# Morphological Description of Noun Formation Process: Case of Suffixation and Prefixation in Iguta Language

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*Abstract:*
*This paper dwells on a concise morphological description of Noun formation process involved in Iguta language (a minority endangered language in the north central, Nigeria). To this end, the paper explores the suffixation and prefixation processes involved in the formation of nouns of Iguta language. Ado's (2017) 455 Iguta wordlists was employed as secondary data and was qualitatively used as instrument for the analyses in this paper. Ado's 455 Iguta wordlists is primarily based on the standard dialect (i.e., Andirgiza) spoken by its native speakers in five selected towns in Jos North local government of the Plateau state, Nigeria. Hand analysis strategy and a thematic analytical process were used in developing insights on the language data during the analysis. The findings revealed '-char, -di and –e' morphs as suffixes to inflect while 't-, ti-, ha-, a-, an-, m-, i-, ma-, si-, ndu-, s-, tu-, tun-, tumu- morphs as prefixes to either inflect or derive nouns. It is also observed that most singular nouns in Iguta are inflected to produce the plural forms using **ti-** or **tu-** prefixes especially when the pattern of the singular words begin with a vowel morpheme or phoneme. In accordance with the findings, it is suggested that prefixes and suffixes are part of the affixation process used in noun formation of Iguta language. In conclusion, the study has contributed in descriptive linguistics in terms inflectional or derivational suffixation and prefixation process used to build nouns in Iguta language. This paper may assist professional teachers and linguists in understanding the suffixations and prefixations existing in Iguta language.*
*Keywords: Morphology, Noun formation, prefixation, suffixation, Iguta language*

## 1. Introduction

Language is a conscious organised method controlled by the use of symbols or conventions, which involves the notion of meaning. Language is vital for human existence. It is both inevitable and irreversible as it is the only thing that distinguishes between man and other lower animals. Sapir (1963) believed that language is purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires through a system of voluntarily produced symbols. Language serves as a medium through which humans communicate. In language, sounds are combined to form words, phrases, clauses and finally, meaningful utterances. The basic pre-occupation of linguists, therefore, is to determine how the various components are structured to form meaningful utterances for human communication. The nominal system occupies a large portion of the grammatical category in every known language. Therefore, this paper hints on the morphological description of Noun formation processes involved in Iguta language. The paper mainly focused on how the nouns are formed through suffixation and prefixation processes.

The 1990s was faced with credible concern for language endangerment worldwide, yet it is equally important to note that the situation is not the same in the African context. The concern in Africa was that of expansion of the existing literatures regarding language endangerment. This is evidently shown by the inclusion of a map of endangered West African languages by Wurm (1996). Similar contribution was provided by Brenzinger (1998) in his attempt to find gaps in the African literary materials about endangered languages. This effort was supported by the works of Connell (1998) and Kastenholz (1998) when they rendered support towards giving case studies about the threatened and moribund West African languages.

As the trend continues, Blench (1998) contributed by summarising the status of languages of the Middle Belt of Nigeria. This point is very vital and relevant to this paper as Iguta is among the minority languages of the Middle Belt of Nigeria. Blench (2007) further provided a reliable justification of endangered languages of West African Sub-Region by assigning status to each and every language of West Africa on the database.

It has been observed that most of the well documented languages in the West African region belong to the elite group. These languages are mostly the ones with official status of the national languages of their respective countries. However, the least documented languages are spoken by the ordinary marginalised population. The communities that experienced conflicts in West Africa are mostly the ones with threatened languages due to the loss of lives of their language speakers (Sands, 2009). Another major source of language endangerment is the government attitudes towards policy making. The government policies in most part of the West African society show disregards to minority languages and do not bother to implement policies that could promote them. This can be seen in the university context. Mostly linguists in the African universities do not pay much attention to languages spoken by the minorities instead they focus on regional or dominant ones (Heine & Nurse, 2000; Childs, 2003; Sands, 2009).

Iguta language is one of the minority languages spoken in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State in the central part of Nigeria (in West African Region). Genetically, Iguta is a "Group 1" of the seven Benue-Congo language families under Niger-Kordofanian phylum (Greenberg, 1963). Iguta is dialectally diverse, with at least five recorded dialects being in used with mutual intelligibility existing among them. These consist of Andirgiza (Targwon), Andigong, Annabor, Anagohon, Andoho (Andisama). The present morphological description focuses on the Andirgiza (Targwong) dialect being the standard one, primarily spoken within the six major villages of the Jos North local Government Area of the Plateau State in the central Nigeria.

The Anaguta land covers the areas surrounding Babale down to the stream which marks the boundary between Plateau and Bauchi State i.e. the Anaguta land extended from somewhere around Rafin-Jaki where it shares a boundary with Tilden Fulani to somewhere along Hwoll-Aza. It shares a boundary with the Rukuba West. To the North-East, they share a boundary with Buji. To the South, Anaguta's land is shared a boundary with Berom and Jarawa (Afizere). To the North-West, they share a boundary with Berom and both lands are demarcated by the Bukuru River. The area is mostly rocky and mountainous with hills scattered here and there. In addition, the rock formation is interspersed by wide valleys and plains which are used for agricultural purposes.

The Anaguta experienced a demographic dislocation as a result of war. They have migrated from Rimin Zayan of Toro Local Government Area of Bauchi State to the present Jos North Local Government Area of the Plateau State. Where they now occupy Naraguta, Kunga, Babale, Rafin Jaki, Zakaliyo, Rukuba Ring-Road, Maza, Tagir or Arai, Fadama, Hwoll and Yelwa villages in the Jos North local government area (Blench, 1998). According to Diamond (1960), Anagutas are wonderful people of the middle belt of Nigeria with vast lands suitable for agricultural purposes. Their population is estimated to be about 2500 and they live in a dispersed settlement within the horticultural rugged hills of Gwong District, in Jos Division of Plateau Province in Nigeria. Sil (1977) reported that Anaguta had an estimated total number of 3,000 speakers. However, based on the 1990 Nigerian population census their population had risen to the estimated number of 6,123 speakers.

Accordingly, it was strongly argued that the key activity that linguists may delve in to maintain and revive any minority, dying or endangered language is through linguistic works and its description (Corris, Manning, Poetsch & Simpson 1999). In this paper, however, we focus on the morphological issues related to the suffixation and prefixation processes involved in the formation of nouns of Iguta language. The nominal system occupies a large portion of the grammatical category in every known language (Sapir, 1963). Therefore, the paper has provided the nominal morphology system of Iguta language spoken in Jos North Local Government Area of the Plateau State in the central part of Nigeria. The major audience for this morphological description of noun formation processes is felt to be people from literate traditions such as professional teachers, linguists and researchers.

## 2. Problem Statement

Iguta language is among the minority languages (Basilect) in the plateau state of Nigeria. Iguta is a language with very few linguistic studies. The language still remains more or less in the spoken form which has been passed down from generation to generation by oral tradition. Although there are some works written on the historical background of the Anaguta people, not much has been done on the morphology of the language (Ames, 1934; Jungraithmayr 1963; Diamond, 1967; Gunn, 1953; Nyam, 1988).

A review of literature provides some studies conducted on morphology of nouns, and morphological processes and how they exist in most of the languages of Northern Nigeria, particularly the ones in Plateau State, the central part of Nigeria. Examples of studies conducted on the Morphology of Nouns include studies by Parsons (1955), Bola (2005), Andrew (2005), Shina'an (2011) and Felicia (2012). Furthermore, the studies on Morphological Processes are Mele (2005), Yakubu (2009), Muazu (2009), Giwa (2011), Nkanga (2012) and Sale (2012). Other studies conducted that involved morphology includes Rufa'i (1979), Abubakar (2001), Adura (2008), Al-Hassan (2011) and Fomwul (2011) among others.

So far very little has been done on the linguistics aspect of Iguta. This includes a study on the documentation of an endangered language: a case study of Iguta wordlist (Ado, 2017). This provided some credence to the language. Nevertheless, Ado (2017) focused only on lexical documentation of Iguta wordlists that can be used for further linguistic studies in the language. Nevertheless, there are few researches as regards to the morphological description of noun formation in Iguta language, especially the suffixation and prefixation processes on the language. Therefore, this study explored and described the morphological processes involved in Iguta nouns, which has not been done before. The study also aims to explore how the nouns are formed or derived through suffixations or prefixation processes in the language.

This paper was positioned within the theoretical framework of Matthew's (1979) Affixation process.

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1 Morphological Analysis

Hartmann and Stock (1972) defined morphology as a study which deals with the analysis of structures, forms and classes of words. The detention endings of inflection such as –*s* in *walks,* and the derivational ending such as –*ness* as in *happiness* are examples. Sharing similar opinion, Morris (1989) views morphology as a study of the internal construction of words in which a word can be analysed into word elements, or morphemes. For example; *"replacement"* which is composed of *re-"place" -ment* and *"walk"*, from the element *"walk"-ed*.

Likewise Bauer (1988), Okolo and Ezikeojiaku (1999 as cited in Okeke, 2008) consider the concept as the level of linguistic analysis, that studies structures of words and the basic unit known as morpheme. Although Bauer (1988) added that, it

is also used for the sequences of rules which are postulated by linguists to account for the change in shape of the words. He further asserts that the description and investigation mentioned which results into the analyses of these basic units are guided by the any language under discussion. Following the similar tract recently, Yule (2005) also refers to morphology as a kind of study which explores all the basic elements of words used in a language through analyses. These elements are known as morphemes. However, there are limits to the definition offers by Yule (2007) because he did not include 'structure' or 'form' of words as the basic elements used for the analyses in morphology.

Meanwhile, we observed that most of these scholars' definitions shared similar views as regard to the morphological analysis of a language. In this sense, morphological analysis takes many procedures. A unique method is to make a distributional study of morphemes and morphemic variants occurring in words. Another methodology sets up morphological processes or operations are to see the relationships between word forms as one of the replacement. And these can be answered through the definition made by Bauer's (1988), Okolo and Ezikeojiaku's (1999) as cited in Okeke (2008)**.** This definition is chosen because it elaborates all the elements required in a morphological analysis such as words, affixes, parts of speech, intonation and stress as being the instruments for measuring or determining the nouns and nominal morphology of Iguta language in this study.

In fact, this paper we share the opinion that Morphological analysis is considered at the level of linguistics analyses which focused on the structure of words and the basic unit known as morpheme. Moreover, we also viewed it as sequences of rules that are postulated by linguists to account for the change in the shape of words through the description and investigation resulting into basic units as guided by in the analyses of the language used for this paper (Bauer, 1988; Okeke, 2008). In this sense, morpheme is defined as the smallest individually meaningful element in the utterances of a language (Hockett, 1959; O'Grady 1996). In addition, it is equally viewed as the smallest unit of meaning which is grammatically pertinent and can be further be divisible to effect semantic changes (Gleason, 1961; Tomori, 1977).

 Examples:

   a) Tourists  -  tour/ist/s
   b) Reopened – re/open/ed

In the above example (a) the word is made up of three morphemes; the  first is a minimal unit of meaning *"tour",* the second is also a minimal unit of meaning *"ist"* (a person who does something) and the third is  a minimal unit of grammatical function *"s"* (indicating plurality). In  example (b)  also there are three morphemes, it has a minimal unit of meaning *"open"* and the initial *"re"* is a minimal unit of meaning  (denotes again) while *"ed"* (indicates past tense). In the light of the above definitions and explanation, one can infer that morpheme is the basic unit of analyses in morphology.

**3.2 Types and Classes of Morphemes**

Besides knowing the different definitions of morpheme, an understanding of two types of morpheme is needed. A type of morpheme is a category based on how it is combined with other morphemes to form words. O'Grady (1996) distinguishes morphemes into *free* and bound. According to him, free morpheme is that which can be a word itself and the *bound* morpheme is that which is attached to other elements to form words. This implies that morphemes are of two types, namely; "*Free*" (independent) morphemes and the "*Bound*" (dependent) morphemes. Yule (2007:75-78) explained a morpheme as "a minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function". He further identifies the morpheme as having branches in which it is illustrated in Figure 1.1 below:
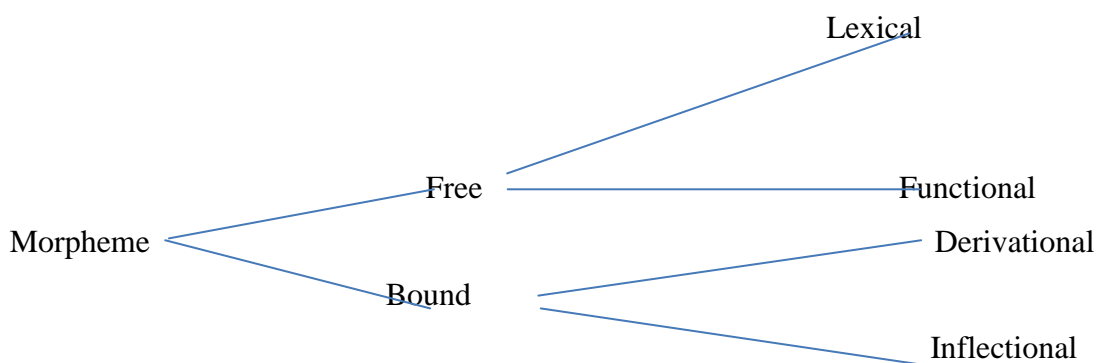


Figure 1.1: Types and Classes of Morphemes

Basically, *free morphemes* being the minimal unit can stand by themselves as single words, for examples: *'open'* and *'tour'* which can further exist in isolation and hence, are also referred to as *independent morphemes* (Yule, 2007). Robin (1967) viewed *free morpheme* as a type of morpheme that can stand as a word and act as a *root* or *stem* in which other morphemes can be affixed to, in formation of new word. Robin (1967) shared a similar opinion with Yule (2007), but he added that a *free morpheme* can constitute a word by itself and exist independently with both semantic and the grammatical meaning without combining with other morphemes. For instance, in English language it includes *'go', 'eat', 'sit* and others. These are free morphemes because they constitute words in their own right. Moreover, Crystal (1991) and Akmajian et al (2007) consider free morphemes as those types of morphemes that can occur as separate words. The study therefore shows that the *free morphemes* are those morphemes that can stand on their own. They can further make meaning on their own without depending on other morphemes. At this point, it should be noted that the root of any word is the *free morpheme*. Hence, Ndimele (1999) confirms after identifying that *free morpheme* do occur in isolation without necessarily having to be attached to another grammatical unit(s). He further classified the morphemes into categories and claims that the classification depends on their semantic content. They are the *lexical free morphemes* and the *functional free morphemes*.

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The *lexical free morphemes* are those set of ordinary nouns, adjectives and verbs known as   the words that carry the content of the message one conveys. Therefore, the lexical free morphemes have an independent dictionary meaning of their own (Crystal, 1991; Katamba, 1993; Ndimele, 1999). They further assert that this class of words can be treated as an "open" class of words because they permit new lexical morphemes to be added to the language. Some examples in English language are:

> Verbs  - *dance, play, open, see, walk etc.*
> Nouns  - *boy, man, tiger, house, car, etc.*
> Adjectives - *yellow, red, green, blue, purple etc.*

Other examples in Ibibio language of Nigeria includes: *úfòk-* "house", *sé-* "look", *kpéké* – "cut", *bòm* – "break"  and others as identified by Nkanga (2012).

On the other hand, Ndimele (1999) and Yule (2007) explained that functional free morphemes are also known as grammatical morphemes and are used to mark grammatical relationship in the larger constructions in which they occur. In other words, they are sets of words which consist largely of the functional words in a language such as pronouns, determiners, prepositions and conjunctions. In addition, they would never add new functional morphemes to the language. Thus, are described as a *"closed"* class of words. For examples, *and, because, near, in, the, above, when, but, on,* and others. Therefore, our focus in this paper is on the lexical free morphemes dealing with suffixes and prefixes on nouns formation processes in Iguta language.

On the other hand, *bound morphemes* are the types of morphemes that do not normally stand-alone but are typically attached to another form (Yule, 2007). In contrast, Robin's (1967) viewed *bound morpheme* as the type of morpheme that is unable to establish words by itself but must appear with at least one other morpheme, either bound or a free in a word. For example, in English language, the following are bound morphemes: *-s, -ed, –un, -full, -less, -ly, -ment, -es* and others. These are *bound morpheme* because they are not words on their own but must appear or must be added to other free morphemes in grammatical processes. Such instances can be best demonstrated in the following English examples, the *–s* is usually added to a free morpheme to form the plural form as in *boy – boys,* and the *–ed* is usually added to a free morpheme to form the past tense as in *look – looked,* also, the *un-* is added to some words in the case of fixation, as in *forget – unforgettable*.

On a similar note, Akmajian et al. (2007) and Finnegan (2012) also added in their explanation of *bound morpheme* that a bound morpheme cannot stand alone but must be attached to another morpheme. *Bound morpheme* performs morphological function and become meaningful only when they are affixed or attached to the related root. In Ibibio and many other languages of central Nigeria, such affixes can precede the root, in which case they are referred to as prefixes, or they can follow the root, which are refers as suffixes (Nkanga, 2012). The general term covering *suffixes* and *prefixes* is called *affixation*. Examples of affixes in Ibibio language are: *-a-,* as in *á-nò* "she/he has given", *e-,* as in *énò* "gift", *-na,* as in *â-nàn-ná* "she/he

*has stretched"*. In fact, all affixes most particularly in English language are referred to as bound morphemes and they are of two types namely: derivational morphemes and inflectional morphemes (Essien 1990a & Yule, 2007).

It should be noted that we choose the classification of morphemes made by Yule (2007) as part of the analytical framework for this paper. This is because Yule (2007) had illustrated in details all the silent points required for the morphological analysis of words by categorising the morphemes into entities for easy identification and usage. Likewise Robin's (1967), Akmajian's et al. (2007) and Finnegan's (2012) views on *bound morpheme* are also considered more appropriate for this study. This is because all of them viewed a *bound morpheme* as a kind of morpheme which cannot establish words by itself but must appear with at least one other morpheme, either bound or a free in a word.

Another relevant aspect of significant to this paper is *derivational morpheme*. Essien (2010) explained that the *derivational morphemes* are those morphemes that do not merely change the grammatical form of a word, like from past tense form to present tense form. The *derivational morphemes* are capable of creating a new word from another such that the new word so created can itself take on grammatical form like the one from which it was created.

This means that a *derivational morpheme* is capable of changing the grammatical category of a word. For example from a verb to a noun as in *'teach'* (verb) to become the *'teacher'* (noun). Thus, in African languages such as Ibibio and Iguta, we have similar cases where a verb is derived from a noun vice versa as in Ibibio language where *'Ikpe'* (case) as a noun is derived to become verb *'kpe'* (settle a case). This is part of the affixation processes used in this paper as *derivational morphemes* involved in the creation of the new words.

On the other hand, *inflectional morpheme* being a type that marks the grammatical morphemes such as number, person, gender, tense aspect and mood does produce different grammatical forms of the same word (Essien, 2010). Again, in African languages such as Iguta and Ibibio, affixation are sometimes combined with other processes, to indicate person, tense, aspects, mood, number and negation, while at other times location is used to indicate affixation (Nkanga,2012).

Finegan (2012) confirms that *inflectional morphemes* change the form of a word but not lexical category or its central meaning. Inflectional morphemes create varieties of words form in order to conform to different roles in a sentence or discourse. He further asserts that on nouns and pronouns, inflectional morphemes serve to mark semantic notions such as number or grammatical categories such as case.

On a similar note, Yule (2007) in the recent study asserts that *inflectional morphemes* are not used to produce new words in the English language, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. In line with this view Akmajia et al. (2007) further notes that inflectional affixes never change the category (part of speech) of the basic morpheme. Therefore in English all inflectional affixes are suffixes. For example, *-s, -ing, -ed, -en, -er,* and *–est as in words like girl-girls, sing-singing, soft-soften, pass-passed,* and *fast-fastest*.

It is true that *inflectional morphemes* do not change the word class or the category of the base morpheme. Subsequently this paper shares similar view offered by Akmjian at el. (2007) over inflectional affixes because it is observed that similar process appears to occur in African languages like Iguta and Ibibio language. On the other hand, Nkanga (2012) stated that apart from the prefix changing from the first, second, and the third person singular to plural form, all other suffixes in Ibibio language are inflectional morphemes and do not change the word class of a word. For instance,

*Wàk (tear something)* ————————→*Wài (tear many things)*
*Kop (hear)* ———————————*n – Kòp-pó ( I hear not)*

Nkanga (2012) further proved that the */n/* in the example stands for 1<sup>st</sup> person singular and interestingly signifies that most suffixes in the Ibibio shows negation like the *"po"* in the word *n-kòp-pó*. Therefore, this paper concur with Essien's (2010) and Finnegan's (2012) views inflectional morpheme as they combined the necessary ingredients that mark the grammatical morphemes such as number, person, gender, tense aspect and mood.

### 3.3 Noun as a Concept

Nouns are the most common class of words existing in almost all languages of the world (David, 1994). Nouns are names of various categories which may be classified into four namely: proper nouns, common nouns, collective and abstract nouns (David, 1994). The four sub classes indicated refer to names of persons, things, places, events, concepts and ideas. David (1994) further explained that proper nouns are names of specific persons, places, things, or events, while common nouns generally covered things that share mutual features. They are not specifying to a particular persons, objects, or places. The examples include *man, woman, market, crop, book, tree,* and others.

In addition, collective nouns are names which refer to groups of people or things. These include *family, congregation, flock* and others. The abstract nouns are names on the other hand; refer to qualities, or thoughts, or emotions. They do not appear to have tangible existence and they cannot be appreciated with the sense of touch, hearing or sight. In other words, the abstract nouns are those types of nouns that refer to as mental conception which can only be seen in one's own mind picture. The examples include *love, honour, beauty, faith, courage* and others. Hence, this was part of the triggered interest to specifically explore the noun formation process of Iguta language in this paper.

### 3.4 Morphological Processes of the Languages of Northern Nigeria

The study of morphology concerns with the word formation and inflection. This could either lexical or inflectional morphology. Moreover, the process involves derivational and compounding in the words formation through the subdivision of the words into smaller sub-fields (Matthews, 1974; Abubakar, 2000).

Among the pioneer studies on morphology in the northern Nigeria was Rufa'I (1979) who described certain processes that exist in Hausa language within the

framework and theory of morphology. Rufa'i (1979) explained the principal processes that account for word formation in Hausa, where he examined six different morphological processes: Compounding, Affixation, Reduplication, Zero derivation, Borrowing and Manufacturing. Although Rufa'i's work provides a detailed morphological analysis of Hausa, yet it lacks formulated rules to safeguard the study. In fact there are some items which are explicitly not part of the core morphology like "*manufacturing*" and some others are even bewildered. While certain items like vowel length were analysed, tone and inflection were not even mentioned and these slightly differs with the recommended theoretical frameworks of scholars as Matthew (1974 & 1993) over morphological process.

Matthew (1974) had provided an established guideline on morphological processes and these are subcategorised into three basic types, thus: Affixation, Reduplication and Modification. Under each of these types there are other subdivisions. For instance, Affixation process is to deal with any of Prefixation, Suffixation and Infixation; Reduplication to focus on being partial or complete while Modification includes Total or modification. In addition, the partial modifications were further subcategorised into Vowel change, Stress change, Tonal modification, Subtraction and Neutralization.

Similarly, Abubakar (2000) was slightly different with the Matthews' (1974). The difference was on modification, the last type of morphological processes. In Abubakar's (2000) research on Hausa morphological process, partial modification was divided into ten, and these are: Suppletion (i.e. tonal modification), Vowel change, Stress change, Tone modification, Subtraction, Clipping, and Zero modification, Hypocorism, Blends and Acronyms.

Of interest to this paper was the finding of Abubakar (2000) over derivational affixes where he shares the same view with Lyons (1970 & 1977) and Kiparsky (1983) that zero derivation is a branch of derivation and that it could either be affixal or non-affixal. Affixal derivation can be class-maintaining or class changing, while non-affixal derivation (i.e. zero derivation) is class changing. Although, linguists had expressed different opinions over the status of zero derivation within word-formation where scholars as Lyons (1970 & 1977) and Kiparsky (1983) felt that zero formation is a branch of derivation, while others as Merchand (1969), Strang (1968) and (Bauer, 1983) treat it as a separate type of word-formation with same level with derivation and compounding. Notwithstanding, the concern of this paper is the fact that derivation can be affixal with either class maintaining or changing.
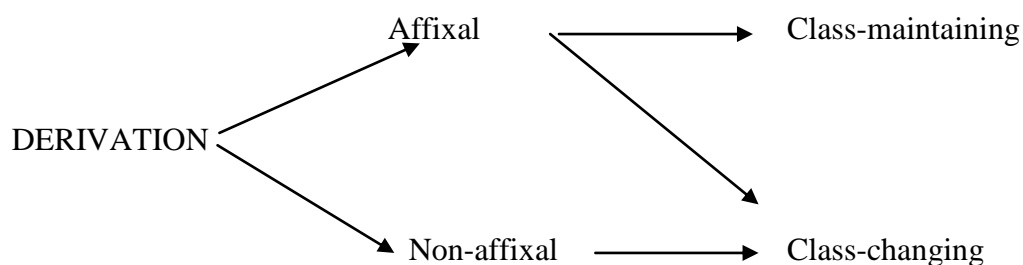


Figure 1.2: Derivational Processes

In an attempt to discover and describe the tonal behaviour of Kanuri language, Mele (2005) discusses the morphological processes that exist in the language. Data was collected primarily through oral interviews (unstructured) by asking the informants questions who are mostly native speakers of the language. The study was based on the central dialect called Yerwa. Secondary data was collected on written materials existing on the language. The study was conducted using Matthew's (1974) model. Similarly, Kamal (2005) conducts a study on morphological analysis of Moro'a language to find out how word structure in the Asholio dialect of the language. Data was obtained from the participants who are matured educated natives of the language through unstructured interview. The interview was flexible in the sense that the participants were allowed to express themselves freely by even going beyond the questions asked in giving their views about the morphological processes in Moro'a language. The age category of the participants was ranged between 45 to 50 years old and the kinds of questions asked are "Are the affixation processes common in Moro'a language? With the sample answers of "Yes, Moro'a language has three sub-division of Affixation. For examples:

| *PREFIXATION* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Prefixes* | + | *roots* | = | *Result* | Gloss |
| *Achi* | + | *Myiam* | = | *Achimyiam* | 'learner' |
| *Ati* | + | *tak* | = | *Atitak* | 'legs' |
| *Ku* | + | *baai* | = | *Kubaai* | 'came' |
| *INFIXATION* | | | | | |
| *Roots* | + | *Infixes* | = | *Results* | Gloss |
| *Fuwo* | + | *f* | = | *fufwo* | 'ear' |
| *Abiyen* | + | *bi* | = | *Abibiyen* | 'breasts' |
| *Jong* | + | *u* | = | *Joung* | 'give' |
| *SUFFIXATION* | | | | | |
| *Roots* | + | *Suffix* | = | *Result* | Gloss |
| *Vak* | + | *gyang* | = | *Vagyang* | 'another road' |
| *Obu* | + | *nung* | = | *obunung* | 'my dog' |
| *Fak* | + | *Zit* | = | *Fakzit* | 'hear us' |
| *Zwat* | + | *ng* | = | *zwang* | 'sitting' |

The study adopted the Matthew's (1974 & 1993) model of approach and discovered that  showed how inflectional prefixes and derivational prefixes are formed in the Moro'a language in contrast to what exist in English language.

In a similar vein, Yakubu (2009) conducted a study on the morphological processes of Tarok personal names to provide an effective and practical contribution to the body of knowledge by developing the language and its teaching material in Nigeria and with the aim of preventing the extinction of the language. The study used oral interview and tape-recording in gathering information from the participants who are competent native speakers of the language. Textual materials written by both native speakers and the foreign researchers were served as the secondary source of data for the study. The study found three morphological processes that are involved in the

derivation of personal nouns and these are affixation, compounding and reduplication. The affixations were found to be used in forming personal names and these were the suffix *'cit'* and *'kat'*.

Similarly, Muazu (2009) explored morphological processes involved in Kilba language using both Matthew's (1974) and Abubakar's (2000) models of approach. The study found the existence of three basic processes: Reduplication, Affixation and Modification. Affixation is revealed to be the commonest in Kilba language. Ma'azu observed four prefixes in the language which includes *"ndər-, njir-, mbor-, with vi-"* and another five suffixes which are*:* *"–kur"* as abstract noun suffix, *"-da, -nga, -nyə, -kə'yə, -kənda"* as possessive suffixes, while *"-na and –nda"* as marking both demonstrative and emphatic suffixes while "ari" suffix marks emphatic in Kilba language. The study also identified other suffixes in the language like *"-ánì, -tì, -yà, -bìyà, -nà, -nyà* with *rì.* The study does not indicate the number of participants and their age category. The instrument used for the data collection too is not mentioned.

With the aid of the same approach, Giwa (2011) equally studied the morphological processes of Alago (a case study of Doma dialect) of Eastern South-Central Niger Congo and analysed the morphemes that enrich the Alago language with a view of making new discoveries and evolving ideas that will enhance the development of the language. Through qualitative interview the researcher retrieved data from ten native speakers of the language as informants whose competence in the language was unquestionably and analysed based on Matthew's (1974) model. The result had revealed the three tiers of morphological processes (i.e., affixation, reduplication, modification).

On a similar note, a study on the introductory morphology of Jakattoe, a branch of Angas-Goemai from West Chadic languages of Nigeria was conducted with the view to identify the morphological concept and other relevant topics of discourse in morphology of the language that could serve as a document for further linguistics research in the language. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. The primary data was obtained through non structured interviews of six different native speakers within the age of 40 to 70 years of age. Unlike most studies reviewed in this paper Fomwul (2011) employed Yule's (2007) model and discovered that Jakattoe is a tonal language with *affixes* mostly serving as *quantifiers*. The results also, showed that affixes also distinguished gender and they can be used in word derivation. The *'mūep'* suffix on the other hand, is seen as a plural marker in the language.

Recently, in the same vein, Nkanga (2012) provided a detail analysis of the morphological and internal structure of Ibibio nouns by focusing on their types and morphological make-up. The method employed in the process of gathering information was interviews and written materials from books and journals about the language. The study adopted Essien's (1990) and Urua's (2000) models in examining the effect of tones in Ibibio language and how nouns are formed. The study revealed that Ibibio has *base formed nous, compound* and *blended nouns*. The study also showed that nouns in Ibibio begin with *vowels or syllabic nasal sounds*

which sometimes they involve the process of elision. This process refers to some sounds of a word are dropped or deleted in order to form *compound names*. The result highlighted has shown that when the sound plummeted, its tone marking remains as in the case of blending. While in other cases the compound words are reduced to a shorter form as in the case of clipping. Meanwhile, Durueke (2012) studied reduplication in Tiv language of central Nigeria. The study was conducted to provide pedagogical materials for teachers and learning materials for the students of linguistics.

The review of these studies has obviously shown that extensive studies were conducted on morphological aspects of certain languages of Northern Nigeria. However, Iguta language was not one of them. It was equally observed that most of these studies adopted the Matthews' (1974) model as their framework. This suggests the strength of the model in terms of suitability in conducting any related morphology study in the languages of northern Nigeria. This among other reasons, we adapted and utilised the Matthew's (1974) framework with focus to the suffixation and prefixations processes of noun formation of Iguta language of the north central of Nigeria.

## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1 Research Design

This paper employed a qualitative approach in the attempt to explore and provide a concise description of the morphological analysis involved in Noun formation process of Iguta language. There are quite a number of qualities involved in using qualitative approach in language related research. Merriam (1998) clearly opined three which consist of being particularistic, descriptive as well as being heuristic for in-depth analyses for information rich of findings. By being particularistic, it implies that the researcher has clear definition of the specific phenomenon being focused as case to study. In this paper we focused on exploration of the suffixation and prefixation processes involved in the formation of nouns of Iguta language. Merriam (1998) also viewed "*description*" as the end product of a case study's phenomenon in focused which in parallel coincide with the objective in this paper '*to provide a concise morphological description of noun formation process Iguta language*'. 'Heuristic' on the other hand, according to Merriam (1998), a researcher could make a given phenomenon clearer. In fact through, qualitative approach we were able to provide rich and comprehensive description of the secondary data been used with clarity of purpose as shown under data collection and instrument.

### 4.2 Data Collection Procedure and Instrument

This paper used secondary source of data. Ado's (2017) 455 Iguta wordlists was the secondary data been utilised for the analyses. Ado's (2017) 455 Iguta wordlists is primarily based on the standard dialect (i.e., Andirgiza) spoken by its native speakers in five selected towns of Jos North local government of the Plateau state, in the north central part of Nigeria. Ado's (2017) 455 Iguta wordlists was initially generated through qualitative means in the dwellings of the native speakers of the language. This was made based on Swadesh (1955) 400 wordlist that the researchers

adapted as instrument and used in the compilation of 465 list of words through interview with twenty native speakers of the language (Ado & Bidin, 2017).

The Ado's (2017) Iguta wordlist is argued is viewed as the most stable set of lexicons of Iguta language that can objectively be used as instrument and guide (i.e., bank of vocabularies or lexicons) for any further morphological analyses (Ado & Bidin) as in the case of this paper.

## 4.3 Method of Data Analyses

Hand analysis strategy and a thematic analytical process were used in developing insights from the Ado's (2017) 455 Iguta wordlist been used as the language data during the analysis.

For analyses, the data was systematically sorted out first through mind mapping in the attempt to identify the suitable topics that could be well integrated into hierarchical order of themes. As we prepared the data then we studied every bit of it and familiarised ourselves with the data. After getting familiar with the data we subsequently searched and ideas and meanings related to the objective of our paper. In fact, these are the foundation of generating codes and themes during thematic analyses process as recommended by several scholars including Braun and Clark (2006). According to Braun and Wilkinson (2003) a thematic map is best applied at the early stage to sort out the relationship between themes and between different levels of themes (main and sub-topics within them). The themes were reviewed and a coherent pattern obtained based on the research questions. At this point, the researcher had a fair idea of the various themes derived and how they fitted to provide answers to the research question. The themes were defined, refined and determined what aspect of the data each theme captures. This was made possible through the arrangement of the individual analysis into a coherent manner and subsequent derivation of sub-topics within topics of the designed models. At the final stage, the results of the thematic analysis were written up through the guide of Matthew (1974) Affixation processes (suffixes and prefixes).

## 5. Findings and Discussion

It was observed that the most common way of building new words in Iguta is through affixation. In this paper it was found that both inflectional and derivational affixes exist in the Iguta language. An Inflectional affix does not change its syntactic category of its base morpheme, while a derivational affix sometimes changes the grammatical category of a word (Matthew 1974, 1993; Bauer, 1988). This means that a derivational affix may have semantic shift, while inflectional affix may not. An inflectional affix indicates certain grammatical functions of a word. In order to describe the noun formation in Iguta language, the data was examined according to different types of Suffixations and Prefixations.

## 5.1 Suffixation

This is one of the processes in which a bound morpheme is attached at the end of the root or base. Examples from the English language:  nouns to inflect (1) dog + s =

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dogs, (2) boy + s = boys. The commonest type of affix used in Iguta as suffixes are: "-*char*, -*di*, and –*e*". This can be illustrated thus:

### 5.1.1 –char suffix

The –char suffix is the commonest type of suffix found in Iguta language. This suffix is used in inflecting noun.

Example (1)

| BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|------|---------|---|--------|---------|
| Tùryóngín | *flower* | = | tùryóngín**chár** | *flowers (n)* |
| rìshárí | *stone* | = | rìshárí**chár** | *stones (n)* |
| tómó | *saliva* | = | tómó**chár** | *salivae (n)* |
| ùtóm | *sweat* | = | ùtóm**chár** | *sweats (n)* |
| ìyèwáh | *fear* | = | ìyèwáh**chár** | *fears (n)* |
| Bùpólí | *cap* | = | bùpólí**chár** | *caps (n)* |

### 5.1.2 -di suffix

This is a type of suffix that indicates plurality of nouns. The process operates in Iguta.

Example: (2)

| BASE | *GLOSS* | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|------|---------|--------|---------|
| àsóng | *belly* | àsóng**dí** | *bellies* |
| ùnyàn | *bird* | ùnyàn**dí** | *birds* |
| tàntúbùgùbùh | *black* | tàntúbùgùbùh**dí** | *blacks* |

### 5.1.3  -e suffix

In Iguta, this type of suffix is used to derive an entirely different noun from an existing one.

Example: (3)

| BASE | *GLOSS* | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|------|---------|--------|---------|
| ùwér | *cloud* | ùwér**è** | *dog* |

Based on the data collected, there is only one example found to exist in the language.

### 5.2 Prefixation

This is also one of the affixation processes whereby an affix is attached at the beginning of a root or base. The following prefixations are found to exist in Iguta namely: *t-, ti-, ha-, a-, an-, m-, i-, ma-, mu-, si-, ndu-, s-, tu-, tun-,* and *tumu-* affixes. This is illustrated thus:

### 5.2.1 t- Prefix

The t- prefix is one of the commonest types of affixation found in Iguta language. It is used as an inflectional noun (pluralisation) prefix as in:

Example: (4)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| t | + | ùbúnkúzú | *liver* | = | **t**ùbúnkúzú | *livers* |
| t | + | ùvá | *leaf* | = | **t**ùvá | *leaves* |
| t | + | ùbùná | *leg* | = | **t**ùbùná | *legs* |
| t | + | ùwòhóh | *mountain* | = | **t**ùwòhóh | *mountains* |
| t | + | ùgàngú | *wing* | = | **t**ùgàngú | *wings* |
| t | + | ùbákárá | *loincloth* | = | **t**ùbákárá | *loincloths* |
| t | + | ùvírà | *knife* | = | **t**ùvírà | *knives* |
| t | + | ùpándón | *yam* | = | **t**ùpándón | *yams* |
| t | + | ùtúdárá | *porch* | = | **t**ùtúdárá | *porches* |
| t | + | ùpé | *month* | = | **t**ùpé | *months* |
| t | + | ùnúh | *mouth* | = | **t**ùnúh | *mouths* |
| t | + | ùsúh | *mortar* | = | **t**ùsúh | *mortars* |
| t | + | ùpánáh | *village* | = | **t**ùpánáh | *villages* |
| t | + | ùgwà | *woman* | = | **t**ùgwà | *women* |
| t | + | Ùwér | *star* | = | **t**ùwér | *stars* |

Or derivational as in:

Example (5)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| t | + | àpíhú | *oven* | = | **t**ùpíhú | *broken pot* |
| t | + | ùwèr | *cloud* | = | **t**ùwér | *stars* |

However, based on the data collected in **t-** derivational affix, this is the only examples found to exist in the language.

### 5.2.2 ti- Prefix

The **ti**- prefix is also common in Iguta language. It can be used as inflectional prefix of nouns.

Example: (6)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| tì | + | ùbángú | *indigo* | = | **t**ìbángú | *indigoes* |
| tì | + | ùbènzhú | *broom* | = | **t**ìbènzhú | *brooms* |
| tì | + | àrríh | *night* | = | **t**ìrríh | *nights* |
| tì | + | ùtá | *bow* | = | **t**ìtá | *bows* |
| tì | + | ùlíngí | *blind* | = | **t**ìlíngí | *blinds* |
| tì | + | ùrá | *arrow* | = | **t**ìrá | *arrows* |
| tì | + | ùtírán | *ringworm* | = | **t**ìtírán | *ringworms* |
| tì | + | ùchìchì | *tree* | = | **t**ìchìchì | *trees* |
| tì | + | ùlàkàr | *dull* | = | **t**ílàkàr | *dull (pl)* |
| ti | + | nyànwà | *shorts* | = | **t**ìnyànwà | *shorts (pl)* |
| ti | + | gìláu | *good thing* | = | **t**ìgìláu | *good things* |

### 5.2.3 ha-  Prefix

This type of prefix in Iguta is used to inflect common nouns from singular to plural forms.

Example: (7)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | GLOSS | = | RESULT | GLOSS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ha | + | ùhéné | *younger brother* | = | **hà**uhénó | *younger brothers* |
| ha | + | dádá | *father* | = | **hà**dádá | *fathers* |
| ha | + | ùgómó | *king* | = | **hà**ugómó | *kings* |

### 5.2.4 a-  and an-  Prefix

These types of prefixes are used to inflect nouns.

Example: (8)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | GLOSS | = | RESULT | GLOSS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | + | màkàyá | *sorrel* | = | **à**màkàyá | *sorrels* |
| a | + | rùráh | *horn* | = | **à**rùráh | *horns* |
| an | + | àtàh | *man* | = | **àn**àtàh | *men* |

### 5.2.5 m- Prefix

In Iguta, this kind of prefix indicates inflection from singular to plural nouns.

Example: (9)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | GLOSS | = | RESULT | GLOSS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| m | + | àrú | *calabash* | = | **m**àrú | *calabash (pl)* |
| m | + | àrú | *wooden vessel* | = | **m**àrú | *wooden vessels* |
| m | + | àsóng | *belly* | = | **m**úsóng | *bellies* |

### 5.2.6 i- Prefix

This type of prefix inflects nouns in Iguta language.

Example: (10)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | GLOSS | = | RESULT | GLOSS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| i | + | bàlkín | *lizard* | = | **ì**bálkìn | *lizards* |
| i | + | wám | *tamarind* | = | **ì**wám | *tamarinds* |
| i | + | Wàyén | *grasshopper* | = | **ì**wàyén | *grasshoppers* |

### 5.2.7 ma- Prefix

This kind of prefix is used in Andirgiza Dialect of Iguta as inflectional affix.

Example: (11)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | GLOSS | = | RESULT | GLOSS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ma | + | dúnzà | *sews (v)* | = | **mà**dúnzá | *sews (v)* |

Based on the data collected, this is the only example found to exist in the language.

However, in Annabor Dialect this prefix is used as derivational affix.

Example: (12)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ma | + | rìría | *eat (v)* | = | **mà**rìría | *eater (n)* |

### 5.2.8 mu- Prefix

*Mu-* prefix is used as an inflectional affix in Iguta language.

Example: (13)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| mu | + | ìkósó | *pot* | = | **mù**kósó | *pots* |

Based on the data, this is the only example found to exist in the language.

### 5.2.9 si- Prefix

The si- prefix is inflectional affix in Iguta from singular to plural nouns.

Example: (14)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| si | + | bìmù | *nose* | = | **sì**bímù | *noses* |
| si | + | ùlém | *feather* | = | **sì**lém | *feathers* |

### 5.2.10 ndu- Prefix

In Iguta language, the *ndu-* prefix is used to derive noun from verb.

Example: (15)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ndu | + | ùbànzé | *teach (v)* | = | **ndú**bànzé | *teacher (n)* |
| Ndu | + | mátárá | *preach (v)* | = | **ndú**mátárá | *preacher (n)* |
| Ndu | + | mànsú | *wrestle (v)* | = | **ndú**mànsú | *wrestler (n)* |

### 5.2.11 s- Prefix

In both Andigon and Andirgiza dialects of Iguta language, the **s-** prefix appeared to be used as an inflectional affix from singular to plural nouns.

Example: (16)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| s | + | ùnùrái | *heart* | = | **s**ùnúrái | *hearts* |
| s | + | ùbúnná | *leg* | = | **s**ùbúnná | *legs* |

### 5.2.12 tu-, tun-, and tumu- Prefixes

These types of prefixes are very rare in Iguta language and are used as inflectional affixes.

Example: (17)

| PREFIXES | + | BASE | *GLOSS* | = | RESULT | *GLOSS* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| tu | + | wànzú | *tale* | = | **tù**wánzú | *tales* |
| tu | + | Àchúnná | *road* | = | **tú**chúnná | *roads* |
| tun | + | ùrái | *heart* | = | **tùn**ùraí | *hearts* |
| tumu | + | fínzíh | *narrow* | = | **tùmú**fínzíh | *narrows* |

General result shows that the Noun Formation processes in Iguta language using affixation-prefix revealed that the *inflectional* (pluralisation) prefixes include: *t-, ti-, ha-, a-, an-, m-, i-, ma-, mu-, si-, s-, tu-, tun-,* and *tumu-* while the *derivational* prefixes include: *ndu-, t-* and *ma-*. It was also observed that both phonologically and morphologically, most singular nouns are inflected to produce the plural forms through the use of *ti-* or *tu-* prefixes when the pattern of the singular words begin with a vowel morpheme or phoneme.

On the part of suffixes, this paper also revealed the existence of noun formation in Iguta language through suffixation and prefixation processes. It was found that in Iguta language, suffixes are normally used to inflect nouns from the existing singular ones so as to become plural forms. The most common suffixes that were found to dominant in the Iguta noun formation process are "*-char, -di,* and *–e*". The "*-char* and *-di* suffixes are normally used to inflect an existing noun, while *–e*" suffix was rare and it is use to derive an entirely another class of noun when attached to an original root noun in Iguta language.

These findings revealed the existence of affixation in noun formation processes of Iguta being one of the minority languages in the northern Nigeria of West African continent. Hence, it is supported with the findings of Bauer (1988), Abubakar (2000), Rufa'I (1979), Kamal (2005), Blench, Dendo (2006), Yakubu (2009), Muazu (2009) and Giwa (2011). According to Bauer (1988) the most common way of building new words in the languages of the world is by using affixes. Bauer (1988) examined many languages and established the assertion for instance; the Basque, Finnish, Thai, English and Quechua languages, Ibibio of northern Nigeria among others. This paper also supported the theoretical framework of several scholars on Affixation process in building new words of a language. Prominent of these include Matthews (1974 & 1993) and Bauer (1988).

On the other hand, the findings of the paper were found to be inconsistence with that of Shina'an (2011). This is because Shina'an (2011) established that suffixes, infixes and interfixes do not exist in noun formation of Goemai language, an African language. According to her findings, affixes (prefixes) are attached to the initial position of the root only and affixes could result in lexical change in the grammatical meaning of Goemai nouns.

However, unlike the scope of these studies, this paper focused only on two types of affixation processes: suffixation and prefixation. On the other hand, Matthews (1974 & 1993) for instance categorised affixation into three viz: prefixation, suffixation and infixation while Bauer (1988) categorised affixation into far more. The findings of Blench et al. (2006) also reported that prefix, infix and suffix, alternating with zero or similar affixes are the noun-class/nominal class affixes commonly displayed in plateau languages. Therefore, this is a matter of limitation of scope. Hence we intend to explore various more types of affixation that could be found in Iguta language in our future researches.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper explored and described the noun formation processes in Iguta language. The paper presented that nouns can be formed in Iguta through suffixation and prefixation processes. The findings also showed that both inflectional and derivational affixes are commonly used in building the nouns of Iguta language. The *'-char, -di and –e' suffixes to inflect,* while *'t-, ti-, ha-, a-, an-, m-, i-, ma-, si-, ndu-, s-, tu-, tun-, tumu- prefixes* are used to inflect or derive nouns in Iguta language. A study should be made in order to explore and describe other nouns features of the language.

We therefore, conclude that the findings of this paper could be utilised by both professional teachers and lecturer of linguistics in teaching their students the suffixation and prefixation processes of noun formation of Iguta language.

We equally conclude that even though Iguta is a minority language being in the verge of dying out; however it is a language that has potentials for further researches on various aspects of morphology, especially the other theorised facets of affixation processes been recommended by Bauer (1988) including Reduplications and Modification processes.

Again, Iguta is also a language that should be utilised in conducting future researches on its grammatical and syntactical aspects among others which could provide practical contribution for the enhancement and development of the language.

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