Analysis of Tiv clitics

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Abstract: Tiv language has both major and minor word-formation processes, and cliticization belongs to the minor process. This study debunks an erroneous assertion by researchers of Tiv extraction that Tiv morphology is devoid of clitics. The non-inclusion of cliticization as a word-formation in Tiv is long overdue. Though clitics are infinitesimally small in the Tiv grammar, their minuteness should not be ignored. This paper argues that the Tiv language has enclitic m, which is added after its hosts, usually verbs, it performs pronominal functions. This paper classifies Tiv clitics, discusses the formation of clitics in Tiv, and states the functions of Tiv clitics. The researcher made use of observation as a primary source of data elicitation, and documentary sources were equally used in the review. It has been discovered that researchers on the Tiv language have not given any attention to clitics in the language. It has been found out that nam (give me) and wuhem (my co-wife) were considered as objects in the previous studies. Researchers mistook clitics for affixes. Finally, the Tiv language only has enclitics.

Keywords: Affixes, Clitics, Enclitics, Epenthesis, Host, Proclitics

1. Introduction

Tiv, a tonal language spoken in the north-central geographical zone of Nigeria and part of the Republic of Cameroon, has many major and minor processes of word-formation and cliticization belongs to the latter. This paper debunks an erroneous assertion by researchers of Tiv extraction that Tiv morphology is devoid of clitics. The non-inclusion of cliticization as a word-formation in Tiv is long overdue. The phenomenon known as clitic is very difficult to define or characterise. Clitics in most literature are analogous to affixes (prefixes and suffixes) because they are attached before and after the root or host. Clitics are different from epenthesis, letters added before, between and afterwords. The paucity of critical works on Tiv clitics could be a major challenge for researchers who are silent about the existence of clitics in Tiv. It is not their fault because they have not seen cliticisation as a morphological process in Tiv. Again, English Language is a stressed-timed international language, has minute instances of clitics that are formed through contractions. For instance, does not – doesn't, will not – won't, there is – there's and Kate is coming – Kate's coming. The deletion of o in not and i in is results in cliticisation, the formation of proclitics and enclitics in English. The English language has enclitics, morphemes that come after the hosts. However, the structure of clitics in Tiv differs from that of English. This study argues that Tiv language has enclitic m, which is added after its hosts, usually verbs, to perform pronominal functions. Though clitics are infinitesimally small in the Tiv grammar, their minuteness should not be ignored. This paper classifies Tiv clitics, discusses the formation of clitics in Tiv, and states the functions of Tiv clitics.

2. Review of related literature

This study considers the conceptual and empirical reviews. Conceptual review dwells on the various definitional approaches, while empirical review hinges on classifications, functions, and characteristics of clitics. This heading shall also examine the types, formation and functions of clitics Tiv.

2.1. Conceptual and empirical reviews

According to Katamba (1989), a clitic is an unaccented particle that is 'attached to a host' and is unable to stand 'on its own'. He maintains that some clitics are words while others are bound morphemes. Trask (2004) and Carr (2008) state that clitic has the property of a word or affix. Trask (2004) buttresses that a clitic cannot

be stressed, and it is phonologically bound to an adjoining word, its host. Similarly, Baker, Hardie and McEnery (2004) assert that a clitic has syntactic property of a word, but it is attached to the hosts phonologically and lexically. They mention contractions and possessions as the roles of clitics. In his words, Crystal (2011) avers that clitic refers to a form that looks like a word, but lacks the capability of being a word that is phonologically hooked to their hosts. Chalker and Weiner (1998) define a clitic is a morpheme that is weakly pronounced, contracted, and attached to a host phonologically. The addition of proclitics and enclitics to the hosts or words is referred to as cliticisation. Matthews (2007) describes cliticisation as a term used in syntax and historical change whereby a word becomes a clitic.'

Clitics are dichotomized into proclitics and enclitics. According to O'Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011:138), clitics that come 'at the beginning of their host' are proclitics, and enclitics come at the 'end of their host'. Proclitics come before their hosts or words that they are being stuck to whereas enclitics come after their hosts. English language has enclitics in contracted forms such as *I'm, there's, didn't, John's eating, aren't, shouldn't, wouldn't,* and so on. It is obvious that the above-abbreviated forms (am),'s (is), *n't* (not), *didn't,* (did not), *John's* (John is eating), *aren't* (are not), *shouldn't* (should not) and *wouldn't* (would not) are considered as clitics in the English language because they are leaning on their hosts – *I, there, did, John, are, should* and *would*. We know that *am* and *is* are verbs and *not* show negation. However, when the above words are clipped as in *'m, n't* and *'s,* they are essentially clitics. Clitic performs different functions such as graphological and morphological (contractions), syntactic (possessions), and phonological (syllabic deletions and epentheses).

Aor (2020) establishes that when *m* comes after its host in Tiv, it is called a clitic. The author states that 'Tiv language has *m* /mæ/ as a letter of the alphabet and *m* /m̩/ is a personal pronoun. He maintains that *M* serves as a subject and as an object as well'. By way of example, Aor (2020) cites *hembam* (greater than me) and *wuam* (kill me) as objects, and they behave as clitics do. Aor vociferously argues that *hembam* and *wuam* are 'not compound words'. Some kinds of literature write the above words by apostrophizing between the hosts and *m* as in: *hemba'm* and *wua'm*, respectively. He finally submits that clitic *m* should be separated from the host. Based on the definition and formation of clitics in the English morphology, the author thinks that the Tiv language has *enclitic,* which some literature call object or possessive pronoun. If *m* is referred to as an object, then it is an object of what? Do words perform an objective function within the same words? Traditional grammar proves that sentences have subjects, complements, and objects. In this study, the author prefers the enclitical function of *m* to the hackneyed term: object.

2.2. Data presentation and analysis
The data have been analyzed under the following headings:
- **a.** Classification of Tiv clitics,
- **b.** Formation of Tiv clitics, and
- **c.** Functions of Tiv clitics.

Classification of Tiv clitics
Prominently, clitics are classed into proclitics (precede their hosts) and enclitics (come after their hosts). However, Tiv morphological structure accepts only enclitics. These encliticised words are found in the table below:

Table 1: Enclitics in the Tiv morphology

Hosts	Clitic M	Cliticised Forms	Glosses
bèè	M	*Bèèm*	resemble me
Dé	M	*Dém*	leave me
dóndò	M	*Dóndòm*	follow me
hàà	M	*Hààm*	pour me
kèsè	M	*Kèsèm*	fetch me
Ná	M	*Nám*	give me
ngô	M	*ngôm*	my mother
Ôô	M	*Ôôm*	wash me
pàà	M	*pààm*	rescue me
Tà	M	*Tàm*	hit me
tìndí	M	*tìndím*	send me
tsèghá	m	*tsèghám*	ordain me
Và	m	*Vàm*	bring me
vèndá	m	*vèndám*	reject me
wùhé	m	*wùhém*	my co-wife

yàngè	*m*	*yàngèm*	prevent me
Zéndá	*m*	*zéndám*	chase me

The above table has shown that Tiv language has enclitic which must precede a verb. The above clitics must be pronounced with their hosts. If *m* is separated from their hosts, then such words cease to be called Tiv clitics. It is the attachment of the pronoun *m* to the host that results in cliticisation.

Formation of Tiv clitics

The formation of clitics varies from one language to another. Some clitics are independent words; others appear before their hosts; most come after their hosts, and another group is formed by the use of contractions. Tiv language has its clitic attached after its hosts. A personal objective pronoun *m* is added after verbs to change them into phrases that have pronominal references. For instance, *kàngè* is a verb meaning 'tie', and if *m* 'me' comes after it (not inflectional function); it means 'tie me'. Again, *pásè* 'release' plus *m* 'me' becomes 'release me'. The author, therefore, propounds **M Codalisation Theory** for the formation of Tiv clitics thus: 'When a voiced labio-dental nasal /ɱ/ precedes their hosts, mostly verbs, then the formed words are called encliticised words'. The rule can be schematically stated as:

Verbs + Final M = Enclitic

The *m* must be a coda, final consonant. The *m* is not used as an affix for pluralization. It is one of the ways of forming new words in Tiv. Conversely, *bum* 'swear', *swem* 'anthill', *bam* 'provoke', *kpam* 'slave', *hôm* 'blossom', *môm* 'one' and *bem* 'peace' are not clitics and cannot be analysed as *bu+m*, *swe+m* and so on.

Table 2: Formation of Tiv clitics

Verbs	Glosses	Plus [+]	Coda [M]	Glosses	Enclitic [Words]	Glosses
Sùè	support	+	M	Me	*Sùèm*	support me
Ésé	wipe	+	M	My	*Ésém*	wipe my
Fá	know	+	M	Me	*Fám*	know me
gémá	turn	+	M	Me	*gémám*	turn me
pìnè	ask	+	M	Me	*pìnèm*	ask me
Tèsè	teach	+	M	Me	*tèsèm*	teach me
zùngwé	pity	+	M	Me	*zùngwém*	pity me
Vìhí	destroy	+	M	Me	*vìhím*	destroy me
Màà	build	+	M	Me	*mààm*	build me
Kùmà	knock	+	M	Me	*kùmàm*	knock me

Functions of Tiv clitics

Clitics in Tiv have morphological, syntactic, and phonological functions. Morphologically, cliticisation is a word-formation process in Tiv. New words are formed by the addition of *m* to their hosts. When *m* is added to the verbs, it changes such words to verb phrases as seen in Table 2 above. Graphologically, somebody will think that *sùèm* (support me) is monosyllabic word but functionally, it is a verb phrase. Syntactically, enclitic *m* 'my' performs a possessive function and pronominal reference to first-person objective pronoun *m* 'me'. Enclitic shows possessions in *ésém* 'wipe my' and *ngôm* 'my mother' and pronominal reference to 'me' as in *pìnèm* (ask me) and *kumam* (knock me). Phonologically, clitics result in closed syllables or the formation of coda in Tiv.

3. Conclusion

Cliticisation, a word-formation process, is relatively unknown in Tiv, and that is the main reason that there is a paucity of literature on it. The non-inclusion of clitic in the Tiv grammar could be as a result of its hydra-heated nature. However, it is indisputably clear that there is a presence of *m* clitic in Tiv. The addition of *m* enclitic to verbs changes them into phrases that have pronominal references. The foregoing has indicated that clitics in Tiv perform phonological, morphological, and syntactic functions. Significantly, this study introduces cliticisation as a word-formation process in Tiv. This research extends the grammatical functions of m pronoun to that of a clitic in the Tiv language. The study establishes that the criticised *m* is a voiced labio-dental nasal /ɱ/ which must come after verbs which are its hosts. This study is not exhaustive; therefore, more research should be carried out on the Tiv clitics.

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