^{ll}$ is the maximal projection and dominates V$^{l}$ which is the combination of the head word which is the verb (V) 'mọ' 'drink' and NP-object 'ẹmọ' 'palm-wine' which occurs as its complement.

**Imperfective Aspect in AAD**
Imperfective aspect indicates that an event is either ongoing or that is usually occurred at all times which means that it has become a normal routine. It may be progressive or habitual.
(a)     **Progressive Aspect in AAD**
The progressive aspect (PROG) describes that an action is ongoing or it has not completed. It occurs with the use of high tone syllable as shown below.
          **AAD**                              **SY**

(17)   (i)     Olú   í   rín/rẹ́n   Olú   ń   rín   èrín
                Olú PROG  laugh                Olú PROG  laugh laughing 'Olu is laughing'

        (ii)    Í   í   wa   imọ́tò   Ó   ń   wa   ọkọ̀

3ps. PROG drive car          3ps. PROG drive car          'He/she    is
driving a car'

(iii)    Mi ín kọ ùwé              Mò ń kọ ìwé
         1ps. PROG write book      1ps. PROG write book      'I  am  writing
         a book'

(iv)    Olúùúsá        á    wa Onígbàálẹ̀    ń   bọ̀    'Owner of the broom
        Broom-owner PROG arrive   Broom-owner PROG arrive     is coming'

In (17), each of the sentence structures showed the combination of NP, PROG marker and VP. NP preceded PROG markers before the VP. The observation here is that 'í' is the PROG marker in (17i & ii) while the progressive assimilation occurs in (17iii & iv) between the last vowel of NP-subject and the 'í' which is the base marker. Each of the words is selected from the lexicon. This can be exemplified in the diagram here.

(18)       Olú í rín/ rẹ́n (SY: Olú ń rín èrín)      'Olu is laughing'
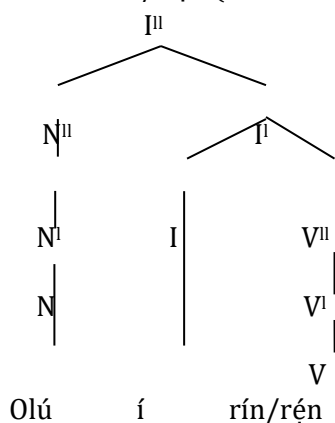


It is revealed in (18) that I$^{II}$ is the maximal projection and dominates N$^{II}$ and I$^{I}$. Also, I$^{II}$ is a mother's node for N$^{II}$ and I$^{I}$; N$^{II}$ and I$^{I}$ are daughters of I$^{II}$. N$^{II}$ occurs at the Spec (NP-subject) without the complement because it is a non-branching node. N$^{II}$ is a sister to I$^{I.}$. N$^{II}$ is a projection which dominates N$^{I}$. In addition, N$^{I}$ is the intermediate projection between N$^{II}$ and N. More so, N 'Olú' is the head word which gives the name of the phrase. I$^{I}$ dominates I 'í' and V$^{II}$ which is another phrase called verb phrase. V$^{II}$ dominates V$^{I}$. While 'rín'/ 'rẹ́n' 'laugh' is the head word which named the phrase (V$^{II}$).

## Habitual Aspect in AAD

The habitual aspect (HAB) indicates an event which happens every time. Its markers are 'í' and ´á'. The occurrence of HAB aspect is shown here.

|        |       | **AAD** |     |          | **SY** |     |          |
|--------|-------|---------|-----|----------|--------|-----|----------|
| (19)   | (i)   | Adé     | í   | kọrín    | Adé    | máa ń | kọrin  |
|        |       | Adé     | HAB | sing-song | Ade   | HAB | sing-song   ´Ade usually sings' |

(ii)     Ọ̀wọ́n á  jẹun                    Wọ́n  á    jẹun
         3pp.  HAB eat               3pp.  HAB eat      'They usually eat'

(iii)    Ṣadé  á ka  kàwé                 Ṣadé  máa ń kàwé       'Sade      usually
read a book'

         Ṣadé  HAB read-book Ṣadé  HAB  read-book

It is shown in (19i-iii) that the structure of each sentence contains NP, HAB markers 'í' /
'á' and VP. The mentioned constituents are merged to form the grammatical sentences.
NP preceded HAB markers 'í' and 'á' while the VP occurs after the markers. The
observation is that item 'í' HAB occurs in (19i), item 'á' occurs in (19ii) while item 'á ká'
occurs in (19iii). The occurrence of HAB marker can be shown diagrammatically below.

(20)          Adé í kọrin       (SY: Adé mán ń kọrin)        'Ade usually sings'
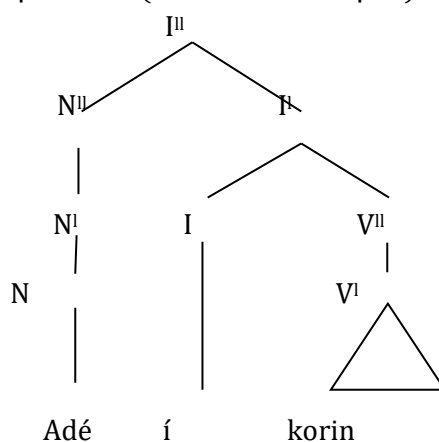


In (20), it is observed that $I^{ll}$ the maximal projection, $I^{ll}$ dominates $N^{ll}$ and $I^{l}$, it is also the
mother's node for $N^{ll}$ and $I^{l}$,; $N^{ll}$ and $I^{l}$ are the daughters of $I^{l}$, and that $N^{ll}$ is a sister to $I^{l}$.
$N^{ll}$ is at the Spec position; $N^{l}$ is the intermediate projection while N 'Adé' occurs at the
word level without the complement. It is a head word that named the phrase. In addition,
$I^{l}$ dominates I and $V^{ll}$; $V^{ll}$ is the maximal projection and dominates $V^{l}$ which is the
combination of the head word verb 'kọ' 'sing' and NP-object 'orin' 'song' (complement).

### Perfective Aspect in AAD
Perfective aspect indicates that an event has already happened before the time of talking
about it. This means that the event has taken place before someone is thinking or talking
about it. This kind of aspect has two aspects which could be present or past as explained
here.

(a)     **Present Perfect Aspect in AAD**
        Present perfect aspect (PRE) refers to an event in which its beginning has been
        ended and the work is still going on. Its markers are 'kí í', 'has been'. 'ká a ka'
        'would have been' and 'yí í' 'has been'. It can be seen below.

AAD                              SY

(21) (i) Dàda    kí í  fọ   aṣọ  rẹ̀    Dàda ti máa ń fọ    aṣọ  rẹ̀
Dàda     PRE wash cloth Pro.  Dàda     PRE  wash cloth Pro.
'Dada has been washing his cloth'

(ii) Ìdòwú   ká a ka  kọ́lí                Ìdòwú   á ti máa kọ́lé
Ìdòwú   PRE   build-house        Ìdòwú   PRE   build-house
'They would have been building a house'

(iii) Fúnmikẹ́  yí í   dirọn/ barọn Fúnnkẹ́ ti n  dirun
Fúnmikẹ́  PRE  plait-hair        Fúnnkẹ PRE plait-hair
'Fúnkẹ́ has been plaiting the hair'

Data in (21) showed that the combination of NP, PRE marker and VP are merged in the derivation of each grammatical sentence in AAD. This means that the PRE markers 'kí í', 'ká a ka' and 'yí í' with VP are combined to form each sentence. Each of the words is selected from the lexicon. The occurrence of PRE markers in AAD are shown in the diagram below.

(22)    Dàda kí í fọ aṣọ rẹ̀    (SY: Dàda ti máa ń fọ aṣọ rẹ̀)    'Dada has been washing his cloth'
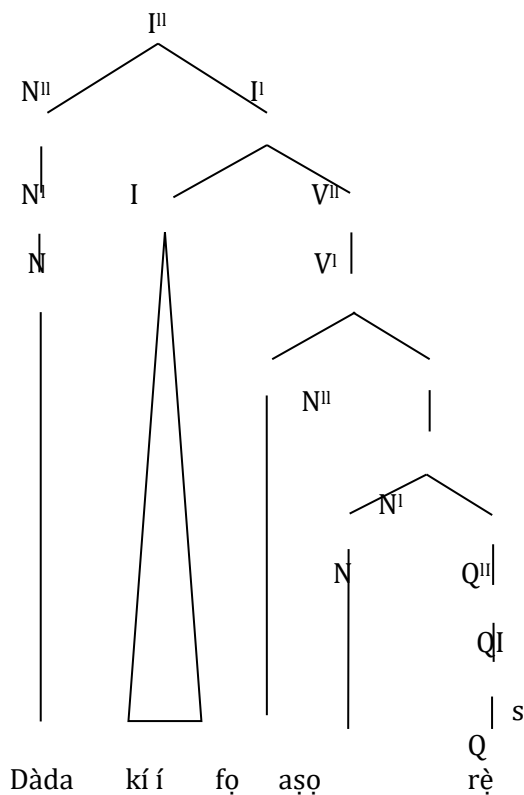
In (22), I$^{ll}$ is the maximal projection that dominates N$^{ll}$ and I$^l$. It is the mother's node for both of them. N$^{ll}$ is a non-branching node, N$^{ll}$ and I$^l$ are daughters of I$^{ll}$ and that N$^{ll}$ occupies the Spec. It is a sister to I$^l$. N$^l$ occurs as the intermediate projection and N 'Dàda' occurs at the word level. It is the head word that gives the name attached to the noun phrase (N$^{ll}$). On the other hand, I$^l$ dominates I 'kí í' and V$^{ll}$. V$^l$ occurs as the intermediate projection and is a branching node which dominates V 'fọ' 'wash' and another noun phrase at the object position. N 'aṣọ' is the head while Q$^{ll}$ is its complement which is ´rè̩'.

(b)  **Past Perfect Aspect in AAD**

The past perfect aspect (PAS) refers to the action or event that had happened completely. It is the event that had already ended in AAD. The PAS marker is only 'ká' 'had' which occur before the verb in a sentence as shown in below.

|  | AAD |  |  | SY |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

(23) (i)  Uná ká kú    Iná ti kú
Light PAS die Light PAS die  ´Light had switched off´

(ii)  Eghó ká ya    Owó ti ya
Money PAS tear    Money PAS tear    'Money had torn'

(iii)  M/N ká mò̩ Mo ti mò̩
1ps. PAS know    1ps. PAS know    'I had known'

In (23), the combination of NP, PAS marker 'ká' and VP resulted to grammatical sentences in the dialect. NP precedes PAS marker and merged with VP. This means that the PAS marker 'ká' is combined with NP-subject and V to form each sentence. Each of the words is selected from the lexicon. The occurrence of PAS marker in AAD is shown in the tree diagram below.

(24)  Uná ká kú    (SY; Iná ti kú)    'Light had switched off'
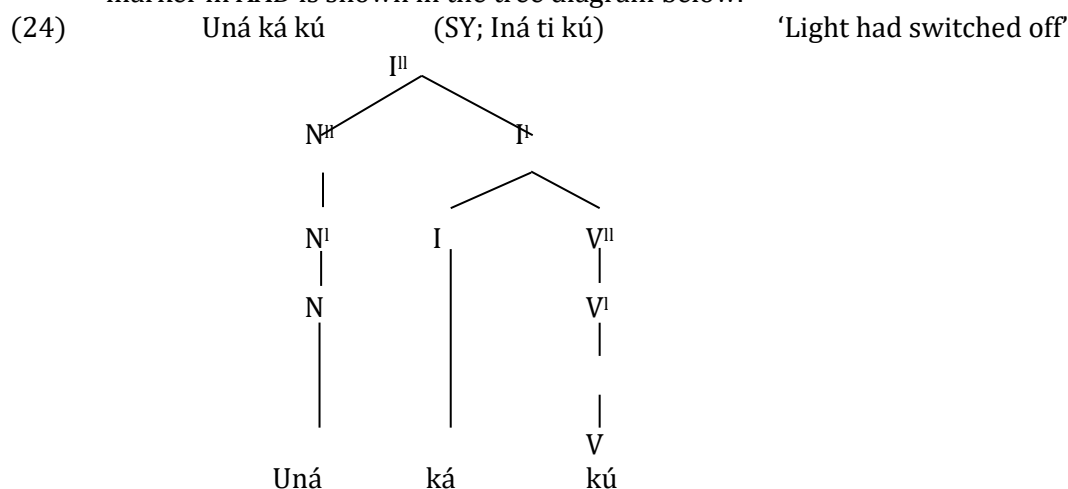


In (24), I$^{ll}$ is the maximal projection and the mother's node of N$^{ll}$ and I$^l$ in which they are the daughters of I$^{ll}$, while N$^{ll}$ is a sister of I$^l$. N$^{ll}$ occurs in the Spec. N$^{ll}$ is a projection on N$^l$ which is the intermediate level. N 'Uná' light' is at the word level

and it is the head without complement because it is a non-branching node. Also, N 'Uná' is the head word which described the name of the noun phrase (N$^{II}$). I$^{I}$ dominates on I 'ká' 'light' and V$^{II}$ which is another phrasal category, V$^{I}$ is the intermediate projection and dominates V 'kú' which is the head without complement.

### Similarities and Differences between Tense and Aspect in AAD and SY

This is the comparison and contrasting of tense and aspect in the dialect and Standard Yorùbá. This will enable the paper to point out where both Àkùngbá-Àkókó dialect and Standard Yorùbá relate and differ.

### Similarities between Tense and Aspect in AAD and SY

The following are the similarities between tense and aspect in Àkùngbá-Àkókó Dialect (AAD) and Standard Yorùbá (SY) despite the fact that they are inseparable. They are as follows:

(a)   Both AAD and SY are tonal languages. It is because both dialects make use of the three level tones when indicating tense and aspect as shown here.

|       |       | AAD | SY |       |       |
|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| (25) | (i)   | Uba á jòkó | Bàbá á jókòó | (FUT) | 'Father will sit' |
|       | (ii)  | Ó nẹ́ àtú/ Ó nátuú | Ó ní fìlà | (NFT) | 'He/she has a cap' |
|       | (iii) | Ita ghọ́n | Ata wọ́n | (UMA) | ´Pepper is costly' |

(b)   Both dialects make use of future tense marker (FUT) 'á' to indicate that an event has not happened and which will occur after the speech. This can be seen below.

|       |       | AAD | SY |       |
|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|
| (26) | (i)   | Iye/Yeye mi á wá | Ìyá mi á wá | 'My mother will come' |
|       | (ii)  | Ọma á gbọ́ | Ọmọ á gbọ́ | 'Child will hear' |
|       | (iii) | Uba á jòkó | Bàbá á jókòó | 'Father will sit' |

(c)   Both dialects don't make use of any grammatical category to indicate the non-future tense in their expressions, as reflected below.

|       |       | AAD | SY |       |
|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|
| (27) | (i)   | Ó nẹ́ àtú/ Ó nátùú | Ó ní fìlà | 'He/she has a cap' |
|       | (ii)  | Alẹ́ lẹ́/ Ẹlẹ́ lẹ́ | Ilẹ̀ sú | 'It is dawn' |
|       | (iii) | Ọma náà gùn | Ọmọ náà ga | 'The child is tall' |

(d)    There is no occurrence of unmarked aspect marker (UMA) in both AAD and SY. This means that both dialects don't make use of any grammatical category to indicate UMA in their expressions as shown below.

|  | **AAD** | **SY** |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| (28) | (i) Ó rí m | Ó rí mi | 'He/she saw me' |
| | (ii) Ipakèkè yìí pón | Èso yìí pón | 'This fruit is ripe' |
| | (iii) Ulí lá | Ilé tóbi | 'House is big' |

### Differences between Tense and Aspect in AAD and SY

Having examined the tense and aspect in AAD and SY, it is needed to identify where both languages differ from each other. Therefore, the differences between them are as follows:

(a)    Future tense marker (FUT) 'á' is used in AAD where SY makes use of FUT 'yóò' 'shall/will' to indicate an event which will take place after the speech as shown below.

|  | **AAD** | **SY** |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| (29) | (i) Uba á jòkó | Bàbá yóò jókòò | 'Father will sit' |
| | (ii) Iye/Yeye mi á wá | Ìyá mi á wá | 'My mother will come' |
| | (iii) Ọma á gbọ́ | Ọmọ á gbọ́ | 'Child will hear' |

(b)    Item 'í' is used in AAD where SY makes use of marker 'ń' to indicate progressive aspect (PROG). The occurrence of this is shown.

|  | **AAD** | **SY** |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| (30) | (i) Olú í rín/ rén | Olú ń rín èrín | 'Olu is laughing' |
| | (ii) Í í wa imọ́tò | Ó ń wa ọkọ̀ | 'He/she is driving a car |
| | (iii) Túndé í jó | Túndé ń jó | 'Tunde is dancing' |

(c)    AAD makes use of 'á' and 'í' as habitual aspect markers where the marker 'máa ń' occurred in SY, as exemplified here.

|  | **AAD** | **SY** |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| (31) | (i) Olú í kọrin | Olú máa ń kọrin | 'Olu usually sings' |
| | (ii) Í í ṣọlé | Ó ń jalè | 'He/she is stealing' |
| | (iii) Ọ̀ghọ́n á jẹun | Wọ́n máa ń jẹun | 'They usually eat' |

(d)    Marker 'yí í' 'has been' is used in AAD for the present perfect aspect (PRE) whereas    'ti ń' is being used in SY. This is shown below.

|  | **AAD** | **SY** |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| (32) | (i) Iye/ Yeye mi yí í wọ ulí | Ìyá mi ti ń wọ ilé | 'My mother has been entering into the |

house'

     (ii)      Fúnmikẹ́ yí í dirọn/ barọn  Fúnnkẹ́ tí ń dirun 'Fúnnkẹ́ has been plaiting
                                                       The hair'

(e)     Item 'ká' 'had' is used in AAD where SY makes use of 'ti' 'had' for indicating that an event had happened before the time of speech. This is shown below.

|  |  | AAD | SY |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (33) | (i) | Unà ká kú | Iná ti kú | 'Light had switched off' |
|  | (ii) | Egho ká ya | Owo ti ya | 'Money had torn' |
|  | (iii) | M/ N ká mọ̀ | Mo ti mọ̀ | 'I had known' |

## Conclusion

The paper examined the related literature on tense and aspect in Yorùbá dialects. It explained the occurrences of tense and aspect in AAD, spoken in Oǹdó state. The study identified two types of tenses which are future and non-future tenses in AAD and SY. The findings revealed that non-future tense is a null category in the dialect. It also established that three types of aspect (unmarked, imperfective and perfective aspect) existed in both AAD and SY. In addition, it revealed that differences exist in the occurrences of tense and aspect in the two dialects. The study contributed to the knowledge on syntax and dialectology because it examined tense and aspect markers as they occurred in the syntactic structures of AAD and SY.

## Recommendations

The paper recommends the following for the study:

(i)     Research should be carried out on item 'á' as the future tense marker and habitual aspect marker in AAD where they have distinct markers in SY.

(ii)    The future researchers should conduct a research on the occurrence of item 'í' as an indicator of progressive and habitual aspects in AAD whereby different marker exists in SY.

(iii)   Research should be conducted on the variant of tense and aspect markers in AAD and SY

## List of Abbreviations

| AAD | Àkùngbà-Àkókó Dialect |
|---|---|
| FUT | Future Tense |
| HAB | habitual Aspect |
| I | Inflection |
| I$^{\text{I}}$ | Inflectional Bar One |
| I$^{\text{II}}$ | Inflectional Phrase |
| N | Noun |
| N$^{\text{II}}$/ NP | Noun Phrase |

| NFT | Non-Future Tense |
|---|---|
| PAS | Past Perfective Aspect |
| PRE | Present Perfective Aspect |
| Pro | Pronoun |
| PROG | Progressive Aspect |
| Spec | Specifier |
| SY | Standard Yorùbá |
| UMA | Unmarked Aspect |
| V | Verb |
| V$^{II}$/ VP | Verb Phrase |
| X$^{II}$ | Maximal Projection |
| X$^{I}$ | Intermediate Projection |
| X | Head/ word Level |

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