



**Research Article**

This article is published by JFP Publishers in the *African Social Science and Humanities Journal (ASSHJ)*. Volume 2, Issue 1, 2021.

ISSN: 2709-1309 (Print)

2709-1317 (Online)

This article is distributed under a Creative Common Attribution (CC BY-SA 4.0) International License.

**Article detail**

**Published:** 26 March 2021

**Conflict of Interest:** The author/s declared no conflict of interest.



## Phonological Effects and Functions of English Loan-words on the Tiv Grammar

Terfa Aor<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Nigerian Languages, National Institute for Nigerian Languages, Aba Abia State, Nigeria, [aorterfa80@gmail.com](mailto:aorterfa80@gmail.com)*

\*Corresponding author



**Abstract:** There is no human language that is devoid of borrowing loan-words from a parent language to its own (recipient) language. When loan-words are injected into a recipient language, there are certain phonological effects that such words have on the grammar of such a language. This paper critically discusses the phonological implications and functions of English loan-words on Tiv the grammar. The objectives of this paper are to: classify phonological implications of English loan-words on the grammar of Tiv language; discuss the implications of English loan-words on Tiv grammar; explore the phonological functions of English loan-words; and, state reasons that necessitate borrowing of loan-words. The author used primary and

secondary sources. The researcher used participant-observer technique as his primary source and documentary sources were used. It has been found out that most English loan-words have no substitutes in Tiv; loan-words have expanded the vocabulary of the Tiv grammar; the original syllabic structure of most loan-words changed from close to open syllables; and epenthetic letters are added to break consonant clusters, for plurality and as a hiatus repairing strategy. It has been recommended that papers should be churned out in the areas of historical, comparative and contact linguistics. Lecturers should give assignments or project topics on phonologically related processes.

**Keywords** – Elision, Epenthesis, Eye-dialect, Grammar, Loan-words, Metathesis, Phonology

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tiv is a major language that is spoken in Benue State of Nigeria. The name 'Tiv' has tripartite connotations: the language itself is called Tiv Language; the tribe is also named a Tiv tribe and the progenitor of the Tiv race – ancestral father. According to Bohannan and Bohannan (1953: 9), the word Tiv is the name applied to the people by themselves, they consider it the name of the original ancestor from whom they all trace agnatic descent. Just like other languages, Tiv language is layered into morphology (study of word formation), graphology (studies punctuations, typographies, graphics and layouts), syntax (sentence formation), semantics (studies meaning) and phonology (sounds). English loan-words have expanded the morphological, graphological, semantic, syntactic and phonological components of Tiv language. When languages borrow linguistic items from another language, their original spellings and pronunciations are modified to suit the recipient language. There is no living language that will not borrow words from other languages.

The thrust of this paper is the phonological implications that English loan-words have on the study of the Tiv language. This paper classifies phonological implications of English loans on the Tiv grammar; discusses the implications of loan-words of English origins on Tiv grammar; explores the phonological functions of English loan-words; and states reasons that necessitate borrowing of loan-words. This paper sets pace for the development of contact linguistics, historical linguistics or comparative linguistics between English language and Tiv language.

## **2. LITERATURE SURVEY**

### **2.1. Phonology**

According to Jones (2006: 388), Matthews (2007: 300), Crystal (2008: 365), Ladefoged and Johnson (2011: 309), Fromkin, Rodman and Hyam (2014: 225), phonology deals with the study of the sounds of particular languages. The phonology of English and Tiv languages is dichotomised into segmental phonology and suprasegmental phonology. Segmental phonology deals with the study of segments (vowels and consonants). English phonology has forty-four sounds, that is, twenty vowels and twenty-four consonants. English phonology has twenty vowels which are divided into twelve monophthongs (pure, simple) and eight diphthongs (impure, double) vowels. Monophthongs are subdivided into long and short vowels. There are seven short vowels which include: /ɪ/, /æ/, /e/, /ɒ/, /ʊ/, /ʌ/, /ə/ and long vowels are five in number and they include /i:/, /a:/, /ɔ:/, /u:/ and /ɜ:/. The word diphthong was derived in fifteenth century from the French word diphthongue (Modern diphthong), Latin diphthongus and Greek diphthongos meaning 'a double sound.' Diphthong involves a glide movement from one pure vowel to another. It is also called gliding or double vowel. There are eight diphthongs in English phonology.

Consonant sounds show full and partial obstruction to the vocal cords. Consonants are classed based on the manner of articulation, place of articulation, state of the glottis, accompaniment and type of airstream mechanism. Manner of articulation is the way in which the airstream is modified during the articulation of a consonant. Place of articulation deals with the organs that are responsible for the production of speech sounds. The state of the glottis refers to voiced and voiceless sounds. Suprasegmental describes the phonological features that are 'above' (supra-) the morphological features (segments) of an utterance. Chalker and Weiner (1994: 386) affirm that suprasegmental is 'a feature of intonation extending beyond the phoneme. Matthews (2007: 392) sees suprasegmental (unit, feature, phonology) whose domain extends over more than one successive minimal element. Ladefoged (2011: 310) views suprasegmental as 'phonetic feature such as stress, tone and intonation, which is not a property of single consonants or vowel.' Suprasegmental features comprise syllable, stress, intonation, rhythm, and tone, phonological phrase. Suprasegmental phonology is also called prosodic phonology.

Suprasegmental phonology has processes such as assimilation (when a sound becomes similar), dissimilation (when a sound becomes dissimilar), elision (subtraction of a letter), epenthesis (addition of a letter), metathesis, Spoonerism (exchange of a letter), nasalisation (production of sound through the nose), palatalisation (hard palate) and so on. This paper dwells on epenthesis, elision, metathesis, dissimilation and metaplasm (eye dialect).

### **2.2. Loan-words**

Etymologically, McArthur and Romaine (1992: 623) trace that loan-word (loanword, loan word) was derived in 1870s from German Lehnwort. According to Trask (1996: 210), loan-word is a word which has been copied into a language from another language, as a result of contact. Carr (2008: 92) simply sees a loanword as a word from one language which is introduced into another. Crystal's (2008: 227) definition of loan-words perfectly fits in this paper: 'both form and meaning' of English loan-words are assimilated into Tiv language. The adaptation of foreign words into the phonology of recipient language is called loan phonology.

### 3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The efficacy of English loan-words to the growth of Tiv language cannot be ignored in a hurry. These loan-words provided substitutes for the already used words and they are wholly borrowed into Tiv language. The Icighan Bibilo (Tiv's Holy Bible), both the old and new editions, contained cornucopious instances of English loan-words. With such heavy borrowings of English items into Tiv literatures and daily communications, the author has discovered that not much critical works or literatures have been written on English loan-words or borrowed words. The handful of authors such as Iorkua (2010) and Usar & Ofoegbu discussed English and Hausa borrowed words into Tiv language. Iorkua carried out a study on 'Linguistic borrowing: A case study of Tiv language. In her study, Iorkua discussed various loan-words from English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba into Tiv language.

Iorkua did not dwell her study on only English loan-words. Usar and Ofoegbu's (2015) 'English and Hausa loan-words in Tiv' deals essentially with English and Hausa loan-words into Tiv language. Their paper is generally on linguistic borrowing, not the phonological implications of loan-words on the study of Tiv language. What these authors presented in their works is infinitesimally small. As a result of the paucity of literary works on English loans generally, and their implications on the study of Tiv language in particular, this study attempts to fill such an existing research gap by classifying phonological implications of English loans on the Tiv grammar; discussing the implications of loan-words of English origins on Tiv grammar; exploring the phonological functions of English loan-words; and stating reasons that necessitate borrowing of loan-words.

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The instrument used in this paper is observation method. The author picked sampled loan-words and compared them with their English equivalents. Data were selected using deliberate sampling. These sampled words constituted primary data whereas journal articles, textbooks and dictionaries relevant to this study were used as secondary data. As for data presentation, the author presented collected data in tables and analysed them.

### 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section essentially deals with the data presentation analysis of findings. The data dwell on the classification of the phonological implications of English loan-words on the Tiv grammar; the implications of English loan-words on Tiv grammar; the phonological functions of English loan-words and reasons for borrowing loan-words.

#### 5.1. Classification of the Phonological Implications of English Loan-words on the Tiv Grammar

The classification of the phonological implications that English loans have on the study of Tiv language are many and varied. These phonological effects are broadly discussed under elision or deletion of segments, epenthesis or insertion of letters, metathesis, eye dialect and dissimilation. These classifications have been adequately explored below.

##### *Elision or Deletion*

According to McArthur (1991: 344), the word 'elision' is derived in the sixteenth century (16c) from Latin *elisiol/elisionis* which means 'crushing out.' According to Brogan (1993: 325), elision is the general term for several devices of contraction whereby two syllables are reduced to one. Bussmann (1996: 335-6) observes that in phonetics and phonology, there is usually a 'loss of a vowel, consonant, or syllable.' Tiv phonology has four types of elision. These are aphaeresis, syncope, apocope and haplology. The well-known types are the first three. Aphaeresis is the deletion of the initial sound. Examples of aphaeresis are *uwagh*, *uwar* which are clipped as *wagh*, *war*. The second type of elision is syncope, a deletion of middle letters or syllables. Letters e, i, are deleted in the following words: *gbandeavaan* (quiver) and *gwarice* (strand of hair).

The third type of elision is apocope, a deletion of final letters or syllables. For instance, the last b, p, s in English

loans are deleted – Yacob(Jacob), hisop (hyssop) and Shila (Silas). The fourth type of elision in Tiv is what is called haplology. Haplology refers to the omission of similar syllables. These examples are found in Tiv – *icughugh* ~ *icugh* (deception) and *ihyundughuu* ~ *ihyunduu* (madness).

**Epenthesis**

Yule (2007: 220) avers that epenthesis is an addition of sound to the middle of a word. Similarly, Richards and Schmidt (2010: 199) substantiate that epenthesis is ‘the addition of a sound at the beginning of a word or between sounds.’ Ladefoged and John (2010:306) define epenthesis as ‘the insertion of one or more sounds in the middle of a word.’ Epenthesis is classified into prothesis, anaptyxis, excrescence and paragoge. In prothesis, sound is inserted at the word-initial position. The insertion of i and u changes singular words to plural words. These words are *pyaven* ~ *upyaven* (division or divisions), *mita* ~ *umita* (metre or metres), *sentimita* ~ *usentimita* (centimetre or centimetres).

Anaptyxis is the addition of extra vowel between two consonants (also called parasitic vowel or svarabhakti /sværəbækti/ vowel/ epenthetic vowel) such as *bokoti*, (bucket), *tebul* (table) and *pelengi* (plate). Excrescence (or *vyanabhakti* /vjændzəbækt/) is the addition of consonant between other consonants as in *igo* – *igyo* (pig) and *iwa* – *iwya* (dog). Paragoge is an insertion of a sound (mostly vowels) to the end of a word. Examples are *ouki* – oak, *cup* – *kôpu* and *apostle* – *apostoli*.

**Metathesis**

Etymologically, McArthur (1992: 656) avers that the word ‘metathesis’ was derived in the 16c: through Latin from Greek metathesis which means ‘placing across.’ Bussmann (1998: 746) sees metathesis as the switching of consonants within etymologically related words. Carr (2008: 100) defines metathesis as aprocessin which segmentswithin a word are switched around. Metathesis therefore means the swapping of a segment.

**Table 1: Metathesis in English loan-words**

English Words	Loansin Tiv	Metathesized letters	Meanings
apple	<i>apel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	a hard round fruit that has red ...
carbuncle	<i>karbunkel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	a red jewel, especially a garnet
chronicle	<i>kronikel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	a record of historical events
marble	<i>mabel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	a type of hard rock
myrtle	<i>mertel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	a kind of sweet-scented tree
tabernacle	<i>tabernakel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	box for keeping holy bread/wine
table	<i>tebul</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>u</i>	a four-legged furniture
temple	<i>tempel</i>	<i>l</i> after <i>e</i>	a building where people worship

**Eye Dialect**

Eye dialect involves the use of unconventional spellings to indicate the actual pronunciation of words. As used in this paper, eye dialect is synonymous with phonography or phonetic spelling. Phonography, according to McArthur (1992: 772), was derived in 18th century from a Greek word phone (voice), and -graphy (writing). McArthur defines phonography as ‘the art or practice of writing so as to represent sound as precisely as possible; phonetic spelling.’

Table 2: Eye dialect in English loan-words

English Language		English Loaned Words in Tiv		General Comments
Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription	
Aquila	/ækwiɫə/	<i>Akwila</i>	/ækwiɫæ/	/ə/ and /æ/ differences
apple	/æpəl/	<i>Apel</i>	/æpel/	/ə/ and /e/ differences
barge	/ba:dʒ/	<i>Baaji</i>	/ba:dʒɪ/	/ɪ/ difference
barley	/ba:lɪ/	<i>Baali</i>	/ba:lɪ/	same transcription
Cain	/keən/	<i>Kain</i>	/kaɪn/	different diphthong
cushion	/kʊʃən/	<i>kushen</i>	/kʊʃen/	/ə/ and /e/ differences
diamond	/daɪmənd/	<i>diamon</i>	/dæjəməɒn/	/j/ insertion/ deletion of /d/
dye	/daɪ/	<i>Dai</i>	/daɪ/	same transcription
fir	/fɜ:/	<i>Fer</i>	/fɜ:/	same transcription
Leah	/li:ə/	<i>Lia</i>	/liə/	different vowels
litre	/li:tə/	<i>lita</i>	/litæ/	different vowels
mile	/maɪl/	<i>mail</i>	/maɪl/	same transcription
mitre	/mɪ:tə/	<i>mita</i>	/mitæ/	different vowels
page	/peɪdʒ/	<i>peiji</i>	/peɪdʒɪ/	/ɪ/ difference
pencil	/pensəl/	<i>pensel</i>	/pensel/	/ə/ and /e/ differences
pillow	/pɪləʊ/	<i>pilou</i>	/pɪloo/	same transcription
pine	/paɪn/	<i>pain</i>	/paɪn/	same transcription
snow	/snəʊ/	<i>senou</i>	/senou/	/e/ insertion
tyre	/taɪə/	<i>taya</i>	/tæjæ/	different vowels/ consonant
wheel	/wi:l/	<i>wil</i>	/wi:l/	same transcription
wheel barrow	/wi:l bæɾəʊ/	<i>wilbaro</i>	/wi:l bæroʊ/	same transcription
willow	/wɪləʊ/	<i>wilou</i>	/wɪloo/	same transcription
window	/wɪndəʊ/	<i>windou</i>	/wɪndoo/	same transcription
wine	/waɪn/	<i>wain</i>	/waɪn/	same transcription
wire	/waɪə/	<i>waya</i>	/wæjæ/	different vowels/ consonant

**Dissimilation**

Trask (1996: 116) asserts that dissimilation is any of various phonological processes in which one segment changes so as to become less similar to another segment in the same form. The spellings of the borrowed differed from their original ones. This phenomenon is captured below:

**Table 3: Dissimilation in English loan-words**

English Language		English loans in Tiv		Comments on Dissimilar Phonemes
Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription	
Amaziah	/æməzaɪə/	<i>Amashia</i>	/æməʃia/	/əzaɪə/ & /æʃia/ are dissimilar
Felix	/fi:lɪks/	<i>Feliku</i>	/felɪko/	/ɪ:/ & /e/ insertion of /o/
governor	/gʌvənə/	<i>Gomma</i>	/gɔmnə/	totally dissimilar
pound	/paʊnd/	<i>Pam</i>	/pæm/	totally dissimilar
Philip	/fɪlɪp/	<i>Philibu</i>	/fɪlɪbo/	/p/ & /bo/ are dissimilar
Zacchaeus	/zækɪ:əs/	<i>Sakiu</i>	/sækju:/	/ɪ:əs/ & /ju:/ are dissimilar
Stephen	/stevən/	<i>Sefanu</i>	/sefəno/	totally dissimilar
shovel	/ʃɒvəl/	<i>shebul</i>	/ʃebu:l/	/ɒvə/ & /ebu:/ are dissimilar
Silas	/saɪləs/	<i>Shila</i>	/ʃɪlə/	/s/ & /ʃ/; /aɪ/ and /æ/; 's' deleted
Cilicia	/sɪlɪsɪə/	<i>Shilishia</i>	/ʃɪlɪʃia/	/ʃ/ & /s/; /ɪə/ & /ɪə/
synagogue	/sɪnəgɒg/	<i>shinagoge</i>	/ʃɪnəgɔge/	/s/ & /ʃ/; /ə/ & /æ/; insertion of 'e'
cypress	/saɪprəs/	<i>shipere</i>	/ʃɪpere/	completely different
Zipporah	/zɪpɔrə/	<i>Shipora</i>	/ʃɪpɔræ/	/z/ & /ʃ/; /ə/ & /æ/
James	/dʒeɪmz/	<i>Yakobu</i>	/jækɔbo/	completely different

**5.2. The Implications of English loan-words on Tiv Grammar**

Thomason (2001: 85) summarises the implications of English loan-words to include elision, epenthesis and replacement of letters. These implications have been discussed under distortion of syllabic structure, syllable shortening, syllable elongation, changing close syllables to open syllables, changing consonants or deletion of final consonants and loan-words may lead to lexical ambiguity.

**Distortion of syllabic structure**

One of the greatest phonological effects of English loan-words is the distortion of syllabic structures. Syllables may be elongated or shortened when English words are borrowed into Tiv language. The shortening of syllables is the handiwork of elision. When letters are deleted or elided, the syllabic structure of words is distorted. Schane's (1973: 52) definition of elision as '... the syllabic structure of words is dropped in certain contexts resulting in different syllabic structure' is vitally important because it hinges on its effect on the syllabic structure. Ibrahim (2016: 1) asserts that elision 'represents deterioration, modification and to some extent radical changes in the syllabic structure of the original words even though it is usually a result of rapid colloquial speech.' Syllable reduction and

syllable elongation are the effects of elision and epenthesis.

**Syllable shortening**

Syllable reduction occurs when some letters from loan-words are shortened when borrowed into a recipient language. Tiv language does not have many examples of this phenomenon. For example, gomna/gɔmna/ meaning 'governor' is a bisyllable. It can be syllabified as gom-na whereas 'governor' /gʌvənə/ has three syllables 'go-ver-nor.' It is obvious that er syllable is syncopated. Another example is Sati which means Saturday in English. Sati /sæti/ is a bisyllabic word Sa-ti whereas 'Saturday' /sætədi/ is a trisyllabic word Sa-tur-day.

**Syllable elongation**

Apart from syllable shortening, there is a pervasive effect of *syllable elongation* as a result of borrowing English loan-words. Epenthesis or insertion affects the syllabic structure of the borrowed words. Monosyllables can be change to bisyllables or even trisyllables. Any addition of a sound initially, medially and finally can elongate borrowed words. English monosyllables changed to Bisyllable, trisyllables, and many more when they are loaned into Tiv language.

**Table 4: English Monosyllables changed to Bisyllables**

English Language		English Loans	
Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
card	/ka:d/	kati	/kæti/
court	/kɔ:t/	koti	/kɔti/
field	/fi:ld/	fiidi	/fri:di/
Job	/dʒəʊb/	Yobu	/jɔbɔ/
Oak	/əʊk/	ouki	/oʊki/
priest	/pri:st/	pristi	/pristi/
Tent	/tent/	tenti	/tenti/

All English words have one syllable but when they are loaned into Tiv language, they have two syllables. When some English monosyllables that have long vowels are loaned into Tiv language, they change to short vowels as in: 'court' /kɔ:t/ becoming koti /kɔti/, 'card' /ka:d/ changes to /kæti/ and priest /pri:st/ to pristi /pristi/.

**Table 5: English Monosyllables changed to Trisyllables**

English Language		English Loans	
Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
Ark	/a:k/	Areki	/æreki/
James	/dʒeɪmz/	Yakobu	/jækɔbɔ/
John	/dʒɒn/	Yohane	/jɔhæne/
Plate	/pleɪt/	Pelengi	/pelengi/

Words under 'English Language' are monosyllables and those under English loans are trisyllables. Those who do

not understand Tiv may not know that such words are borrowed from their English counterparts.

**Table 6:** English Bisyllables changed to Trisyllables

English Language		English Loans	
Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
Abram	/æbrəm/	<i>Aberam</i>	/æberæm/
Andrew	/ændru:/	<i>Anderia</i>	/ænderia/
Bible	/baɪbəl/	<i>Bibilo</i>	/bɪbɪlo/
Peter	/pɪ:tə/	<i>Peteru</i>	/petero/
prophet	/prɒfɪt/	<i>profeti</i>	/prɒfeti/
Talent	/tælənt/	<i>talenti</i>	/tælenti/

**Changing Close Syllables to Open Syllables**

English loan-words change open syllables to close syllables. A close syllable ends with a consonant while an open syllable ends with a vowel. English words that end with consonants change to vowels when they are borrowed into Tiv language. There are myriad examples of English words that change close syllables to end syllables. These examples are shown in the table below:

**Table 7:** Close syllables changed to open syllables

Close Syllable		Open Syllable	
apostle	/æpɒsəl/	<i>apostoli</i>	/æpɒstɒli/
David	/deɪvɪd/	<i>Davidi</i>	/dævɪdɪ/
desert	/desɜ:t/	<i>deserti</i>	/dese:tɪ/
Egypt	/ɪ:ɢɪp/	<i>Iɢipiti</i>	/ɪɢɪpɪtɪ/
Moab	/mɒəæb/	<i>Moabi</i>	/mɒəæbɪ/
prophet	/prɒfɪt/	<i>profeti</i>	/prɒfeti/
Shirt	/ʃɜ:t/	<i>sheti</i>	/ʃeti/
Silas	/saɪləs/	<i>Shila</i>	/ʃɪlæ/
Tent	/tent/	<i>tenti</i>	/tenti/

**Changing Consonants or Deletion of final Consonants**

Another phonological effect English loan-words is the change of consonants or deletion of final consonants such as *b, s, z, th, h, ch, f, p,* and others. Discussing the effects of English loan-words on the recipient language, Thomason (2001: 85-6) asserts that a letter is lost or replaced to conform to the phonological structure of recipient language. O’Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011: 298) observe that borrowing results in the introduction of new phonemes and changes in their distribution. Examples of loan-words that undergo deletion or sound replacement

are Jacob – Yakob /jæko:/, Gomorrah – Gomora, Enoch – Enoki /enɔki/, Amos – Amoshi /æmɔʃi/, Amoz – Amoshi /æmɔʃi/, Joseph – Yosev /jɔsev/, Timothy – Timoteu /timɔtəu/, Matthew – Mateu /mætəu/, Matthias – Matia /mætia/, hyssop – hisop /hiso:/ and Baptism – *batisema* /bætisemæ/.

**Loan-words may lead to Lexical Ambiguity**

Anambiguity occurs when a word or an expression has two or more meanings. Lexical ambiguity occurs when a word has two or more meanings whereas a grammatical or sentential ambiguity results when the entire sentence has several interpretations. English loan-words are prone to several connotations. Sometimes such loans may have the same spelling with another English or Tiv word. When this happens, it is not easy to decipher the actual meaning. A table below shows how English loan-words may result in lexical ambiguity.

**Table 8: Lexical Ambiguity as a Result of English Loan-words**

English Language		First Interpretation		Second Interpretation	
Word	Transcription	Word	Gloss	Word	Gloss
Aquila	/ækwilə/	Akula	Aquila	Akula	Aôndoakula
Ayya	/æjə/	Aya	Ayya	Aya	Mother
Azor	/æzə/	Asor	Azor	asor	Lots
Jesse	/dʒesi/	yese	Jesse	yese	scorpion
Jew	/dʒu:/	Yuda	Jew	Yuda	Judah
myrrh	/mɜ:/	mire	myrrh	mire	submerge
Nile	/naɪl/	Nil	Nile	nil	Nothing
Uzziah	/ju:zaiə/	Ushia	Uzziah	Ushia	council ward
Zeus	/zu:z/	Seuse	Zeus	Seuse	Daily

It is obvious that English borrowed words can be spelt the same with other English or Tiv words. The above words are susceptible to several meanings. Some persons may think that the words under First and Second Interpretations above are original Tiv words or English loan-words. It is the context that can disambiguate the above words.

**5.3. The phonological functions of English Loan-words**

Elision, epenthesis, dissimilation, metathesis and eye dialect have their phonological functions. Elision makes words easier and faster to pronounce. Words that are unnecessarily long or duplicated are very simple to pronounce when deleted. Elision is also used in verse for metrical or rhythmical reasons. Poets elide some letters so as to have certain syllables they need. Elision is one of the repair strategies in Tiv. Taylor (1994: 2), O’Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011: 406) and Kwambeh (2014: 35) identify vowel elision as a hiatus repair strategy.

Furthermore, epenthesis or insertion is used for breaking consonant clusters in words that have them. The cluster can be broken up by means of a vowel or a consonant which is inserted between its elements. These examples are Kirimishi /kɪrɪmɪʃi/ meaning ‘Christmas’, Igipiti /ɪgɪpɪti/ means ‘Egypt’, Bibilo /bɪbɪlɔ/ is ‘Bible’, Esera refers to ‘Ezra’, Heberu /heberu/ means ‘Hebrew’, Iserael means ‘Israel’ and Ekesodu /ekesɔdu/ is ‘Exodus’ /lɛksədəs/. Note that x in ‘Exodus’ brings about a cluster of /ks/.

In Tiv language, prothetic vowels can be added to show plurality. One of the ways of forming plural is the addition of u to the singular nouns. For instance, u will be added to these singulars *mita*, *lita*, *windou*, *hôtél*, *gomna*, *kaade*, *kômiti*, *mato*, *miliôn*, *mishen*, *kyuubu*, *miniti*, *kômputato* be plurals. The table below shows the usefulness of prothetic vowel in plural formation.

**Table 9:** Prothetic Vowels used for Plural Formation

Singular Loan-words		Plural Loan-words	
<i>gomna</i>	governor	<i>Ugomna</i>	governors
<i>hôtél</i>	hotel	<i>Uhôtél</i>	hotels
<i>kaade</i>	card	<i>Ukaade</i>	cards
<i>kômiti</i>	committee	<i>Ukômiti</i>	committees
<i>kômputata</i>	computer	<i>ukômputata</i>	computers
<i>kyuubu</i>	cube	<i>ukyubu</i>	Cubes
<i>Lita</i>	litre	<i>Ulita</i>	Litres
<i>mato</i>	motor	<i>Umato</i>	motors
<i>miliôn</i>	million	<i>Umiliôn</i>	millions
<i>miniti</i>	minute	<i>Uminiti</i>	minutes
<i>mishen</i>	mission	<i>umishen</i>	missions
<i>Mita</i>	mitre	<i>Umita</i>	mitres
<i>Windou</i>	window	<i>uwindou</i>	windows

Consonants are inserted between two vowels to break hiatus. The insertion of consonants serves as a repairing strategy. Trask (1996: 170) defines hiatus (*hai|eitəs*) as ‘the occurrence of two consecutive vowels forming separate syllables.’ Tiv loan-words show this phenomenon when letter *i* changes to *y* and appears between two vowels. For example, *Kayafa* ~ Caiaphas, *Mahaseya* ~ Mahseiah, *Yehoyada* ~ Jehoiada and *Yehoyakim* ~ Jehoiakim repair the above triphthongs, a sequence of three vowels. There is an intrusive *h* in *Kapernahum* ~ Capernaum which separates the two vowels.

Eye dialects, considered to be non-standard spellings, are useful in their own right. They reflect the characters’ linguistic background and social statuses. These deviated spellings may represent taboo words such as *Gawd* for God, *s\*k* for sex, *f\*\*k* for fuck, *pen!s* for penis and so on. In English loan-words, eye dialects are useful in acquiring the spellings and pronunciations of such borrowed words. For instance, *mail* and *mile* /*mail*/, *dai* and *dye* /*dai*/, *wain* and *wine* /*wain*/, *fer* and *fir* /*f3*/ and *wiil* and *wheel* /*w1:l*/.

#### 5.4. Reasons for Linguistic borrowing of loan-words

Campbell (1998: 59) affirms that languages borrow words from other languages primarily because of need. Borrowing becomes necessary since languages presumably needed new names for these new concepts when they were acquired. For instance, *kômputata* – computer, *fon* – phone, *redio* – radio and *kômishena* – commissioner. Tiv language also borrowed some words because of prestige. For instance, a Tiv word for ‘cup’ is *iyongo* but Tiv people



prefer *kôpu* to *iyongo*. Other examples that show that Tiv people prefer English loan-words to Tiv words are *deserti* instead of *taakyôngo* (desert), *akii* in lieu of *ushindan* (keys), *Sati* in place of *Cootom* (Saturday), *hama* instead of *msabe* (hammer) *pati* in place of *genabe* (party) and *tica* /ʃiʃæ/ instead of *ortesen*.

Languages borrow loan-words for vocabulary expansion. English borrowed a lot of words from other dialects and languages for its expansion. Such borrowed words have resulted in many synonyms. Some of the borrowed words have made it possible for a Tiv language to express one thing in several ways. Examples are *ushoja*, *mbautyav*, *mbakangenyav* (soldiers), *senou* and *awombo* (snow), *Upsalami*, *Atsam*, *Amo* (Psalms). Campbell (1998: 60) posits some loan-words are borrowed due to negative evaluation, that is, the adoption of the foreign word to be derogatory.

## 6. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. This paper will be relevant to scholars who may wish to carry out research in comparative, contact linguistics and historical linguistics.
- 6.2. This study will equally be useful to curriculum designers who may wish to incorporate contact and comparative linguistics as course unit(s) in the Department of African/Nigerian Linguistics.
- 6.3. This study is not exhaustive; therefore more studies have to be done on the morphological, graphological, syntactic, semantic effects of English, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo loan-words on the Tiv grammar.

## 7. CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Any study or paper that adds nothing to knowledge is not fit to be called a paper or study. From the above backdrop, this paper has the following contributions to knowledge:

- 7.1. This paper sets pace for the development of contact linguistics, historical linguistics or comparative linguistics between English and Tiv languages;
- 7.2. The phonological study English loan-words has created a new linguistic field known technically as loan phonology;
- 7.3. Theoretically, functional theory of language contact can be vitally important for those that want to analyse oral and written discourses;
- 7.4. Pedagogically, this paper can be of immense help to the teaching of phonology, language contact, historical linguistics, comparative linguistics and contrastive linguistics.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Language contact often results in borrowing loan-words from other languages. English loan-words came into Tiv language through the contact that the Tiv people had with the Whites (especially the White Christian missionaries as most of the loan words are from the English Bible). This contact made it possible for the domestication and introduction of new lexical items into Tiv language. These loan-words should not be seen as a bastardisation of Tiv language but should be perceived as language growth and development. Principally, Tiv language borrowed English words to enrich her vocabulary, for prestigious reason, and as substitutes for Tiv words. It has been established from the findings that most English loan-words have no substitutes in Tiv; loan-words have expanded the vocabulary of the Tiv grammar; the original syllabic structure of most loan-words changed from close to open syllables; epenthetic letters are added to break consonant clusters, for plurality and as a hiatus repairing strategy and epenthesis, elision, metathesis and dissimilation are figures of phonological deviation. Finally, this paper has clearly explored elision, epenthesis, dissimilation, metathesis, eye dialect as phonological effects and functions of English loan-words on the study of Tiv grammar.



## 9. FUNDING

This research received no external funding.

## References

- Bailey, W. R. (1992). Eye dialect. In McArthur, T. (ed). *The Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bohannon, P., & Bohannon, L. (1962). *Tiv of central Nigeria*. London: International African Institute.
- Bowdre, H. P. (1964). A study of eye dialect. An Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, The University of Florida, Florida.
- Brogan, T. V. F. (1993). Elision. Preminger, A. & Brogan, T. V. F. (eds). *The new Princeton encyclopedia of poetry and poetics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bussmann, H. (ed). (1996). *Routledge dictionary of language and linguistics*. London: Routledge.
- Campbell, L. (1998). *Historical linguistics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Carr, P. (2008). *A glossary of phonology*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Chalker, C., & Weiner, E. (1994). *The Oxford dictionary of English grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chomsky, N. & Morris, H. (1968/1991). *The sound pattern of English*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Crystal, C. (2008). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics* (6th edn.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ibrahim, A. M. (2016). The influence of elision on the original syllabic structure in English and Safwani Arabic: A contextual analysis. *International journal of English linguistics*, 6 (2):1-8.
- Iorkua, B. M. (2010). *Linguistic borrowing: A case study of Tiv language*. An Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Department of Linguistics, Benue State University, Makurdi.
- Jones, D. (2006). *English pronouncing dictionary*. New 17th Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krapp, P. G. (1925). *The English language in America*. New York: The Century Co.
- Ladefoged, P. & Johnson, K. (2010). *A course in phonetics* (6th edn.). Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.
- McArthur, T. (1992). Metathesis. In McArthur, T. (ed). *The Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kwambeh S. T. (2014). Hiatus resolution strategies in Tiv. An Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Department of Linguistics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- Matthews, H. P. (2007). *Concise dictionary of linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McArthur, T. (1992). Elision. In McArthur, T. (ed.). *The Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McArthur, T. (1992). Phonography. In McArthur, T. (ed.). *The Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McArthur, T., & Romaine, S. (1992). Loan. In McArthur, T. (ed.). *The Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- O'Grady, W. M., Archibald, J., & Katamba, F. (2001). *Contemporary linguistics*. Essex: Pearson Education.
- Richards, C. J., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4th edn.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Schane, A. S. (1973). *Generative phonology*. New Jersey. Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Thomason, G. S. (2001). *Language contact*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Trask, R.L. (1996). *A Dictionary of phonology*. London: Routledge.
- Traugott, C. E., & Pratt, L. M. (1980). *Linguistics for students of literature*. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Usar, I. I., & Ofoegbu, C.O. (2015). English and Hausa loanwords in Tiv. *Ansu: Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 1(2):1-11.