

CHAPTER 11

Morphological Description of Selected Loan Words from English to Tiv Language

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Abstract

Morphological description of Loan Words is found in so many languages. This study has focused on morphology of English words loaned into Tiv language to ascertain whether the word formation process of Tiv words borrowed from English enjoys the same characteristics as that of English. Taking a descriptive approach, the study has employed both the primary and secondary sources of

data generation. The primary data were generated through interview. The study has adopted Nida's Descriptive Linguistics Theory of 1949 as it was further elaborated by Carl (1996). Findings show that prefixes "u, a mba" in Tiv language are used for plural formation in Tiv words borrowed from English. Also, loan words from English into Tiv are characterized by change in spelling and pronunciation, though the sounds remain relatively the same with slight modifications. The study has revealed that derivational inflections are very rare in Tiv, taking into cognizance the morphological description of the borrowed words from English language. It concludes that English words loaned into Tiv language undergo some morphological modifications in spellings and pronunciation as well as plural formation which set the morphological study of the two languages at par.

Keywords: Loan words, morphology, inflection, prefixation, Tiv language, English language.

Introduction

Language is purely a human activity. According to Udu (2009), it is central to human life. Udu maintains that without language, there will be no interaction, no social activities and no communication. In another perspective, Usar (2013) views language as a phenomenon that is dynamic and creative. He posits that it changes with time and creates room for expansion and adaptation of new words and ideas. Usar (2013) submits that since no language is isolated, it is not free from linguistic borrowing. Speakers borrow words from other languages to fill lexical gaps in their own lexical inventory. The reasons for

such lexical gaps, Usar maintains, may be informed by cultural innovation which may introduce objects or actions that do not have names in the native language. Also, some words may be conceived as non-prestigious and, therefore, be substituted by terms from other languages. The substituted words then become popular through constant use and the mass media. Equally, the advent of new technological concepts, new diseases etc. has added to the pressing need for borrowing words from other languages into the languages which have no bearing of such words.

According to Usar, interaction between people of different cultures and languages brings about bilingualism, code-switching and code-mixing, as well as linguistic borrowing, also known as loan words. A loan word, therefore, is a foreign word from a language which has been adopted into the linguistic system of another language. Tiv language has also borrowed from other languages such as English and Hausa languages, among several others. Bur (1993) opines that Tiv language, during its early period of growth and development, had contact with other languages such as Fulfude, Jukun, Chamba and Kuteb, through trade and migration. These languages have had considerable influence on the development of Tiv language. According to Usar (2013), Tiv language has borrowed intensively from the English language which has formed part of its(Tiv) lexicon. This study has carried out a morphological description of some Tiv words borrowed from English.

There have been studies on linguistic borrowing. For example, Ubong (2012) studies morphophonemic analysis of inflectional morphemes of nouns in English and Ibibio languages in order to discover points of differences and similarities. The study uses Contrastive Analysis (CA) model as its theoretical

framework. The results indicate that the two languages are structurally different. For instance, Ibibio is agglutinative, tonal and analytic in nature while English is basically analytic and intonational. The study analyzes the problem that Ibibio speakers of English are likely to encounter in the study of English word structure.

Relatedly, Nopriansah (2016) in a study considers the morphophonemics of words borrowed from English in Serawai language. The study explains the morphophonemic process of words borrowed from English into Serawai language. The scope of the analysis is at the phonological and morphological levels. This study is descriptive in nature, taking into considerations the procedure for data collection, data analysis and result presentation. The study concludes that the words of Serawai language borrowed from English have the same morphological system as Serawai.

Similarly, Yusuf (2017) has studied morphophonological analysis of nouns borrowed by Kiswahili and Hausa from Arabic. The data for the research were sourced from both the written literature and oral interviews. Some native speakers of Hausa and Kiswahili were used to supplement or authenticate the data generated. Analysis was done via the Optimality Theory (OT) which accounts for loanword adaptations. Findings revealed that in dealing with disallowed codas and consonant clusters, three main strategies namely insertion, deletion and feature change were applied in order to satisfy highly-ranked markedness constraint in Hausa and Kiswahili. In a few examples, however, faithfulness prevails over markedness, leading to change in the phonology of Hausa and Kiswahili. The findings of research have implications on the expansion and growth of the two languages as the research discusses

phonological and morphological modifications. Finally, the study has proved that morphophonology is involved in the adaptation of Hausa and Kiswahili from Arabic.

In spite of the above, the researchers notice a dearth of evidence on studies relating to morphological description of Tiv words borrowed from English. To this end, this study has is set to fill this gap.

Basic Information on Tiv

Tiv language is the language spoken by Tiv people, who form majority of the population in Benue State. They are also indigenous to other States such as Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba and Cross River. Anshi (2004) avers that the language is spoken by a population of over 3 million people and it is as old as the people themselves. Occupation wise, Tiv people are predominantly farmers, they cultivate various food and cash crops such as yams, cassava, soyabeans, beniseed, rice, groundnut, etc. They also rear some livestock and poultry such as goats, pigs, sheep, chicken, especially for consumption purposes. They equally have a special breed of cow (bua Tiv) which they rear. In terms of trade, Tiv people engage in petty trading and some are into weaving of the native clothes known as “anger”, “tukudu”, “ivyavtyo”, etc.

Tiv people occupy fourteen local government areas out of twenty-three local government areas in Benue State, representing 61% (percent). The local government areas occupied by Tiv people in Benue are Buruku, Gboko, Guma, Gwer, Gwer-West, Katsina-Ala, Konshisha, Kwande, Logo, Makurdi, Tarka, Vandeikya, Ukum, and Ushongo.

Morphology

According to Dobrovolsky and Aronoff (1997:401), morphology is the study of word structure. It seeks to characterize the system of categories and rules involved in word formation and interpretation. The study of morphological processing seeks to understand how word structure plays a role in language processing. Word formation, as Marchand (1969) claims, is “that branch of the sciences of language which studies the pattern on which a language forms new lexical units”. Rufa’i (1979:1) adds that “it thus deals with formally and semantically analyzable composite forms”. According to Matthews (1991:37), “word-formation is that branch of morphology which deals with relations between a complex lexeme and a simple (r) lexeme”. For Rubba (2004), “word-formation processes deal with the ways of creating new words in English”. The Free Encyclopedia of Linguistics (2008) maintains that word formation rules form “new words” (that is, lexemes). Based on the views above, it is obvious that word formation is concerned not only creating new words and their rules, but also the relationship that exists between words - simple and complex (Matthews 1991). It deals with the processes involved in forming new words. Word-formation is a natural linguistic phenomenon that exists in all languages – English and Tiv inclusive.

There exist several processes of word-formation such as affixation, compounding, borrowing, reduplication, clipping, conversion, acronym, etc. However, this paper solely concentrates on the affixation (prefixation) process.

Prefixation

Prefixation comes from the word “prefix”. A prefix is a bound morpheme that comes before the root, stem or base (source). In other words, it appears before a stem (source) word. A prefix adds meaning to a root without altering its class. Elson and Pickett (1976:12) define prefixes as “the affixes which occur preceding roots”. Agezi (2004:40) views a prefix as “an affix which is added initially to a stem.” Thus, prefixation refers to the process whereby an affix is added initially to a stem. In other words, prefixation is a sub-process of affixation in which morphemes known as prefixes are added before the “operands” (bases, roots, stems). Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:442) divide the prefixes in English into reversative prefixes, pejorative prefixes, prefixes of degree or size, prefixes of attitude, locative prefixes, prefixes of time and order, number prefixes and conversion prefixes.

Loan Words

Loanwords, sometimes regarded as borrowed words, are words adopted by speakers of one language from a different language (the source language). According to Crystal (2006:286), a ‘loan’ is a linguistic unit (usually a lexical item) which has come to be used in a language or dialect other than the one where it originated. He adds that several types of loan process have been recognized such as loan words (where both form and meaning are borrowed or assimilated with adaptation to the phonological system of the new language) loan blends, loan shifts and loan translations. Mathews (2007:230) describes a loan word as a word imported from another language. Such words are sometimes adapted directly to fit the sound patterns of the borrowing language. Linguistic borrowing, loan words, loan adaption, word assimilation or

acclimatization, stolen words and phrase etc. are terms variously applied to this popular linguistic phenomenon. Word borrowing, as stated earlier, is a common feature of almost all human languages in that nearly all languages have some new words, phrases or even sentences imported from other languages into them.

Research methodology

The study adopted a descriptive approach to analyze morphological description of Tiv loanwords from the English language. It made use of both the primary and secondary data. The primary data for the study was sourced from Tiv native speakers of English living in Makurdi, Benue State, with a bias to the elderly and academics through interview, whose responses were recorded and transcribed later for analysis. The secondary data were also derived from the printed body of literature which include textbooks, journal articles, national dairies, etc.

Theoretical framework

This study has utilised descriptive linguistic theory propounded by Eugene Nida in 1949; it has been elaborated in Carl's (1996) model of descriptive linguistic analysis. It should be noted that almost all linguistic theories have their origin in practical problems of descriptive linguistics. Nida's linguistic theory, therefore, primarily articulated through his theory of translation, centres on functional "equivalence" which emphasizes conveying the original message's intended meaning and effect on the recipient rather than a literal word-for-word transfer. The basic tenets of the theory are premised on the functional equivalence. This, according to Nida, can be perceived from two perspectives: the formal and dynamic/functional equivalences. While the formal equivalence focuses on matching the form and message of the source text as

closely as possible (though this can be overly literal and lead to misunderstanding), dynamic or functional equivalence aims at an equivalent effect on the target audience, prioritising meaning and cultural context over literal rendering. Apart from the equivalent response in the receiver, the theory is equally premised on the context-dependent principle which emphasizes that different cultural contexts require different translation approach to achieve intelligibility.

Other tenets emphasised the identification of morphemes. One of these emphasized that “Forms which have a common semantic distinctiveness and an identical phonemic form in all their occurrences constitute a single morpheme.

Another principle states that “Forms which have a common semantic distinctiveness but which differ in phonemic form (i.e. the phonemes or order of the phonemes) may constitute a morpheme provided the distribution of formal differences is phonologically definable.

Once more, Nida’s descriptive linguistic theory provides that “Homophonous forms are identifiable as the same or different morphemes on the basis of the conditions that: 1. Homophonous forms with distinctly different meanings constitute different morphemes; 2. Homophonous forms with related meanings constitute a single morpheme if the meaning classes are paralleled by distributional differences, but then constitute multiple morphemes if the meaning classes are not paralleled by distributional differences.”

Lastly, Nida’s principle of morpheme identification portrays that “A morpheme is isolatable if it occurs in isolation or in multiple combinations (in at least one of which the unit with which it is combined occurs in isolation or in other combinations) as well as in a single combination (provided the element

with which it is combined occurs in isolation or in other combinations with non-unique constituents).

Carl (1996), on the other hand, noted that descriptive linguistics focuses on systematically analyzing and describing the structure of languages as they are actually spoken and used, based on empirical data and the principle that each language is an autonomous system. Key aspects of this description include detailed analysis of phonology (sounds), morphology (word structure), syntax (sentence structure), lexicon (words) and discourse, aiming for objectivity and comprehensive description of language. He further summarised the core principles of descriptive linguistics to include:

- a. Systematic Description: The goal is to create a complete and systematic description of a language's components and organizational principles.
- b. Language Autonomy: Each language is considered an autonomous system that should be described on its own terms, not through the standards of another language.
- c. Empirical Observation: Descriptions are based on actual, observable patterns in natural speech, collected from speakers through systematic methods.
- d. Comprehensive Analysis: This involves analyzing all aspects of the language, including sounds (phonology), word formation (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), vocabulary (lexicon) and connected speech (discourse).
- e. Objectivity: Descriptive linguists strive for an objective and unbiased approach, examining all relevant linguistic features from the data without preconceived notions.

Descriptive linguistic theory was adapted and used in this study because it is characterised by the consistent application of basic concepts and analytical procedures, employing the basic units of analysis such as phonemes, allophones, morphemes, variants, direct constituents etc. In the study of Tiv language, the resulting description of the above levels of analysis is characterized by systematic representation of the phonemes of the language, variations of those phonemes, and the transformations into morphemes.

Data Presentation and Analysis

There are a large number of English loanwords into Tiv. Many words denoting household items, clothing, means of transportation, school materials etc. have been loaned into Tiv language. Examples of such words are the following:

Tiv Loan Word	English Gloss	Tiv Loan Word	English Gloss
Pilo	Pillow	Siketi	Skirt
Biro	Biro	Sheti	Shirt
Orshoja	Soldier	Bulosu	blouse
Tica	Teacher	Bokoti	Bucket
Toci	Touch	Koopu	Cup
Televishen	Television	Peleti	Plate
Fan	Fan	Afiishi	Ice-fish
Tiv Loan Word	English Gloss	Tiv Loan Word	English Gloss
Durum	Drum	Ciaman	Chairman
Ijiga	Digger	Diakon	Deacon
Belakaboodu	Black board	Dikishenali	Dictionary
Deseke	School desk	Tapirata	Typewriter
Doseta	Duster	Inki	Ink
Pensel	Pencil	Buroshi	Brush
Dosebin	Dust bin	Shingil	Singlet
Koboodu	Cupboard	Shebul	Shovel

Words borrowed from English into Tiv language, as seen above, can be grouped into various lexical categories as presented below.

Grouping of Loan Words According to Approximate Sound Change

Tiv adopted		Gloss	
B <u>o</u> l	/bɔl/	B <u>a</u> ll	/bɔ:l/
Drom	/drɔm/	Drum	/drʌm/
Bikon	/bikon/	Beacon	/' bi:kən /
Daari	/dɑ:ri/	Diary	/' daɪə.ri/
Redio	/redio/	Radio	/reidiə/
Koop	/kɔ:p/	Cup	/kʌp/

In the grouping of the words above, it could be deduced that some English loaned words in Tiv have approximate sound change as illustrated above. For example, in the word ball, /b/ has changed to /o/ in Tiv. In “drum”: /drʌm/, /ʌ/ has changed to /ɔ/ as /drɔm/ in Tiv adoption. This could also be seen in examples such as “beacon” /bi:kən /; the long vowel /i:/ has changed to the short vowel /i/ in Tiv adopted version while the vowel /ə/ has changed to /o/ in Tiv version. The word “diary” /'daɪə.ri/ has changed to /da:ri/ - the triphongs /aɪə/ has become long vowel /a:/ in Tiv version.

Grouping of Loan Words According to those that take Additional Morphemes

Tiv adopted		Gloss	
Baaji	/ba:dʒi/	Barge	/ba:dʒ/
Caaji	/tʃa:dʒi/	Charge	/tʃa:dʒ/
Inki	/inki/	Ink	/ɪŋk/
Fiidi	/fi:di/	Field	/fi:ld/
Tochi	/tɔtʃi/	Torch	/tɔ:tʃ/
Bokoti	/bokoti/	Bucket	/'bʌk·ɪt/
Cuoku	/tʃɔ:ku/	Chalk	/tʃɔ:k/

English loan words in Tiv can also be grouped based on those that take additional morphemes as illustrated thus: barge /ba:dʒ/ has an additional morpheme /i/ added to it in Tiv, hence, it becomes “baaji” /ba:dʒi/. Also, the word “charge” /tʃa:dʒ/ takes additional morpheme /i/ as shown in Tiv version Caaji /tʃa:dʒi/. This could be seen in several other examples such as “ink” /ɪŋk/, “chalk” /tʃɔ:k/ which become Inki /inki/ and Cuoku /tʃɔ:ku/ respectively in Tiv.

Word Formation by Prefixation

It is clear that every language has a way of expressing its inflections in nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs; though the process varies from one language to another. In Tiv, for example, inflectional markers for nouns are derived through prefixes, that is, prefix + root using ‘u’ ‘a’ ‘i’ ‘m’ ‘mba’. But in English, the case is different; the inflection is through suffix, that is, root + suffix ‘s’ ‘es’ ‘ies’ ‘en’ respectively.

To the best knowledge of the researchers, prefixes for inflection are limited to only three of the five inflectional morpheme – ‘u’ ‘a’ ‘mba’ where the other two (‘i’ ‘m’) seem to be scarce among Tiv loan words from English. Note the examples below.

Prefix	Base/Root	Plural Form	Gloss
A	Pilo	Apilo	Pillows
Biro		Abiro	Biros
Orshoja		Ashoja	Soldiers
Tica		Atica	Teachers
U	Toci	utoci	Torch
Televishen		Utelevishen	Televisions
Fan		Ufan	Fans
Yunivasiti		Uyunivasiti	Universities
Cementu		ucementu	Cements
Firiji		Ufirigi	fridges
Foto		Ufoto	Photographs
Siketi		Usiketi	Skirts
Bulosu		ubulosu	Blouses

Mba Afiishi	Mbafiishi	Icefish
Abom	mbaabom	Albums
Adreshi	mbaadreshi	Address
Ajanda	Mbaajanda	Agendas

As can be observed above, formation of Tiv loan words from English is characterized by change in spelling and pronunciation though the consonant sound remains relatively the same. Furthermore, when forming the plural forms of such words, it is observed that most of the loan words are formed using prefixes ‘a’ ‘u’ and ‘mba’. For example, the word “pilo” from English “pillow” remains almost the same, though the spelling changes. However, when forming its plural form, both the pronunciation and spelling change. “Pilo” becomes “apilo” as a result of the prefixation “a”.

Also, the word “televishon” loaned from the English word “television” retains the English pronunciation, though the spelling changes. When forming its plural form, both the pronunciation and spelling change to realise “Utelevishon” as a result of the prefixation “u”. Similarly, the word “abom” from English word “album”, experiences a change in its spelling. When forming its plural form, both the pronunciation and spelling change to “mba-abom” as a result of the addition of prefix “mba”

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn; that words formation process of Tiv loan words from English is characterized with change in spelling and pronunciation though the sound remained relatively

the same in most cases. All the plural loan words are formed using prefixes such as ‘u’ ‘a’ and ‘mba’. The study has also proved that just like English language whose borrowed words from other languages take different forms in its pluralisation process, pluralisation of nouns borrowed from English and incorporated into Tiv language accept different forms of plural morphemes which include “a”, “u” and “mba”.

The explanation above does not, in any way, claim that the topic under consideration has been exhaustively justified, hence, the need for further researches in this regard. More so, this study has opened more perspectives on the study of Tiv morphological process of word formation, hence, the need for similar researches, taking into consideration different points of view for an inclusive and elaborate whole. In this regards, this study did not consider other basic areas of word formation processes in Tiv such as coinage, duplication, clipping etc. which are equally important in the teaching and learning of the language. These areas also need to be explored by other similar researches to enhance the revitalization and standardisation of Tiv loan words for language development.

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