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## MORPHOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF THE IBIBIO VERB

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### Abstract

This study examined the morphological processes of the Ibibio verb. The specific objectives were to investigate how and where verbal constituents are distributed and realised across morphological constructions and to discuss the morphological processes of Ibibio verb in order to explore the different morphological alternations internal to the verb complex. The theoretical framework adopted was Lexicalist theory. The study was a qualitative research with a descriptive survey design. Information was obtained through the process of elicitation and introspection. The result of the study showed that the Ibibio language is a verb centered language. It was observed that most grammatical properties in Ibibio were indicated by affixes attached to the verb roots; thus, affixes formed the head of constructs to determine the grammatical category of the morphological constructions. The effects of the pervasive nature of the Ibibio language become predominant in the areas of grammatical contrasts, verb alternations, cliticisation, verb compounding, derivational and inflectional processes and reduplication. Thus, circumfixation and interfixation processes were identified as part of Ibibio affixation processes to add to the most commonly known ones- prefixation and suffixation, while infixation becomes unproductive in Ibibio language. Partial reduplication, clipping and plurisation functioned as incidental by-products of phonology while the juxtaposition or incorporation of two verbs resulted in category incorporated preposition.

**Keywords:** Morphology, Ibibio Verb, Prefix, Suffix.

### Introduction

The phenomenon of verb is a widespread area of study in the grammar of the Ibibio language. The traditional grammar identifies a verb as a part of speech (i.e. property of morphology) which forms

the fundamental building block of a language with notional definitions to aid in syntactic analysis. The verb is a word class which denotes or defines an action, condition or an existence. The verb is a prominent category that is central to sentence formation. It modifies its base or stem to create different meanings. The study of the verb in any language is equivalent to the study of the language throughout the world (Dickson, 2012). The verb is found virtually in most languages of the world, but in different word order as a parametric variation from the same universal communication principles. The verb constitutes the principal part of the grammatical well-formedness of Ibibio sentences. The sentence in Ibibio is a pro-drop, where subject of verbs may not be overtly expressed, instead appropriate affixes – vowel and syllabic nasal prefixes are regularly used. Accordingly, Essien (1986, p. 29) avers that every verb in Ibibio is capable of taking some kind of object in ordinary discourse and such objects are generally deleted, thus, giving the impression at the surface level that such verbs are intransitive. The verb occupies the headship position of a verb phrase. It forms a fundamental unit in a construction with a universal intuitive recognition by the native speakers.

The Ibibio language is the major language spoken in Akwa Ibom State amongst the other two dominant languages- *Annān* and *Orọ*. The language is classified under the Lower-Cross language group of the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo language family (Urua, 2007). The verb in Ibibio language is complex and agglutinative (Benjamin, 2019). Hence, verbal elements are built by stringing morphemes together across morphological constructs in the language. However, due to the pervasive nature of the verb, there exists some complexities in identifying the head relations in terms of its distributional criteria in Ibibio sentences. Also, verb roots in Ibibio hardly appear alone or perform its grammatical function without interfacing with other linguistic paradigms in a manner that will cause morphological alternations or contrasts internal to it. Consequently, the study of the morphological processes of the Ibibio verb is inspired by this gap. The study aims at investigating how and where verbal constituents are distributed and realized across morphological constructions. It seeks to discuss the morphological processes of Ibibio verb in order to explore the different morphological alternations internal to the verb complex. The study is basically set out to account for the morphological processes of the Ibibio verb. It uses the process of elicitation and introspection to obtain data. The Lexicalist theory is the theoretical framework.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Lexicalist theory is an approach to word formation. It was propounded by Chomsky in his work “Chomsky’s Remarks on Nominalization” (1970). Lexicalist theory can be called Lexicalism. Lexicalism is a theoretical standpoint in modern generative linguistics according to which the processes that form complex words (derivation and compounding) are accounted for by a set of lexical rules, independent of and different from the syntactic rules of the grammar (Scalise & Guevara, 2014). The theory stepped down transformation in the analysis of word and the lexicon. It spells out the autonomy of morphological component in parsing words based on the grammaticality of the language (Halle, 1973). It breaks words in accordance with its internal structure in a specific order of concatenation of morphemes. The lexicalist theory is relevant to the study of morphological processes of Ibibio verb in the sense that it has a parameterised method of parsing complex words in the Ibibio language,

## **Methodology**

The study is a qualitative research with a descriptive survey design. The qualitative research is a humanistic research, which uses interviews as its primary sources in linguistics field work to collect corpus (data) for analysis (Oluikpe, Ndimele & Oluikpe, 2018). The data for this research was obtained from Ibibio speakers in Uyo Metropolis. The sample size of the study consisted twenty (20) adults-males and females of equal number, who speak the Ibibio language using a simple random sampling technique. The unstructured interview was used as instrument for data collection from the informants, in order to confirm the researcher's data generated intuitively, which serve as the primary source of data. The data was juxtaposed with the secondary sources like textbooks, journals and online materials that were relevant to the topic of the research. The data is analysed using Lexicalist theory.

## **Presentation and Data Analysis**

The verb in Ibibio language agglutinates with affixes and other words to perform grammatical functions. The agglutinative structures are composed of morphemes strung together based on morphological rules according to its peculiar features within the bound of grammaticality. The Ibibio verb manifests in two major types of morphological processes- concatenative and non-concatenative morphological processes.

### **Concatenative morphological process**

This is a derivational process, which involves the segmentation or addition of morphemes to the verb root to create new words from an existing word. It has different ways which are productive in Ibibio:

#### **Affixation**

This is a morphological process in which morphemes are added to the root verb to either extend or change the function. The affixes are discussed based on the position and the functions of affixes prevalent in the Ibibio language as:

#### **Prefixation**

This is a grammatical device or a word component which is attached as abound morpheme before the root word. Morphologically, prefixation in the Ibibio verbs produces the following derivatives:

#### **Agentive**

The agentive is a grammatical instigator (agent) of the action of the verb. It is derived through the attachment of a prefix to the verb. The prefix bears a high tone, which changes the original grammatical category of the verb to the noun. It can be exemplified below as:

Prefix			Verb root	Derivation	Gloss
1) (a)	ṣ́	+	kwṣ́rṣ́ preach	ṣ́kwṣ́rṣ́	'preacher'
(b)	á	+	kpií 'tap'	á-kpií	'tapper'

It could be deduced from the examples that the prefixes 'á' and 'ṣ́' are the noun class elements, which are attached to the verb roots 'kwṣ́rṣ́' and 'kpií', as the basic forms of the verb root to become agentives. The choice of the prefix is determined by the noun class. The agglutination of

the prefixes to the verb roots results in nouns. It could be realised that in example 1 (a-b), the nominalised verbs are usually followed by a cognate noun as in

- (a) ɔkwɔ́rɔ́ ikɔ́ 'one who preaches the gospel'.  
 (b) á-kpìí úkɔ́d 'one who taps palm-wine'.

This can be illustrated on a diagram using the principle of lexicalist theory as:

**Fig.1** ɔkwɔ́rɔ́ 'preacher'

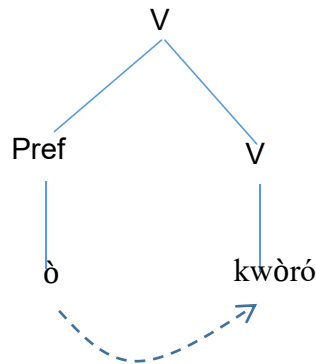
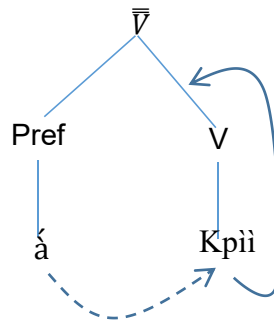


Fig. 1 shows the structure of an agentive noun 'Q-kwɔ́rɔ́'. The prefix 'Q' is the head node which percolates to the features of the complement (verb) to derive an agentive 'Q-kwɔ́rɔ́'.



**Fig. 2** á-kpìí 'tapper'

In Fig.2, the prefix 'á' percolates to the verb root 'kpìí' to derive an agentive noun á-kpìí – 'tapper'. The prefix acts as the head that determines the grammatical category of the agentive.

### Gerundive

Gerundive in Ibibio describes the grammatical function of the verb. It changes the form class from verb to nominal (ending with ...'ing' as in English language). The nominal is derived by prefixing a high tone harmonizing vowel 'ú' to the verb root as can be seen in the following examples:

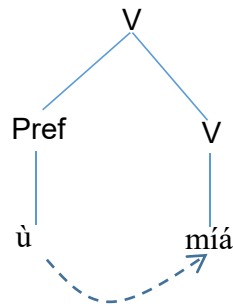
(2)	Prefix	+	Verb root	Derivation (Verbal Noun)
(a)	ù	+	míá 'clap'	ùmíá 'clapping'
(b)	ù	+	tíghá 'kick'	ùtíghá 'kicking'

It is observed that the prefix 'ù' is a class changing. It changes the category of the basic form (verb) to gerund-verbal noun. The nominalised verbs portray different kinds of activities or actions; they often follow cognate nouns as:

- a) ùmíá úbók 'clapping of hands'
- b) ùtíghá bọ̀d 'kicking of football'

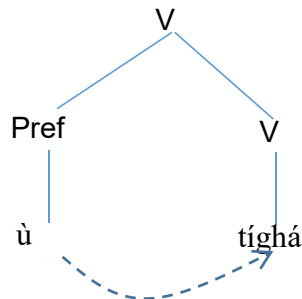
The gerundive can be represented using the lexicalist framework as follows:

**Fig.3 ùmíá 'clapping'**



The prefix 'ù' percolates to the feature of the verb root 'míá' to derive 'ùmíá' as a gerundive noun. The prefix 'ù' acts as the head that determines the grammatical category of the gerundive noun 'ùmíá'.

**Fig.4 ùtíghá 'kicking'**



The prefix 'ù' characterizes the head of the morphological construct, which percolates to the root word 'tíghá' to derive 'ùtíghá' as the grammatical category of the gerundive.

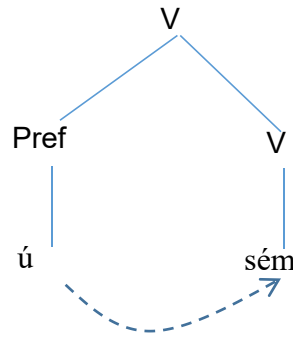
### Deverbal noun

This is the outcome of the morphological process whereby a noun is directly derived from the verbs through the attachment of a bound morpheme to a verb root. It can be termed deverbative. The deverbatives occur as single lexical items. They are explicated in the following examples as:

	Prefix	Verb	Deverbal	Grammatical class
(a)	ú-	sém 'speak'	ú-sém 'language'	Noun
(b)	ń-	kpà 'die'	'm-kpà 'death'	Noun

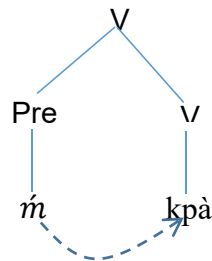
In the above examples, the principle of harmonization determines the choice of a particular prefix by the verb. The prefixes have high tones. The tones of the verbs do not change after union with the prefixes; rather the form classes are changed from verbs to nominals. The examples can be demonstrated thus:

**Fig.5** *ú-sém* 'language'



The prefix and the verb root exhibit shared structures. The 'ú'-prefix percolates to the features of the verb root 'sém' to create a verbal noun 'ú-sém' as a grammatical category.

**Fig.6** *m̃-kpà* 'death'



Here, the prefix determines the grammatical category of the deverbal noun as the head of the morphological construct. The prefix 'm̃' percolates to the complement 'kpà' to emerge a verbal noun *m̃-kpà* 'death'.

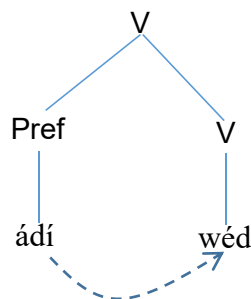
### Infinitive

The infinitive verb is a deverbal derivative, which is formed through the prefixation of *ádí/édí-* to the verb root. It can be illustrated with the following examples:

(4)	Prefix	Verb root	infinitive	
(a)	ádí-	wéd	ádí-wéd	'to write'
(b)	édí-	yàm	édí-yàm	'to sell'

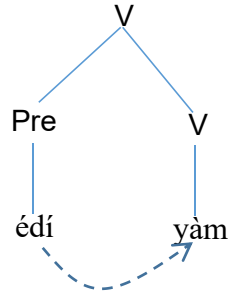
In example 4, the prefix as the head of the morphological construct is *ádí-/édí-*. The prefixes determine the grammatical category of the infinitive. The verbal derivands are 'wéd' and 'yàm' respectively, which merge with the prefix to emerge as the derivatives. These derivatives are infinitive. The infinitive most times cannot function as predicates but rather as a deverbal noun; it occurs as a subject in a construction. It can be demonstrated as:

**Fig.7** *ádí-wéd* 'to write'



From the diagram, it could be observed that the prefix ‘ádí-’ percolates to the features of the complement (verb root) to intersect and derive infinitive ‘ádí-wéd’ which is a class-changing category.

**Fig.8 édí-yàm ‘to sell’**



It is observed that the prefix ‘rédi-’ percolates to ‘yàm’ to intersect with it and derive an infinitive ‘rédi-yàm’.

### Suffixation

Suffixation is a morphological process, which attaches an affix or affixes as bound morphemes after the root or stem word. It acts as an additional morpheme to the host (root) to create new words. It functions in the Ibibio language as a morphological process that may derive agentless, reversive and reflexive verb derivatives. These derivatives are accompanied by harmonization of the verb stem with the suffixes in diverse ways as:

### Agentless verb derivation

It is a morphologically unmarked verb, where the role of an agent is not represented. In Ibibio, an agentless verb is marked through a –CV suffixation as the examples below show:

5.	Verb root	Suffix	Agentless Derivation
(a)	wák ‘tear’	ká	wákká ‘torn’
(b)	blǎ ‘break’	ñǝ	blǎñǝ ‘broken’

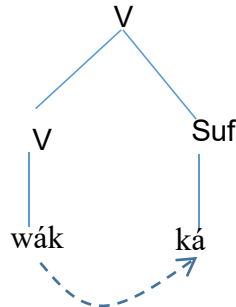
From example 5, it could be observed that the suffix attached to the verb roots derive agentless verbs through doubling of the coda consonant. The –CV-suffixes attach to the verb roots occur to form geminate consonant, which occur intervocalically. It is realised that the suffix does not perform the function of an agent; rather, it merely indicates the absence of an explicit agent and occurs with verbs that can take an ergative nominal, e.g.

	Sentence	Gloss	
(a)	Ñwèd òdò áwákká.	The book is torn	Book the torn.
(b)	Ètòńwèd ǝblǎñǝ	The pencil is broken	
	Pencil broken.		

From the above examples in 6 (a-b), it could be deduced that the syntactic structures are ergative nominals, which indicate the absence of an explicit agent. The verbals obligatorily attach the –CV suffix ‘ká’ in ‘wákká’ and ‘ñǝ’ in ‘blǎñǝ’ to perform an ergative nominal. Also, the AGR features of

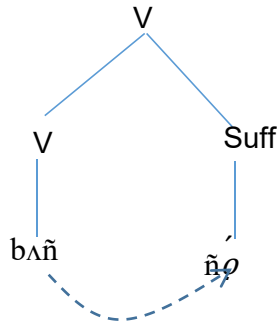
person and number are indicated affixally on Ibibio verbs, more specifically, as prefixes. Thus, (-á, and -ò) as shown in examples 6 precede the verb roots. The examples are shown on tree diagrams using the lexicalist theory as:

**Fig.9 wákká 'torn'**



The verb root 'wák' percolates to the features of the complement node (the suffix) 'ká' to emerge an agentless verb 'wákká'.

**Fig.10 bǎññò 'broken'**



From the theory, the verb root 'bǎñ' percolates to the feature of the complement 'ñò' to derive an agentless word bǎññò 'be broken'.

### Reversive verb derivation

Reversive verb derivation is a process, which relates a root verb to a suffixation process to indicate contradiction or reversivisation in meaning. It could be considered in the examples as:

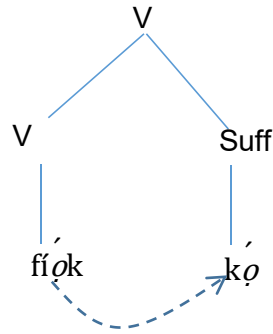
	Verb		Suffix	→	Reversive Verb
a.	fíòk 'wedge'	+	kò	→	fíòkò 'unwedged'
b.	wán 'wrap'	+	ná	→	wánná 'unwrap'

From the examples, it could be observed that the verb roots occur in the affirmative of what one should do as: fíòk - 'wedge' and wán 'wrap' while, the -CV suffixes occur as reversive markers to induce actions that are contrastive in meanings. Also, the final consonant of the verb forms the initial consonant of the -CV to create geminate consonant, while, the vowel of the stem harmonises with the vowels of the suffix to agree.

It could be demonstrated on the tree diagram below:

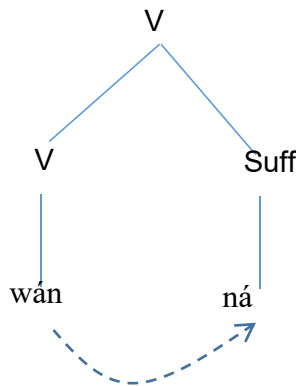


Fig. 11 fí'ók' 'unwedged'



It could be observed that the verb root 'fí'ók' percolates to the complement 'k'' to emerge fí'ók' 'unwedged'

Fig.12 wánná 'unwrap'



In Fig.12, the verb root 'wánná' percolates to the complement 'ná' to emerge as wánná 'unwrap'.

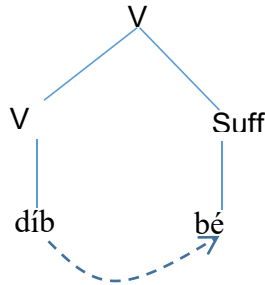
### Reflexive verb derivation

Reflexivisation is the act of referring back to the subject (performer of an action). Verbal reflexive is where the marker is part of the morphology associated with verbs (an affix, a clitic, or a particle) Okeke, p.2008. Thus, the Ibibio language marks reflexivisation through the process of suffixation associated with the verb roots as a reflexive pronoun, which are co-referential with the subject. It can be considered in the following examples:

	Verb	Suffix	Reflexive Verb
a.	díb 'hide'	bé	díbbé 'hide oneself'
b.	tán 'pick'	ná	tánńá 'pick by yourself'

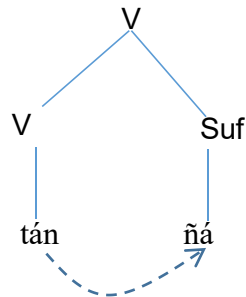
As observed from the examples above, the reflexive suffix morphemes are attached to the verb roots to indicate reflexivisation. However, it is realised that example 8 (a-b) takes geminate according to the grammaticality of the language. The reflexive verb derivation allows harmonisation between the root and the suffix vowels. This could be illustrated using the lexicalist theory as:

**Fig. 13 díbbé 'hide oneself'**



The verb root 'díb' copies the feature of the complement node 'bé' to emerged as díbbé 'hide oneself'.

**Fig.14 tánñá 'pick by yourself'**



Here tánñá results from the percolation of the verb root 'tán' and the complement (suffix) 'ñá' to emerged as tánñá 'pick by yourself'

### Circumfixation

This is a morphological process in which a discontinuous affix comprising two dissimilar parts surrounds an otherwise free morpheme (Mbah, 2012). It adds an affix to both sides of a host morpheme (verb root). This can be considered below:

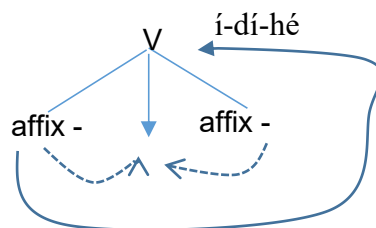
#### I - negative circumfix marker combination

This is a circumfixation process, whereby an initial vowel prefix and an obligatory negation suffix markers í/hé, há conjoin to create circumfixation. It can be exemplified as:

(9)	Prefixes	Verb root	suffix	Derivation
(a).	í-	dí 'come'	-hé	í-dí-hé 'not coming'
(b).	í-	tá	-há	í-tá-há 'not chewing'

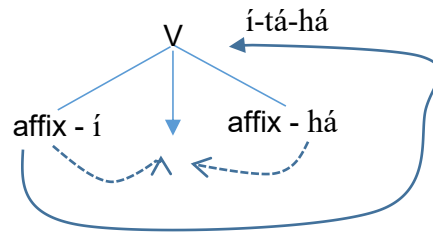
From the examples above, the discontinuous affixes harmonise with the vowels of the verb roots. The first marker of the circumfix is marked with the prefix (í-), while the suffix takes variable negative markers, depending on the vowel of the verb root. The tones of the verb roots with the affixes are high tones. It can be demonstrated thus:

**Fig.15 í-dí-hé 'not coming'**



From the diagram, the verbal derivand is 'dí-'on which the features of the circumfixes percolate. After the merging, í-dí-hé 'not coming' emerges as a negative derivative.

**Fig.16 í-tá-há 'not chewing'**



The diagram demonstrates the percolation process between morphological forms. The derivand 'tá-'on which the features of the circumfixes percolate, intersect with the circumfixes í-/há to derive í-tá-há 'not chewing'.

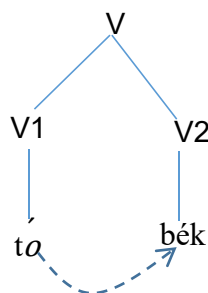
### Compounding

According to Mbah (2018:36) "a compound word is a form with a new meaning independent of either the individual meanings of the deriving words or the sum of their meaning thereof". Thus, compounding in Ibibio is a morphological process where two or more free forms are combined to form a new word with a new meaning, which is different from the meanings of the comprising words or their meanings put together. It is demonstrated in the following examples:

	<b>Verb 1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Verb 2</b>	<b>Derivation</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
(a)	tó 'hit'	+	bék 'pluck'	tóbék	'break off'
(b)	dá 'stand'	+	bèm 'take care'	dábèm	'watch over'

In the above examples, two verb roots (V1+ V2) with independent meanings are combined to form a compound verb. The second verb (V2) reanalyses its meaning and expresses a preposition, which have greater prepositional meaning than the verb. The examples can be represented on a tree diagram using the theoretical framework as:

**Fig.17 tóbék 'break off'**



It could be observed that there is compatibility between the feature of the first verb and that of the complement.

### Nonconcatenative morphological process

This is a process-based morphology. It involves a systematic modification of the sound structure of the root word. It exhibits a root based modification or alternation, which is epiphenomenal that is

an incidental byproduct of phonology. It can be called inflectional morphology due to its distinctive nature of modifying words to fit into different grammatical contrasts and contexts. It includes clipping or truncation, internal change and partial reduplication.

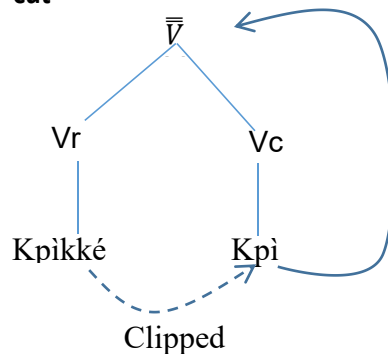
### Clipping or truncation

This is a subtractive morphological process, which involves a systematic shortening or deletion of a defined portion of the base words. It is a non-class changing category derivation with the same semantic and grammatical content. It is shown in the following examples as:

	Verb root	Clipped verb	Grammatical class
(a)	kpìkké	kpì 'cut'	verb
(b).	wàmmă	wàm 'pluck'	verb

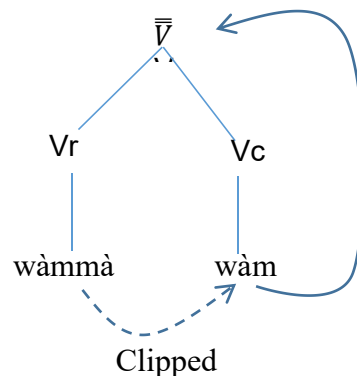
From example (11), it is observed that the verb roots undergo the process of shortening some syllable to have but a clipped form without any grammatical contrasts. In Ibibio, the clipped form has been accepted in general usage. Using the lexicalist theory, clipping can be represented on a tree diagram as follows:

**Fig. 18 'Kpìkké' 'cut'**



From the above diagram, there is a percolation process, where the root word 'Kpìkké' is clipped to derive 'Kpì' of the same class category and meaning.

**Fig. 19 'Wàmmà'**



There is percolation process that resulted from the root word (verb) 'wàmmà,' being clipped to derive 'wàm' with the same meaning and function.

### Internal change or Process Word

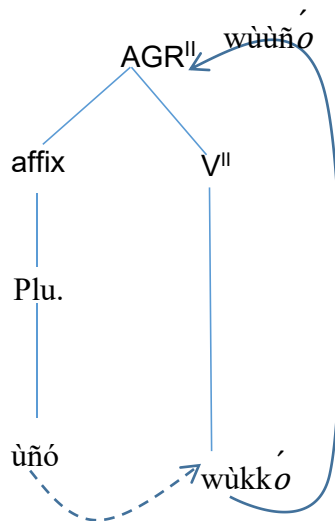
Internal change is also named process morpheme (Essien, 1990) or internal change (O’Grady, Archibald & Katamba, 2011). According to O’Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011, p.136) “internal change is a process that substitutes one non-morphemic segment for another to mark a grammatical contrast”. Essien (1990, p.91) views internal change as, “a process morpheme which involves the system of marking plurality. However, pluralisation is a process of making something more than one. In the Ibibio language, pluralisation is a complex phenomenon that functions in different grammatical classes through different processes like affixation and reduplication. According to Essien (1990, p.91), “plural verbs usually have the meaning of repeated, sustained or continuous action, or action by a large number of objects. The following are the examples of plural in the Ibibio language:

Singular Verb	Plural Verb
(a). wùkkó ‘uproot’	wùnnó ‘uproots’
(b). fàkká ‘uncork’	fààñá ‘uncork’

From example (12), it could be observed that the singular verb stems undergo internal changes by lengthening the vowel sounds in the medial positions to denote pluralisation in the Ibibio language.

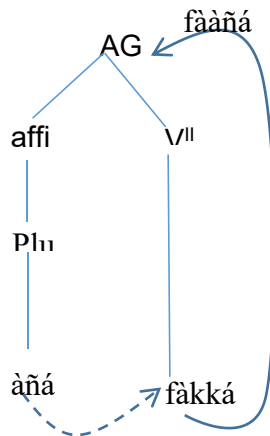
However, in the case of example 12(a-b), the [kk] in wùkkó ‘uproot’ and fàkká ‘remove’ are formed by doubling the vowel of the first syllable and nasalising the oral stop from [kk] to [ñ]. This is because there is an internal phonetic process occasioned by vowel harmony such that the velar nasal [ŋ] is affected and modified by the voiceless velar plosive [k] to reflect the same place of articulation thus changing [kk] to [ñ]. The vowel of the stem harmonises with the vowels of the suffix. It could be represented on a tree diagram, using the lexicalist theory as:

**Fig. 20** wùkkó



From the diagram, it could be deduced that there is a percolation process, which arise from the verb category (affix) ùñó to the complements (verb root) wùkkó to emerge and produce a plural verb wùùñó

**Fig. 21** 'fàkká' 'uncork'



The verb category (plural marker) percolates over the singular verb 'fàkká' with a plural notion 'àñá' to form a plural verb fààñá

### Reduplication

This is a process, which is very common in the Ibibio language. It occurs partly as a full reduplication and as a partial reduplication of nonconcatenative morphology. The addition of affixes is determined wholly or partly by the base. It attaches an affix to the base through the copying of the full base or parts of the base. It performs grammatical and semantic contrasts. There are two types of reduplication in Ibibio, which include:

#### Full Reduplication

Full reduplication is a type of reduplication where there is a total repetition and copying of the reduplicant. It occurs in the CV- verb base by doubling the reduplicant and inserting a vowel in between the CV-reduplicant to mark imperative constructions and intensity. This can be considered in the following examples:

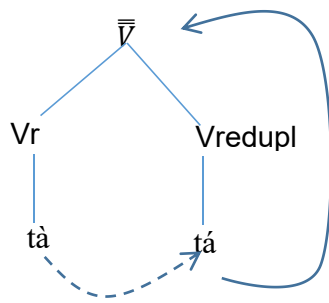
#### CV verb stem in full reduplication

- |     |     |        |      |        |
|-----|-----|--------|------|--------|
| (a) | .tà | 'chew' | tata | 'chew' |
| (b) | .má | 'love' | mámá | 'love' |

The CV-reduplicant copies the entire CV verb roots, such that the derived form has two forms of combinations; the half of the base and the half of the reduplicant, which functions to show intensity and command

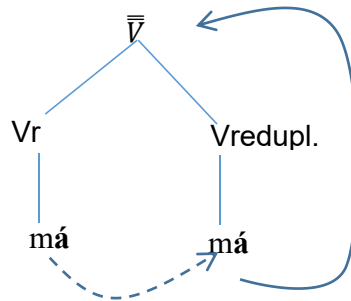
The examples can be diagrammatically represented using the lexicalist theory, thus:

**Fig. 22** Tátà



Here, the verb category (reduplicant) 'tà' percolates to the verb root 'tà' to derive a reduplicated form 'tàtà'

**Fig. 23 Mámá**



From the illustration, the reduplicant 'má' percolates to extend the verb root 'má' so as to derive a reduplication 'mámá' at the same level of compatibility. Thus, full reduplication occurs either as an interfixation process or copying the whole part of the verb

### Partial reduplication

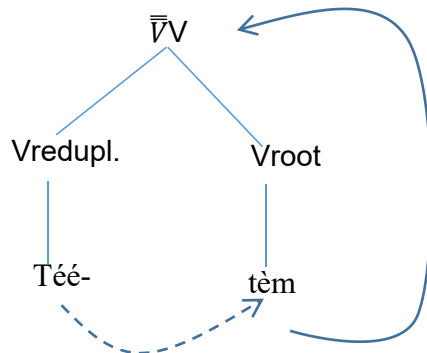
This is a morphological process, which duplicates or copies only a part of the reduplicant. It involves a systematic modification or alternation of the sound structure of the root word either by deleting the final consonant in a CVC structure and the second syllable in a disyllabic verbs. The examples below illustrate thus:

#### (14)

- |      |      |        |          |        |
|------|------|--------|----------|--------|
| (a). | tèm  | 'cook' | tée-tèm  | 'cook' |
| (b). | tóbó | 'tie'  | tóó-tóbó | 'tie'  |

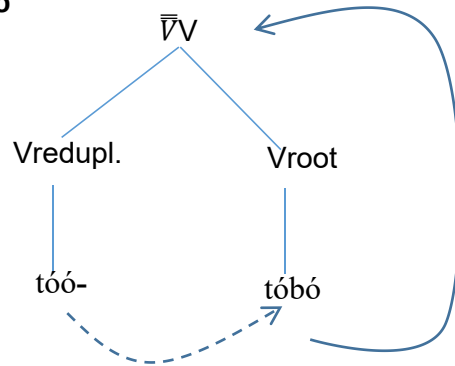
It could be observed that the examples above show instances of partial reduplication. There is modification of the verb root through a lengthening process. In example 14(a) the coda in the CVC root is deleted, while, in example 14(b) the second consonant in a CVCV (disyllabic structure) is deleted thereby extending the vowel of the reduplicated segment (reduplicant) to mark emphasis, intensity, contrast and ensure specification. There is no semantic change to the structure of the word, but there is harmonization between the vowels of the reduplicant and the vowels of the root verb, using the lexicalist theory, the examples could be represented thus,

**Fig. 23 tée-tèm**



The reduplicant 'tée' percolates to the features of the complement 'tèm' to emerge a partial reduplicated verb 'tée-tèm'. It indicates grammatical contrast, showing emphasis.

**Fig. 24 Tóó-tóbó**



It is observed that 'tóbó' is a disyllabic verb. The first syllable is clipped and the vowel is duplicated in harmony with the verb root. The 'tóó-' reduplicant percolates to the verb root 'tóbó'; to derive 'tóó-tóbó' with all the tone copied as well.

### Summary of Findings

The study of the morphological processes of Ibibio verbs helps to specify the linguistic forms that Ibibio grammar assumes. The verb constitutes the kernel structure of the Ibibio language. The morphological structure of the Ibibio verb provides grammatical information about its morphemic or cellular architect. The monosyllabic verbs are canonical verbal units. The morphological processes are either derivational or inflectional. The Ibibio concatenative morphology is the affixation of prefix, suffix, circumfix and interfix to free morphemes while infix becomes dormant in Ibibio affixation process. The prefix determines the grammatical class of the eventual derivatives and all prefixes are observed to be mostly vowels sounds, marking personal and modal features prefixally. It produces nouns such as agentive, infinitive and verbal nouns as semantic functors on arguments or morphosyntactic locus, where inflection takes place. The suffix may be used to form verb complexes to derive agentless, reversive and reflexive verbal forms. The agentless verb acts as an ergative verb in the Ibibio morphology. Most suffixes in Ibibio language begin with consonant sounds, marking negation and pluralisation suffixally. Also, circumfixation is used to form negative constructions in the Ibibio language. Interfix is realised in full reduplication of verb forms, while the partial reduplication modifies the sound structure of the root words. On the other hand, concatenative process produces morphological terms used to define the relationship between the affixes and other constituents in the construction. Also, verbs in Ibibio are consonant initials. They do not begin with vowels except when they are prefixed to the verb; but most Ibibio suffixes are consonants. Ibibio verbs also concatenate one another to form compound verbs. Compounding in the Ibibio language results in category incorporated preposition. Here, the last verb in the compound re-analyses its meaning to express a preposition notion. This is similar to what is seen in neighbouring languages such as Igbo, Yoruba (see Madugu 1995, Mbah 1999, 2018). Thus, the concatenative and nonconcatenative morphological processes examined in this research work generate morphosyntactic structures in well-formedness conditions to form the influences of this study.

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