

TONE IN DABA

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SOCIETE INTERNATIONALE DE LINGUISTIQUE

B.P. 1299, YAOUNDE

CAMEROUN

April 1977.

TONE IN DABA

1. GENERAL

1.1. Tone chart

	level	glide
high	ˊ H	
mid	ˉ M	
low	ˋ L	ML

1.2. Description

Daba has three level tones that function in the syllable and one glide which appears only on nominal personal pronouns in the singular and in the third person plural, where it functions as an aspect marker.

H	high level tone	pé	'all'
M	mid level tone	pur	'tear'
L	low level tone	lày	'place'
ML	mid-low glide tone	â	'he' (nominal pr. 3ps. sg + pl)

1.3. Distribution

Each syllable carries one of the four tones. All four tonepatterns are found on one-syllabic words. On polysyllabic words there is a wide range of combination possibilities of the three level tones.

tone patterns on phonological words:

- one syllabic words
- all four tones appear

examples:	L	jik	'house'
	M	fod	'four'
	H	pé	'much'
	ML	tâ	'I'

- two-syllabic words

all nine possible combinations of the level tone appear

examples:	LL	bàlà̀m	'slave'
	LM	vìkin	'bird'
	LH	sàkém	'to buy'
	ML	bùsè	'mat'
	MM	telü	'monkey'
	MH	mə̀ndán	'other'
	HL	ɓílök	'sour'
	HM	séray	'two'
	HH	ɓílík	'heavy'

- three-syllabic words

15 combinations of level tones appear

examples:	LLL	mòtùlùm	'elephant'
	LLM	gègèdem	'swine'
	LLH	kùlùkóm	'glande'
	LML	fàrsənà	'prisoner'
	LMM	màzəra	'front'
	LMH	mòvolúm	'panther'
	LHL	mòkódòk	'vulture'
	LHM	vàkàraw	'wolf'
	LHH	gèdikíd	'thorn'
	MLL	mèdikè	'neighbor'
	MLM	mandàvən	'hare'
	MLH	sèlègwét	'game'
	HMM	zlúguna	'this morning'
	HHM	tékə̀naw	'ideophone'
	HHH	kédírék	'a little'

On verbs and nouns the possible tone patterns are restricted: the first tone always has to be L or M, never H. exception: kən 'thing' is one syllabic with H, but this is probably a short form of təkən 'thing' used in another dialect.

Loanwords only carry the tone patterns ML, MLL, LLH and LML, or when four-syllabic LLML.

1.4. Function

1.4.1. lexical

The lexical function of tone is limited. Only the following minimal pairs have been found upto now:

wìlì	'hole'	wìli	'meal'		
pèl	'to loosen'	pəl	'to pay'		
kén	'thing'	kən	'to attache'		
tâ	'I'	tà	'relative pronoun'		
kémí	'how'	kəmí	'why'		
pàla	'plaine'	pàlà	'part'		
tètár	'to be happy'	tètàr	'creat'		
kùla	'pipe'	kùlá	'pretty'	kúlá	'upto'

1.4.2. grammatical

The grammatical function of tone will be treated in chapter 4 of this paper.

2. PHONOLOGICAL TONE

2.1. Tone perturbation classes

Three perturbation classes have been set up according to the phonological tone changes as they take place word initially.

These three classes are subdivided into the two subclasses A and B according to tone changes word finally and their influence on the following tone pattern.

How the different word classes are affected by these phonological tone perturbations is shown in chapter 3.

The tone pattern MH has only been found on an adverb which is not affected by phonological tone perturbations. This tone-pattern does therefore not appear in this chapter.

2.1.1. The three tone classes

The five tone patterns LLH, LM, LMM, ML and MLL have been found to appear in two different tone classes. In these cases the tone class is marked immediately after the pattern.

Toneclass 1:

There is no tone change word initially.

All tone patterns of toneclass 1 have two initial low tones.

Tone patterns: LL, LLL, LLM, LLH₁

Examples: LL bàlám 'slave', LLM vègèdem 'pig'
 kèr bàlám ka bàlám â sèkém bàlám
 'a slave is left' 'each slave' 'he buys a slave'
 kèr vègèdem ka vègèdem â sèkém vègèdem
 'a pig is left' 'each pig' 'he buys a pig'

Toneclass 2:

The first tone assimilates to the preceding tone, except that it will never go lower than* (eg. initial M stays mid after M as well as L, and initial H always stays high.)
 All tone patterns that occur only in toneclass 2 contain a H except the pattern MLM. *in isolation

Tone patterns:

LLH ₂	ML ₂	H
LM ₂	MLL ₂	HL
LMM ₂	MLM	HM
LMH	MLH	HH
LH		HMM
LHL		HHM
LHM		HHH
LHH		

Examples: LMH mòvolúm 'panther' MLL₂ kedèli 'stonewall'

HM	séray 'two'	
kèr mòvolúm	ka movólúm	â sèkém móvolúm
'a panther is left'	'each panther'	'he buys a panther'
kèr kedèli	ka kedèli	â sèkém kédèli
'a stonewall is left'	'each stonewall'	'he buys a stonewall'
bàlám séray	fàlam séray	â sèkém séray
'two slaves'	'two horns'	'he buys two'

Toneclass 3:

An initial L is raised by one when following H. The tone pattern LM₃ raises both tones (following H, LM becomes MH).

An initial M is raised by one when following M or H.
 In the tone patterns of toneclass 3 we never find two initial L nor a H.

Tone patterns: L M
 LM₃ MM
 LML ML₃
 LMM₃ MLL₃

Examples: LM₃ vikin 'bird' MM telü 'monkey'
 kèr vikin ka vikin â sèkém vikín
 'a bird is left' 'each bird' 'he buys a bird'
 kèr telü ka télü â sèkém télü
 'a monkey is left' 'each monkey' 'he buys a monkey'

2.1.2. The two subclasses

There are six tone patterns which may also change their final tone when they appear phrasemedial. They also influence the following tone pattern.

For these six tone patterns a subclass A has been set up.

Subclass A:

Tone patterns: LM₃, LLM, LMM₂, LMH, M, MLM

There are two tone changes involved when words with tone patterns of subclass A precede another word. The rules for the changes must be applied in the following order:

1. All tone patterns following subclass A are affected as if the subclass A patterns ended in H (i.e. patterns of tone class 2 will assimilate to H and so on.)
2. the tone patterns of subclass A lower their final tone by one when preceding a H (except the pattern LMM₂)

Examples: LM₃ + ML = *LM HL = LL HL

vikin + madày = *vikin mádày = vikìn mádày
 'bird' 'big' 'a big bird'

MLM + LH = *MLM HH = MLL HH

mandàvèn + sèndán = *mandàvèn séndán = mandàvèn séndán
 'hare' 'other' 'another hare'

Words of tone pattern LM₃ ending in a low vowel will always lower their final tone when they appear non-clause final.

Example: LM₃ + L = LL M

tàpa + cà = tàpà ca
 'tabac' 'this' 'this tabac'

The tone pattern M is influenced by the preceding as well as the following tone, and the rules must be applied in the following order:

1. after M or H it is high (rule of tone class 3)
2. a following H lowers it by one except when the preceding tone is also H
3. In all the other environments M stays M.

chart for M:

following tone

	ϕ	L	H
ϕ	M	M	L
L	M	M	L
M	H	H	M
H	H	H	H

preceding tone

Examples: L + M + M = *L M H = L L H

kèr + pay + vu = *kèr pay vù = kèr pày vù ?
 'left' 'tree' 'interr. marker' 'is a tree left?'

M + M + M = *M H H = M M H

ka + pay + vu = *ka páy vù = ka pay vù ?
 'each' 'tree' 'interr. marker' 'each tree?'

When words of subclass A, ending in a velar or uvular consonant, occur non-clausefinal, they drop their final consonant and lower their final tone by one, whatever the following tone.

Examples: L L M mbèlèlɛŋ 'insect'

mbèlèlè tòku 'this insect' mbèlèlè gúb 'ten insects'

Subclass B:

Tone patterns: all the others

They never change their final tone, and influence the following tone pattern according to the phonological rules (2.1.1).

Examples: fòfón + madàɣ = fòfón mádàɣ

'flower' 'big' 'a big flower'

màslága + sèndán = màslága sèndán

'cloth' 'other' 'the other cloth'

3. GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES AFFECTED BY PHONOLOGICAL TONECHANGES

3.1 Wordclasses

3.1.1. Nouns and verbs

All noun- and verb tone patterns are affected by the phonological tone perturbation rules.

Examples: LM₃1 zlàmbat 'exchange', LL fìcik 'throw'

LH sèkém 'buy', M pay 'tree'

â zlàmbat páy 'he exchanges the wood'

â fìcik pay 'he throws the wood away'

â sèkém páy 'he buys wood'

3.1.2. Pronouns

Accusative and dative pronouns act according to the rules set up.

Examples: saf + u = sòfú 'to see it'
'to see' 'it'

tèp + en = tèpen 'to bring him'
'to bring' 'him'

tèp + en + u = tèpènú 'to bring it to him'

Demonstrative pronouns also act according to the rules set up, with the exception of the most widely used demonstrative [tòkú] 'this', which always carries LM.

Examples: zlà 'cow', kén 'thing'
takàná 'already mentioned', cà 'this here', tòku 'this'

zlà takàná 'the cow already mentioned'

kén takàná 'the thing already mentioned'

zlà cà 'this cow here'

kén cà 'this thing here'

zlà tòku 'this cow'

kén tòku 'this thing'

The nominative pronoun will be treated in the grammar and the possessive pronoun in the section on derivational tone changes (chap. 3.2.3.)

3.1.3. Numbers

The two numbers [fod] 'four' and [koh] 'six' as well as the decimal marker [wòm] will never change their tone. All the other numbers are affected by the phonological tone perturbation rules.

Examples: kén 'thing', bàlám 'slave',
 (LM₃)tàkan 'one', fod 'four', wòm màkad 'thirty'

kén takán	'one thing'	bàlám tàkan	'one slave'
kén fod	'four things'	bàlám fod	'four slaves'
kén wòm màkad	'thirty things'	bàlám wòm màkad	'thirty slaves'

3.1.4. Adverbs and ideophones

Neither adverbs nor ideophones change their tone according to the rules set up. This could be due to the fact that most of them are anyway HH or LL.

Examples:

tètár + kahày kahày	=	â tètár kahày kahày
'happy' 'every'		'he is very happy'
gáp + dày dày		â gap dày dày
'thick' 'very'		'it gets thicker'
yà + birtíd		à yá birtíd
'come' 'quickly'		'come quickly'

3.1.5. Question words

The question marker [vu], the question words [mi] 'what' and [pu] act according to the rules set up.

Examples: hâ gər pay vù 'are you looking for wood?'
 hâ gər zlà vu 'are you looking for the cow?'
 hâ həl mi 'what are you doing?'
 hâ gər mí 'what are you looking for?'

The question words [kemí] 'why', [à mi] 'with what', [à njà siki] 'how and [wásiki] 'is it not' never change their tone according to the rules.

Examples: hâ gər páy kemí 'why are you looking for wood?'
 hâ và kemí 'why are you going?'
 hâ kər páy à mi 'with what are you tying the wood?'
 hâ kər zlà à mi 'with what are you tying the cow?'
 hâ bit à njà siki 'how did you get saved?'
 hătí mar zla wásiki 'you watched the cows, did you not?'

The question word nu can carry H or M and acts according to the corresponding phonological rules.

Examples: zlà nu or zlà nú 'how many cows?'
 kén nú 'how many things?'

The location questionword will be treated in the grammar, together with the location phrase (chap, 4.1.)

3.2. Derivational tone changes

Derivation markers are monosyllabic. They are said to have a neutral tone (N). This assimilates to the preceding tone and after words with tone patterns of subclass A it is high. It influences the following tone as if it was H. N therefore belongs to the tone perturbation class 2 A. Yet the second rule of Subclass A does not apply to it: It does not get lower preceding H.

3.2.1. Adjectives

Adjectives are built with the derivation marker [ma] with N, and a verb. Usually the verb is repeated.

Examples: L dàl 'to be ill', M bit 'to save', L zlà 'cow',
 LH bìsól 'cock'

zlà mà daladal	'the ill cow'
zlà mà bìtébit	'the saved cow'
bìsól mà daladal	'the ill cock'
bìsól mà bìtébit	'the saved cock'

When the adjective functions as a noun, the mà carries a L.

Example: mà daladal 'the ill (person)'

A few adjectives have been found where the adjective marker [ma] (N) seems to have fused with the adjective root, and this new word then took a tone pattern as a whole. Some of these adjectives do not have a verb as a root.

Examples: dáy 'much' madày 'big' zlà madày 'a big cow'
 mílìn 'blacken' memìlin 'black' zlà memìlin 'a black cow'

3.2.2. Genitive constructions

Genitive constructions can be built with nouns, verbs and possessive pronouns. Between the two (or more) words a low vowel with N is inserted.

Examples: LL bàlám 'slave', LM₃ vikin 'bird', M bay 'chief'
 LH dòkú 'grandmother', LH sèkém 'to buy', M tik 'his'

bàlám à báý 'the chiefs slave'	bàlám à dókú 'the grandmothers slave'	bàlám à tík 'his slave'
vìkìn é báý 'the chiefs bird'	vìkìn é dókú 'grandmothers bird'	vìkìn é tík 'his bird'
sèkém á bàlám 'the slaves price'	sèkém á tík 'its price'	
sèkém á bàlám á tík 'his slaves price'		

When the first word of the genitive construction ends in a vowel, no vowel is inserted. The following word changes according to the phonological rules.

Examples: LL hùbù 'mat', LM₃ hèrà 'eye', ML büsè 'mat'
LH dókú 'grandmother', M tik 'his'

hùb tik 'his mat'	hùb dókú 'grandmothers mat'
hèrà tík 'his eyes'	hèrà dókú 'grandmothers eyes'
büsè tik 'his mat'	büsè dókú 'grandmothers mat'

4. GRAMMATICAL TONE

This chapter is not yet final. The present description of the grammatical tone tries to cover what has been analyzed upto now. More investigation is needed on grammar and semantics for a thorough description.

4.1. Locatives

In daba locatives are being expressed either as being part of an action, the place being in focus, or as being a description. When the locative preposition carries H, resp. HH, it is the focus of the action, when it carries L, resp. LM, it functions as a description.

Examples:

mòvolúm â ham á jik	'it is in the house that the panther is eating'
mòvolúm â ham à jik	'the panther is eating in the house'
â fi wùdén áné kùhu	'he puts wood into the fire.'
wùdén àné kùhu	'the wood is in the fire'

The same rule applies also to the locative question word [a ki] 'where'. [ki] always carries H when the question focusses on

the place of the action, and M when it is a simple question. The preposition [a] carries either N or the same tone as the questionword [ki].

Examples:

description

mgbìv à ki	'where is the baobab?'
mgbìv a ki	'where is the baobab?'
â tàp à kî	'where is he climbing?'

focus

â tàp à kí	'through where is he climbing?'
â tàp á kí	'through where is he climbing?'

4.2. Verbs

There are six inherent tone patterns found on verbs. These are established from the verb in isolation. Grammatical tone changes mark certain aspects and moods. Grammatical tone changes precede phonological ones. That is, the grammatical tone pattern influences, and is influenced by, the following tone patterns as described under chapter 2. The tone pattern preceding the verb has no direct phonological influence on the verb tone pattern, as this preceding word (eg. different pronouns, infinitive marker etc.) marks aspect or mood of the verb.

The two tone patterns M and LM₃, which belong to subclass A, keep the characteristics of subclass A also in different grammatical moods and aspects.

In the following chart the different possible grammatical tone changes are shown.

The chart is set up according to the phonological tone classes, to which the different verb tone patterns belong.

There are some tone patterns (LM₂, LH, M) which can have two different tones in certain moods. Both possibilities are then written. The tone pattern M has two kinds of verbs, which act differently in different moods. I could not yet establish, where the difference lies. The tone pattern M has been split up into M_a and M_b, according to these two kinds.

Chart of verb tone patterns in different moods and aspects:

phonological tone classes	1. cl.		2nd. cl.		3. cl.			
	LL	LM ₁	LH	L	M _a	M _b	LM ₂	ML
verb in isolation	LL	LM ₁	LH	L	M _a	M _b	LM ₂	ML
completed action	LL	LM	LL LH	L	L	L	LM	ML HL
action in progress	LL	LM HM	LL HH	L	L	H	LM	HL
infinitive	LL	MM	MH	L	L	M H	LM	HL
imperative, emphasis	LL	HM	HH	M	H	H	MH	HL
relative	LL	HM	HH	M	M	H	MH	HL

GLOSSARY

H high tone

M mid tone

L low tone

ˊ high tone mark

ˋ low tone mark

∅ pause

N neutral tone

mid tone is not marked on words

CONTENTS

	page
1. GENERAL	1
1.1. Chart	1
1.2. Description	1
1.3. Distribution	3
1.4. Function	3
1.4.1. lexical	3
1.4.2. grammatical	3
2. PHONOLOGICAL TONE	3
2.1. Toneperturbation classes	3
2.1.1. The three tone-classes	5
2.1.2. The two subclasses	7
2.1.3. Chart of the tone-classes and subclasses	7
2.2. Elision of wordfinal vowels	7
3. GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES AFFECTED BY PHONOLOGICAL TONECHANGES	8
3.1. Wordclasses	8
3.1.1. verbs and nouns	8
3.1.2. pronouns	8
3.1.3. numbers	9
3.1.4. adverbs and ideophones	9
3.1.5. question words	10
3.2. Derivational tonechanges	10
3.2.1. adjectives	10
3.2.2. genitive constructions	10
4. GRAMMATICAL TONE	11
4.1. Locatives	12
4.2. Verbs	13
GLOSSARY	