A STUDY OF ASPECTS OF DERIVATIONAL MORPHOLOGY OF A LANGUAGE GROUP IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study was carried out to identify some aspects of the derivational morphology of a language group in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study also identified some differences between the Edda dialect to other languages and some morphological manifestations of the Edda dialect of the Igbo language. Two research questions were developed in line with the purpose of the study. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of 2449 lecturers and 92 students and the sample comprised 1000 lecturers and 30 secondary school students from the area of study. This sample was drawn using a multi-stage sampling technique A-10 item instrument termed "A study of aspects of derivational morphology questionnaire (ASADMQ) was used by the researchers for data collection. The instrument was first validated by experts and reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics and the reliability index was 0.05. The administration and retrieval of the instrument were through direct contact and the use of research assistants. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions. While the z-test was used to analyze the hypotheses. Findings on the hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students from Ebonyi State on the items presented. Regular practice of the Edda dialect with lecturers and students and motivating students to see derivational morphology as a very important aspect of the morphology of human language were recommended.

Keywords: Aspects, Derivational, Morphology, Language.

Introduction

Background to the Study

One of the properties of human language is its productivity or creativity. This property, among other things, endows language users with the ingenious ability to create novel structures, sentences, phrases, and words or to modify existing onesin the language. Creating new words or making new expressions is incumbent on language users due to the need to express or designate new ideas and inventions in society. The processes of creating new words or modifying words in a language fall within the preview of morphology.Morphology is the branch of grammar that studies the sentences or forms of words, primarily; through the use of morpheme construct Crystal (2003)stated that the branch of linguistics is generally divided into fields, the study of word-formation/derivational (Lexical or Derivational Morphology). The focus of the study is on the latter-derivational morphology; with a specific interest in the Edda dialect of the Igbo language in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Edda dialect as one of the varieties of Igbo shares a lot of core morphological operations with standard Igbo.

However, according to Okam, (2011) there exist certain grammatical or morphological operations that mark Edda dialects out of the standard variety and another dialect of the Igbo Language. To the best of thisresearcher's knowledge, the derivational aspect of Edda morphology has not been adequately explored. This study is therefore an attempt to investigate aspects of the Edda derivational morphology of a language group to spotlight the peculiar properties evident in the morphology of the Edda dialect. This study will stand as a foundation, based upon which many others are expected. It will serve as reference material for future researchers, students of Igbo dialectology and linguistics lectures, and teachers in various tertiary institutions within and outside the shores of Nigeria. It will contribute to the general drive to have the Igbo Language comprehensively described. They will add to the pool of literature in linguistics studies and theories, particularly from the perspective of deviational morphology (LMBM).

Statement of Problem

The morphology of the Igbo language is not the

same as that of other words, there are bound to be differences in their structure. These differences are crucial and significant enough to necessitate a comparative study of nature. This study is therefore an attempt to investigate aspects of Edda derivational morphology of language groups with the view to spotlighting the peculiar properties evident in the morphology of the Edda dialect in Ebonyi State Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze and describe the various derivational processes operative in the Edda dialect of Igbo in Ebonyi State Nigeria. In more specific terms the study sought to:

i. Find out the morphological manifestation of Edda dialect in Ebonyi State Nigeria.
ii. Classify the difference in Edda on the bases of the morphological processes employed in their derivation.

This study will stand as a foundation, based upon which many others are expected. It will serve as reference material for future researchers, students of Igbo dialectology and linguistics lectures, and teachers in various tertiary institutions within and outside the shores of Nigeria. It will contribute to the general drive to have the Igbo Language comprehensively described. They will add to the pool of literature in linguistics studies and theories, particularly from the perspective of deviational morphology (LMBM).This study is concerned withthe Derivational Morphology of Edda in Ebonyi State, Nigeria, it will investigate the processes of Edda word derivations, specifically those involving the creation of new words from existing root or stem in Edda. The study is limited to lexical morphological processes only.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study;

i. What are the morphological manifestations of the Edda dialect in the Igbo Language?
ii. To what degree does the morphology of Edda dialects differ from that of other languages?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this research work. They were resisted at a 0.05 level of significance;

Ho$_1$; There is no significant differences between the opinions of lecturers and students on the use of dialect in Ebonyi State Nigeria.
Ho$_2$; There is no significant difference in the opinion of lecturers and students to the degree towhich the morphology of the Edda dialect differs from other Languages.

Review of Related Literature
Theoretical framework

This study adopts the lexememorpheme-based morphology (LMBM) as propounded by Beard (1995). The Lexeme-based morphology is a variant of Aronoff's (1994), 'lexemes – based morphological theory.Recall that lexeme–basedmorphology assumes that only the lexeme is a true linguistic sign, where "Lexeme" is defined exclusively and explicitly as any noun, verb, and adjective stems. The effects of lexical and inflectional derivational derivation in the lexeme do not affect its status as a sign at all. These processes; it follows, must involve elements other than linguistic signs. Lexeme morpheme-based morphology (LMBM) is a complete set of lexeme-based morphological theories and hypotheses including the following; theseparation hypothesis which holds that lexical and inflectional derivation are distinct from affixation, the universal grammatical function theory whereby the functions of inflection and lexicalderivation are one and same, the base rule hypothesis which holds the universal functions must originate in a base component if we are to explain both lexical and syntactic (inflection) derivation, Aderson's (1992), general theory of affixation which predicts the placement of all affixes and clitics, the defective Adjective hypothesis which claims that adpositions are adjectival pronouns in a class with case endings and hence grammatical morpheme rather than lexemes; morphological performance theory which include; a theoryof lexical stock expansion processes, a theory of normal speech error, a theory of pathological speech error.

In lexemes morpheme base morphology (LMBM) the lexicon is seen as exclusively the domain of lexemes; whichis defined specifically as noun, verb, and adjective stems and the lexical categories which defined them. All other meaningful materials belong to the closed set of closed categories of grammar and are handled by "Morphology in the general sense, (derivation plus affixation). Lexeme morpheme base morphology (LMBM) therefore maintains a

distinction at every level of language and speech. In this framework lexical and inflectional morphemes hence, must represent different types of linguistic elements. Thus, as noticed in the previous chapter, the fundamental claim which distinguisheslexemes morpheme-based morphology (LMBM) from another morphological framework, is its rigid distinction of lexemes and morphemes hence its name "Lexeme-morpheme base morphology"; Beard (1995)argues that grammatical morphemes and lexemes differ in the following respects:

i. Lexemes belong to open classes whereas morpheme belongs to a closed class.
ii. Lexemes do not allow zero or empty forms whereas morphemes do.
iii. Lexemes have extra-grammatical referents whereas morphemes have a grammatical function.
iv. Lexemes may undergo lexical derivation whereas morphemes may do.
v. Lexemes are not paradigmatic whereas morphemes are.

> Lexemes morpheme-based morphology (LMBM) in its separation hypothesis view splits all derivation, lexical and inflectional-like, into three processes; lexical derivation (L. derivation) inflection derivation (L. derivation) and morphological spelling (MS). Derivation in his framework involves operations on abstract–lexical and inflectional category functions, such as (+ plural – singular) + (Past - Present) and the like, whereas spelling, is purely the phonological realization of the morphological categories of any based lexemes which haveundergone such derivation.

Review of Empirical Studies
Considerable attention has been paid to Igbo morphology with the results that many works exist in various aspects of Igbo Morphology; a few selected empirical studies, particularly in Igbo derivational morphology reviewed to include, Green and Igwe 1963, Emenanjo 1971, 1985, 1978, 1983, Williamson 1972, Nwachukwu 1975, Igwe 1977, Uwalaka 1983, Nwachukwu 1983; Onuoha 1990, Anagbogu 1990, 1995, 2000, Nwaozuzu 1991, Onukawa 1992, Oluikpa and Nwaozuzu 1995,

Mbah 1998, 1999, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2011, Crystal 2003, Ejele 2005, Onumajuru 2007, Nwankwegu 2008, 2014, Okam 2011, Nwankwegu 2013 and IIoene and Nwnozuzu 2013.

Emenanjo (1983) examines verb derivational morphology in Igbo using a descriptive approach. Foregrounding the study, Emenanjoobserves the fact that the Igbo verbal system; in general, and the verbs in particular, are the only sources in the language for creating new words. (Emenanjo 1983:43), Comparatively, Emenanjo, notes that in a language like English, the same or different word classes can be derived. He illustrates this assertion with the following examples. Man (noun), manage (verb), To man (verb), manager (noun), manly (adj.), Management (n), man-like (adj.) manage-able (ad)the following examples; (adj), management (n); man-like (adj) manage-able (adj); Man – hood (n), managerial (adj), conversely, Emenanjo 1983:42 notes that in Igbo, it is only from a verb that other words can be derived as stated below.

> "The Igbo verb is the only form class from which useful authors of cognate lexical items of varying morphological structures and equally of varying syntactic behavior have been derived and can still be derived at least for a good majority of them".

Earlier studies before Emenanjo (1983), all serious studies of Igbo grammar had recognized thephenomenon of Igbo verb-centered morphology (Green and Igwe 1963; Emenanjo (19837, 1978, Williamson 1972,Nwachukwu 1975 and Igwe 1977) while some of this works merely recognize the phenomenon, others discuss it with varying degrees of detailed exposition and exemplification, several other contemporary and post-Emenanjo, (1983) studies in Igbo grammar re-echo this morphological truism (Uwalaka 1983, Nwachukwu 1983, Mbah 2006; 2011; Okam 2011 and Nwankwegu 2013). However, some studies have observed that new words can be derived from the nominal class of Igbo, though this process is not quite productive. Expressing this observation, Nwankwegu (2013-67) recognize the one-way derivative morphology of

Igbo verb but scarcely can verbhave derived from other classes, and asserts that "Igbo morphology is verb centered". However, he notes, inner fixation derivation in Igbo could be noun-based or verb based. He exemplified this, Uwa-to-uwa (Forever); ogo-lo-ogo (Length, longness). All of which are noun-based, noun-noun, compounding has also been observed to exist in Igbo (Nwaozuzu 1991; Anogbogu 1990, 1995, 2000; Oluikpe and Nwaozuzu 1995 and Nwankwegu 2008; 2014). This observation, however, has been countered by Onuoha (1990) and Mbah (1998, 1999, 2004, 2005) Different derivational means of forming new words have been established in languages. In other words, word creation lands itself to different morphological strategies in which words are created, according to Nwankwegu (2013. 80) are affixation, borrowing, hybridization (loon-blending), calquing (loan translation) neologism (coinage) blending, eponymy, reduplication, and compounding. Other means include clipping, hypocorism, conversion, acronymization, back-formation, folket-etymology, and incorporation (Nwankwegu 2013:834) strictly speaking, not all the terms enumerated above are morphological processes. To put it more mildly, these processes and not purely morphological. To capture the aspectof morphology in which this work is interested, there is a need to restrict the strategies to concatenative processes. Not all the processes enumerated by Nwankwegu (2013) are applicable in Igbo, the dialect in which this research is interested.Onukawa (1992b) discusses the prolificacy of the rv4 as a diachronically, derivation in function in the Igbo language, characterizing its synthetic and semantic features.Based on sikirlis's (1986) model. Onukawa observes that words derived using rv4 and classifiable into various thematic meanings, including, the result of abstract action, the result of physical activity, the result of state instrument, product, agent motion activity, and motion of identification. Examples; Result of abstract action – si- "say" – asiri (a-si-r4), the result of gossiping; concluding, Onukawa (1992b: 158) posits, among other things, that the –rv4 was diachronically quite prolific in deriving nouns from simple roots in Igbo, functioning in combination with syllabic prefixes. Again, it bears some synthetic and semantic features like other morphemes, the features, which are distributed to the noun through percolation.In line with Ejele (2005), Onumajuru (2007) examine the processes of word formation in the Onicha dialect of Igbo. She identifies five modes

of word formation, namely; compounding, reduplication, affixation, nominalization, and paraphrasing.

However, working on derivations in Onicha Igbo, Onumajuru (2007) describesderivation in Onicha under the following sub-headings; prefixation interfixation, circumfixation, tonology, the deverbalization. In the opinion of this researcher, such processional descriptions of word derivation strategies as given by Ejele (2005) and Onumajuru (2007) are prone to the mix-up.It is pertinent to maintain a single base description to avoid confusing or redundantclassification. Conversely, considering the resultant derivatives, one may have the following nominalization, infinitivization, non-nominal derivation, adjectivization, and verbalization. The classification could be functional based such as Agentive derivation, instrumental derivation, etc. In this study, derivation in Edda will be analyzed purely morphologically under affixation, compounding, and reduplication as they operate underthe theory of LMBM.

The derivatives are to be categorized using LMBM-appropriate characterizations of L-derivation–transposition, functional L-derivative, and so on. Affixation according to crystal (2003:15) is the morphological process whereby grammatical or lexical information is added to a stem". Affixation are of different types, depending on the type of affix involved. Nwankwege."(2013:23) defines an affix as ...." a type of bound morpheme that is added to a root or stem to modify the grammatical or lexical value of the word or to derive a new word". Based on the morphological functions, Nwankwegu (2013:23) classifies affixes into two: inflectional and derivational affixes, and Nwachukwu (1983:60) classifies them as inflectional and non-inflectional. Nwankwegu (2013:23) also characterizes affixes on the basis, of the oppositionconcerning the root stem. On this basis, he identifies seven types of affixes, namely,

i. Prefix-an affix that precedes the stem.
ii. Suffix-an affix that follows the stems
iii. Infix-an affix that sandwiches in between the foot
iv. Interfix-an affix that follows the first base but precedes the second.
v. Circumfix-an affix that embraces the stem
vi. Transfix – an affix that interlocks a segment or a group of segments of the root.

Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey design according to Eze (2005) and Nworgu (2006) is one in which a group of people is studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few people, considered to be representative of the entire group. It is used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present, and interpret for clarification.

The study was carried out in Ebonyi State and the secondary schools in the State. The state is situated in the southeastern part of the country and shares boundaries with Benue in the north, Enugu to the northwest, Abia to the South – East and cross River to the East. It has a total land area of 5, 5333 square kilometers Ebonyi State lies between 600 15N, $0805'$ E and 06.25^0N, $08^083'$ E. (www.ngex.com/nigeria 29/10/2019).

The population of the study consists of eight Hundred (800)Lectures and 1500 students. Sample comprises eighty (80) lecturers, one hundred and fifty (150) students from each of the three (3) educational zone of the State. This total number represents about 10% of the population which is 230 respondents.

The researcher developedan instrument titled. "A study of Aspects of derivational morphology questionnaires. (ASADMQ) which was used to elicit information from the respondents. The rating scale of the questionnaire was divided into three clustered 1, 2, and 3.Cluster 1 seeks information on the Edda dialect of the Igbo Language and teachers of secondary schools in Ebonyi State, Nigeria, cluster 2 is to what degree the morphology of Edda differs from that of other languages. Cluster 3 is on the various strategies adopted by the lecturers or teachers of secondary schools in handling their dialectical challenges. The researcher used the following responding ratings. Strongly Agree, (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). The points rated 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively and the decision rule calculated thus,

$$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.5$$

Copies of the rating scale were given to two experts in the department of linguistics at the Ebonyi State University and Abia State University Uturu, for validation, hence, the instrument received both content and face validity.

The reliability of the instrument was carried out using 30 lecturers and 30 teachers from selected Secondary Schools in the Enugu Metropolis of Enugu State who were not part of the study groups. Cronbach Alpha tool was used to correlate the score and a correlation coefficient index of 0.85 was obtained. The services of three research assistants were employed by the researcher for dialect administration of the questionnaireinstrument to the respondents. The questionnaire instrument was administered to the respondents and subsequently collected and collated. The data collected were presented in a frequency table to the research questions. The researcher used a mean score of 2.50 decision points to answer the research question while the hypotheses were tested using z-test statistics at a 0.05 levelof significance. The decision rule was that any item that has a mean score of 2.50 and above is in agreement while a mean score below 2.50 is in disagreement.

Results

Research question 1: What are the morphological manifestations of the Edda dialect in the Igbo Language.

Table 1. Mean ratings and standard deviation of lecturers and students on the morphological manifestation of the Edda dialect of the Igbo language?

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	Lecturers(80) $\bar{X}$	SD	DECISION	Students (150) $\bar{X}$	SD	DECISION
1.	Lectures are responsible for using reduplication to derive new words which embraces word derivation in Edda Igbo.	3.2	1.22	A	2.5	0.812	A
2.	The lecturers are required to organize Idophonic reduplication in Edda dialect of Igbo Language.	3.21	0.83	R	3.10	0.65	A
3.	The lecturers use reduplication involving Prefixation in Edda which will enable the Students work and practice other Languages.	3.40	1.73	A	3.81	0.62	A
4.	Lecturers using verb-verb and noun-noun compounding or composition among the student.	2.80	1.94	A	3.60	0.64	A
5.	Using Edda dialect in communicating Both lectures and students	3.22	0.89	R	3.15	0.62	A
	Average Total.	3.81	0.61		3.77	0.65	

Table 1: Contain information on the Edda dialect of the Igbo Language. The five (5) items presented in the table were all accepted by both the lecturers and the students with the average mean value of 3.8 and 3.778 respectively as the morphological manifestation of the Edda dialect of Igbo Language.

Research question 2: To what degree does the morphology of Edda dialects differ from that of other languages?

Table 2. Means response of what degree does morphology of Edda dialects differs from that of other languages?

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	LECTURERS (80)			STUDENTS (150)		
		$\bar{X}$	S. D	DECISION	$\bar{X}$	SD	DECISION
1.	Edda employs category incorporation Copiously in deriving new words	2.51	0.81	A	2.56	0.80	A
2.	Edda dialect employs transposition, affixation Which includes prefixes, Interfixes, and Suffixes in L-derivation.	3.31	0.55	A	3.21	0.61	A
3.	Partial reduplication in Edda occurs with obligatory prefixation.	3.01	0.58	A	2.81	0.78	A
4.	Edda dialect uses idiophonic reduplication In their morphological processes.	2.56	0.76	A	3.02	0.88	A
5.	Edda dialect uses words transposed Via Prefixation in their morphological Processes	2.66	0.67	A	2.77	0.72	A
	Average Total	2.71	0.63	A	3.64	0.52	A

Table 2: Table 2 above contains the data on how the degree of the morphology of the Edda dialect differs from that of other languages. The respondents agreed and accepted all the items presented in the table, including the morphological difference of the Edda dialect from that of other languages. This is evident in the total average of 2.602 for lecturers and 36.4 for students respectively.

Table 3: Z-test on the differences in responses of lecture and students on the frequency of dialect in Igbo language conversation.

Group	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	P	Z-STAT	REMARK
Lecturers	80	3.81	0.42	228	0.023	0.2218	
Students	150	3.25	0.58				

The Z-test hypothesis table indicates total averages mean score of 3.81 for lecturers and 3.25 for the students while the total average standard deviation of lecturers is 0.42. with the Z-Stat value of 0.2218 and Z-cal. Of 0.o23. Hence, the null hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of the Lectures and students.

Table 4: Z-test on the difference in the mean scores of lecturers and students on a degree at which the Edda dialect differs from other languages in the Ebonyi State of Nigeria.

Group	N	X̄	SD	DF	P	Z-STAT	REMARK
Lecturers	80	2.60	0.81	228	0.0096	1.96	
Students	150	2.55	0.91				

The Z-test hypothesis table indicates a total average mean score of 2.62 lecturers and 2.55 for students while the standard deviation of 0.81 for lecturers and 0.91 for students. With a Z statistics value of 0.0096 which is less than the tabulated value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis shows there is no significant difference between the mean score values for the two respondents and hence the hypothesis is upheld.

Discussion and Recommendations
Discussion of Results

The findings revealed that the following are the morphological manifestations of the Edda dialect of the Igbo Language.Lecturers are responsible for using reduplication to derive new words which embrace word derivation in the Edda dialect. The lecturers are required to organize idophonic reduplication in the Edda dialect.The lectures use reduplication involving prefixation in Edda which will enable the students to work and practice other languages.Lectures using verb-verb and noun-noun compounding or composition among the students. Using Edda dialect in communicatingwith one another both lecturers and students.These are in agreement with the finding of (Onuoha 1990, Nwaozuzu 1991, Mba 1995, Oluikpe and Nwazuzu 1995, and Nwozuzu 2003). These researchers work on various derivational morphology.

Edda employs category incorporation copiously in deriving new words,the dialect employs transposition, affixation which includes prefixes, interfixes, and suffixes in L-derivation,Partial reduplication,and obligatory prefixation, the dialects use words transposed via prefixationin their morphological processesEdda dialects use idiophonic reduplication in their morphological processes.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

i. Every lecture in tertiary institutionsin Ebonyi State Nigeria should encourage the students of the department of linguistics to see that derivational morphology as a very essential aspect of the morphology of the human language.

ii. There should be a regular practice of the Edda dialect in our various schools in line with the school curriculum.

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