



Semantics of Affixes in Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma

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Abstract

The article dwells on the semantics domains of affixes in Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma under Lexical morphology and prototype theories. For example, tema 'cut' to n-teng'-w-a can fit in the lexical morphology as in 'the one who has been cut' or the one who is lead under the prototype model. The motivation behind the examination was that most linguists have investigated tonal transfer, phonology, and verb extensions in Sukuma but less is done in noun affixes and their semantic functions, thus the need for investigation to fulfill this gap. The study used an interpretivism paradigm veiled in a qualitative approach, based on the fact that the data comes from natural settings. The study used a descriptive study design to describe the semantics of affixes in Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma from Sukuma population in Njingani village, Geita rural district, in Mwanza region. Three methods of data collection were used namely, focus group discussion, intuition knowledge and critical documentary analysis. Ten Sukuma native speakers were selected purposively for the discussion. Sukuma native speakers were selected for the study. The study revealed inflectional and derivational affixes, the former are prefixes as in diminutive {ka, tu}, hugeness {ma, li, mi}, locative {ku, mu, ha}, adjective and deverbal {i, ma, n} while the later are suffixes as in causative {j, ch, sh, y}, passive {w, ng'w, v}, adjective prefix {n, ß} and applied {ig, ij, eg, a or i}. The prefixes are ordered in three maximally in a single noun while this is true, the derivational suffixes trigger numerous senses. Based on the findings, it was concluded that such semantics of affixes in Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma contribute to and strengthen the development of Lexical morphology and prototype theories. The study urges other studies be carried out on other affixes which with no doubt would contribute to the grammar of the language to both this generation and generations yet to come.

Introduction

Kisukuma language has rich noun morphology compared to other Bantu languages. Many, if not most, of the Sukuma linguists have investigated tonal transfer, phonology, and verb extensions (cf. Batibo, 1976; Richardson, 1959; Matondo, 2006; Muhdhar, 2006), but less has been done on noun affixes and their semantic functions. The peculiarities found in Kisukuma language affixes and prefixes warrant specific investigation; specifically, Kisukuma can have up to three (3) prefixes in a noun or word, something which has not yet been examined. Therefore, given this understanding, there is a need to investigate noun affixes and their semantic functions in languages beyond English



to determine whether there are peculiarities related to the type, form, and meaning of Kisukuma nouns.

Bantu languages' noun morphology has been presented and analysed by various scholars such as Rugemalira (2007), Manus (2010), Appah (2007), and Muhirwe (2007), to mention just a few. Rugemalira (2007) researched the noun phrase structures of Bantu languages such as Igiha, spoken in Kigoma, Tanzania; Runyambo, spoken in Karagwe, Tanzania; Kinyakyusa, spoken in Mbeya; and Kiswahili, spoken in Tanzania. The data presented appears to be formed through both derivational and inflectional morphology. Therefore, Rugemalira argued that the nouns in most Bantu languages are created using affixes and suffixes. Rugemalira's study did not address the context of affix ordering that informs the current study's investigation.

Maganga and Schadeberg (1992) wrote about the grammar of Nyamwezi, focusing on the Jidakama dialect of the Kisukuma language. These scholars presented various word classes, including verbs, but did not cover noun morphology. The current study explores the semantics of noun affixes, including prefixes and suffixes, in the Kisukuma language.

Al-Azzaawi (2006) links the term *diminutive* to morphology and argues that it is an affix with the general meaning of small, little, or a particular form of a noun indicating that the person or thing referred to is small in size. Al-Azzaawi states that diminutive affixes perform the function of meaning modification and usually add a semantic feature of quantitative and/or qualitative nature. The author calls for deeper language-specific research to discover whether the affixes are morphologically realised as prefixes, infixes, or suffixes. The current study provides answers to that call.

Batibo (1976) investigated Kisukuma phonology and morphology; in the section on morphology, he briefly described noun morphology, particularly noun classes. His study analysed the syntactic structure of Kisukuma and the typological classification of the language. Among other things, he provided the following examples:

1. Kilezu - 'mustache' šilezu - 'mustaches'

The data in 1 above shows singularity and plurality in the Kisukuma language. Batibo's study is very significant to our current study because it has informed us as the basis on which re-analysis is desired. In turn, the study by Batibo needs re-analysis because there is an incomplete understanding of the topic under discussion, as *kekoome* is not the plural of *šikoome*. Batibo's study informs our current study that there is a misconception or incomplete understanding of Kisukuma formation pertinent to singularity and plurality; as such, it needs re-analysis in both morphological contexts and phonotactic considerations.

Richardson (1959) investigated the role of tone in the structure of Kisukuma. He discussed how the high and low tones in Kisukuma are marked. Richard's work provided us with the phonology of Kisukuma as well as some historical background. In fact, this study informs the current analysis that tones can manifest noun formation, but the current study uses morphology, i.e., prefixes and suffixes, to examine how nouns are formed.

Matondo (2006) investigated the matter of tonal transfer in Kisukuma. He carried out an analysis of the interaction between verb stem reduplication and tone in Jinakiiya, a dialect of the Kisukuma language. Matondo managed to analyse noun reduplications affected by tonal transfer, but not the noun morphology as per the current study. His study provides us with an understanding of how



Kisukuma tones can influence noun formation; this contrasts with the current study, which emphasises the formation of noun affixes in relation to linguistic morphology.

Muhdhar (2006) described five verbal extensions in the Kemunakiya dialect. His analysis of verbal morphemes includes the Applicative morph *-il/-el-*, Causative morph *-ij-* (*-ej-*), *-ish/-ish-*, Reciprocal verb suffix *-i-*, and Passive verb suffix *-w/-iw/-ng'w-*, *-nv-*, which were not correlated with noun morphology. Muhdhar (2006)'s investigation has provided the current study with some verb affixes; in turn, these affixes can be helpful for conjugating them into noun affixes.

The guiding theories

The study applied Lexical Morphology theory, which was propounded by Katamba (1986, 1993). The theory justifies that morphological analysis, done by breaking down words into functionally meaningful lexical units, makes grammatical meanings comprehensible. In other words, a word, or noun, is made up of a root or stem together with morpheme(s); these morphemes contribute to the meaning of the noun or word. Lexical morphology theory delineates rules that capture generalisations, and one rule accounts for all alternatives. One of these rules is the word formation process, which is core to this investigation, i.e., inflection of numbers, attributes, deverbal, and diminutive nouns. The formation of these noun forms occurs at different levels, including phonological, morphological, and syntactical aspects. In this respect, a theory of word formation was deemed adequate as a basis for the study of noun morphology in the Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma.

In turn noun morphology that takes the suffixes extension in this language cannot be accounted for within the lexical morphology theory pertinent to their semantics. In other words, nouns which are being embedded by suffixes extension house different meanings of which other theory is devised to handle. Thus, the study opted on prototype theory.

Prototype theory was pioneered by cognitive psychologist Rosch (1978). The research findings showed that membership in categories is, in most cases, a matter of degree. Therefore, Rosch (1978) argues that categories, in general, have best examples which he calls '*prototypes*'. It must be noted that within this model, categories are understood as having a 'core' and a 'periphery'. From another angle, prototype theory is a mental representation of a typical instance of a category, such that entities are assimilated into the category based on perceived similarity to the prototype" (Taylor, 1990, p. 529).

This theory is suitable for delineating noun morphology and the semantics of noun suffixes in Kisukuma derivational morphology. In other words, when a verb is derived into a noun, its meaning becomes more varied compared to the original. Therefore, the fact that a member lacks one property possessed by other members of the category does not necessarily disqualify it from being a member of that category or from possessing another property.

Methodology

The study employed a case study design in which the author attended to the Geita region and Geita rural district specifically, with the Kemunang'weli dialect serving as the case study. This implies that the Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma is spoken in the region, making it a viable choice. The population includes all members of any defined group of people, events, and objects from which information about the study can be derived. Therefore, the Sukuma people constituted the population under discussion. The study involved 10 informants whose native language was Kisukuma: four males and six females aged between 40 and 70. Three data collection methods were utilised: interviews, critical documentary analysis, and intuitive knowledge. The study utilised



unstructured interview questions posed to respondents to obtain data concerning noun morphology in the Kemunang'weli dialect. In reviewing documents, the researcher referred to written materials such as “*Le Kesukuma: Langue Bantu de Tanzanie: Morphologie & Phonologie* » and the *Kisukuma Bible*. The aim was to gather various vocabularies concerning the formation of nouns. The research also employed the intuition method, given that the researcher was a native speaker of the Kemunang'weli dialect originating from the region where the dialect is spoken.

Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

The study employed content analysis to determine the different morphemes used to form noun classes in the Kemunang'weli dialect. The discussion of the findings obtained from the field reveals that the Kemunng'weli dialect exhibits various prefixes, each presenting different semantics. The study identified diminutive, locative, adjective, and deverbal prefixes. Additionally, the language under discussion demonstrates the presence of more than one prefix in a single word, known as pre-prefixes.

Noun prefixes

Diminutive prefixes: These are types of prefixes that semantically indicate small, thin, or short. The Kisukuma diminutive prefixes have different characteristics; they can semantically function to show smallness, hugeness, singularity, and plurality, to mention just a few. However, the Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma has been observed to exhibit behaviours associated with all these forms of prefixes. In turn, the study identified the noun being formed from adjectives and adverbs of diminutive when added to the noun.

Table 1: Diminutive prefixes

Prefixes	Features	Numbers	Examples	Gloss
-ka-	Small or thin	Singular	Kagup ^{hi}	Is (small/thin) short
-tu-	Small or many	Plural	Tugup ^{hi}	Are(many/thin) short

The data in Table 1 above shows that the noun in the Kemunang'weli dialect can be formed by adding one prefix to the root to indicate the degree or size of the noun, which can refer to smallness, shortness, or thinness.

Hugeness prefixes: These are prefixes that indicate vastness, immensity, enormity, massiveness, gigantism, and bigness. Vast or mammoth prefixes have different forms; in other words, they are created using various morphemes such as -li-, -mi-, and -ma-. Consider the data below in Table 2:

Table 2: Hugeness prefixes

Prefixes	Features	Numbers	Examples	Gloss
-li-	Big/fat	Singular	Ligup ^{hi}	Is (big/fat) short
-ma-	Big/ many	Plural	magup ^{hi}	Are(fat/big) short
-mi-	Many/many	Plural	Migup ^{hi}	Are(many/fat) short

The data in Table 2 shows the various forms of prefixes indicating hugeness, toughness, or bigness in Kisukuma. While speakers of the Kisukuma language use the prefix -ma- for plural formation, other Bantu languages use different prefixes, as seen in Runyakitara noun plural formation. The Runyakitara language employs the prefixes -a- and -bha- for plural formation, as in a *bhantu* 'persons', derived from the singular prefixes -o- and -mu-, as in *Omuntu* and *Muntu* 'person'. The Kisukuma language also uses -mu- as a neutral prefix, which can be observed in the noun *munhúú* 'person'.



Locative prefixes: These are forms of affixes that indicate places, locations, or directions in different linguistic contexts (cf. Barasa, 2017). In the Kemunang'weli dialect of Kisukuma, adverbs are derived from nouns, particularly the adverb of place, by using prefix morphemes, namely: mu-, mwi, ha- which mark nearby places, and ku- which indicates remote places, while m-/mu- signifies within a place. Consequently, the noun is formed by omitting the prefixes that denote remote, within, and near in the adverb. The following analysis illustrates this interpretation:

Table 3: Locative prefixes

Prefixes	English	Pr+Noun	Structure	Gloss
-mu-	-in-	Mu+numba	Munumba	In the house
-ku-	-to-	Ku+numba	Kunumba	To the house
-ha-	-at-	Ha+numba	Hanumba	At the house

In Table 3 above, it is observed that the Kemunang'weli dialect demonstrates how adverbs of place can be used to form nouns indicating spatial relations such as 'within', 'remote', and 'near'. Note that each prefix is determined by grammatical intricacies. That is why researchers in Bantu languages agree that noun class features are determined by grammatical number, semantics (that is, whether they are human, animal, or non-living things), and, in other cases, arbitrarily (Katamba, 2003).

Adjective prefixes: These are noun prefixes that indicate adjectives. In the Kemunang'weli dialect, the investigator observed that adjectives are used to form nouns by replacing the prefix morpheme of the adjective with other prefixes. Consider the following data in Table 4:

Table 4: Adjective prefixes

Prefixes	Nouns	English Gloss	Structure	Nouns	Gloss
-n-	Simba	dig	N+simbi	Nsimbi	Digger
-β-	Sebhu	Hot	βu+Sebhu	βusebhu	Hotness
-β-	Nginu	Fat	βu+uginu	βuginu	Fatness

From Table 4 above, it is observed that adjectives can be used to form nouns in noun morphology. The adjectives that begin with the prefix -β- can be replaced with the prefix -n- to form nouns in the language under discussion.

Deverbal prefixes: Deverbal prefixes are forms of affixes that change verbs into nouns. This behaviour was observed in Kisukuma, where Sukuma disyllabic verbs changed into noun class. Consider the following data in Table 5:

Table 5: Deverbal prefixes

Verbs	Gloss	Noun	Gloss	Prefixes
Dima	Catch	Ndima	Catcher	-n-
Teja	Make loose	Nteja	Looser	-n-
Lya	Eat	Ilya	Eating	-i-
Lya	Eat	Malya	Eatings	-ma-
sumba	Create	Nsumbi	Creator	-n-
Loga	Witch	Nogi	The witch one	-no-
Tema	Cut	Ntemi	Those who cut	-n-
Lema	Reject	Nemi	Rejecter	-n-



Table 5 shows Kisukuma deverbal prefixes: -n-, -no-, and -ma-. When these prefixes are added to a verb, the verb changes into a noun. It is important to note that sometimes the derived noun can have multiple semantic meanings.

The maximum number of prefixes in a single noun

The study revealed that more than one prefix can be ordered in a single noun. This phenomenon is known as *pre-prefixation* in linguistic morphology. In other words, these are affixes that can co-occur before the root or stem of words. Therefore, pre-prefixation is the phenomenon in natural languages whereby more than one prefix (three at most for the current study) is ordered in a single noun. It was found that the maximum number of prefixes in the Kemunang'weli dialect is three.

Two prefixes: This describes the ability of two affixes with different qualities to align within a single noun. In the Kemunang'weli dialect, it was observed that two groups of prefixes can align: the first group includes -ka-, -u-, and -a-, while the second group includes -ku-, -lu-, -tu-, and -ma-. However, the two groups of prefixes are aligned, starting with the first group, followed by the second group. See the data in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Pre-prefixes of two affixes

P1	P2	P1+p2	Structure	Words	English gloss
-ka-	-ku-	-ka+ku-	Kaku+gulu	kakugulu	Small (short) leg
-ka-	-lu-	-ka+lu-	Kalu+gulu	Kalugulu	Small(thin)hill
-u-	-β-	-u+β-	Ubhu+do	Ubhudo	Smallness (single)
-u-	-tu-	-u+tu-	Utu+do	Utudo	Small (many)
-a-	-ma-	-a+ma-	Ama+do	Amado	Small (big, fat tall)

Table 6 above shows the Kisukuma pre-prefixes, which are limited to two in number. All the pre-prefixes are inserted at the beginning of a noun to indicate the degree of size, adding meaning to the noun in the Kemunang'weli dialect. Degree prefixes are morphemes from which nouns are formed, showing the size of the noun as small, big, or huge.

Three prefixes: In turn, it was also observed that the Kemunang'weli dialect has peculiarities in ordering up to three prefixes, namely pre-prefixes. Each of these prefixes has its own semantic meaning. The data in Table 7 exemplified:

Table 7: Pre-prefixes of three affixes

Pr1	Pr2	Pr3	Pr1 +pr2+pr3	Root	structure	English gloss
-a-	-ma-	-mi-	a+ma+mi	ti	amamiti	Many (big, thick) trees
-u-	-tu-	-mi-	u+tu+mi	ti	Utumiti	Many (small, short) trees
-a-	-ka-	-βu-	a+ka+βu	ti	akaβuti	One (short, small) medicine
-u-	-tu-	-βu-	u+tu+βu	ti	Utūβuti	Many (small) medicines
-a-	-ma-	-βu-	a+ma+βu	ti	amaβuti	Many (big) medicines

The data in 7 shows three prefixes in the Kemunang'weli dialect that can be ordered before the word root or stem. In these prefixes, there are concord agreements that exhibit their alignment; for example, prefix -a- occurs with prefixes -ma-, -mi-, -βu-, and -ka- in various ways, while prefix -u- aligns with prefixes -tu- and -βu-. Thus, prefix -a- can co-occur with -ma- and -βu-. In other words, prefix -a- is a flexible prefix that pairs with the diminutive prefix -ka- and the -ma- prefix, whereas prefix -u- does not align with prefixes -ma- and -ka-. The third prefix, -mi-, aligns with the second prefix, -tu-, and -ma-.



This situation of pre-prefixation in the Kisukuma language contains different peculiarities, and such significant features contribute to the modification of linguistic theories in the long run. For example, the ordering of up to three prefixes in a single noun (cf. 7) is envisioned in the Lexical Morphology theory (Katamba, 1993). This theory argues that morphological analysis involves breaking down words into functionally meaningful lexical units, whose grammatical meanings are decipherable. In other words, each prefix attached to a noun has a clear semantic scope. In this regard, prefix one follows prefix two and not vice versa.

Noun suffixes

Kisukuma, as one of the Bantu languages, has the characteristic of combining noun prefixes and suffixes as a result of noun phrases. In the Kemunang'weli dialect, prefixes and suffixes are employed to alter either the word class or the thematic roles, also known as theta roles, of the noun. It was observed that the noun can result from verb extensions using both prefixes and suffixes.

Nominalising suffix -i-: This is one of the noun suffixes in Kisukuma that transforms a verb into a noun. It is called a nominalising suffix because it converts a verb into a nominal class. Consider the following data in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Nominalising suffix -i-

Prefix	Verbs	Gloss	Suffixes	Noun extension	Gloss
-m-	Beha	Smoke	-i-	m-beh-i	The smoker (one)
-n-	Lemba	Cheat	-i-	n-emb-i	The cheater (one)
-n-	Gubha	Rape	-i-	n-gubh-i	The one who rapes
-n-	Seka	Laugh	-i-	n-sek-i	The one who laughs
-n-	Loga	Witch	-i-	no-g-i	The witch person
-n-	Lya	Eat	-y-	n-y-i (n-i-i)	The eater

In Kisukuma, when the -i- nominalising suffix is added to the lexeme, it results in different interpretations. In a few cases, not all lexemes are prefixed with -n- for noun organisation; for example, the noun *nogi* is not *n-g-i-* as in other nouns. This reflects the semantic structure that is central to cognitive grammar's conception of language, where meanings are organised in terms of complex constructions (see, for example, Taylor 2002, Cruse 2000). These semantic gradients are illustrated in Table 9:

Table 9: Prototype senses of nominalizing -i-

Nouns	Core meaning	Peripheral meaning
Mbehi	The smoker (one)	The minder person
Nembi	The cheater (one)	The slower person
Nogi	The witch person	Action of witching
Nseki	The one who laughs	The one who makes butter

Each derived verb has core and peripheral assumptions of meaning when transformed into a noun. These senses are contextualised in both semantic and pragmatic contexts. In other words, semantics is primarily characterised as being concerned with the linguistically determined meanings of an expression, while pragmatics is thought to focus on the contextually conditioned interpretation(s) of an expression (Chabata, 2007, p. 191). This aligns with the prototype theory of meaning conceptualisation, which suggests that words are inherently elastic, reflecting the fact that language users interpret variants based on context.



Passive noun suffixes: These are suffixes that indicate the noun upon which the action is performed. Thus, passive morphology shows the action being performed on the subject. In other words, a verb is said to be in the passive voice when the subject is not active, and the roles of the subject and object are reversed (Spencer, 1991). The study revealed three forms of passive suffixes in Kisukuma, as illustrated in (10).

Table 10: Passive noun suffixes

Prefix	Verbs	Gloss	Suffixes	Noun extension	Gloss
-m-	Beha	Smoke	-w-	m-beh-w-a	The smoked (one)
-n-	Tema	Cut	-ng'w-	n-te-ng'w-a	The cut one
-n-	Simba	Uproot	-v-	n-simv-a	The uprooted (one)
-n-	ng'wa	Drink	-iw-	ng'wi-w-a	The one who is drunk
-n-	Lemba	Cheat	-v-	Nem-v-a	The cheated one

In Table 10, three passive allomorphs *-v-*, *-ng'w-*, and *-w-* are observed in Kisukuma. It is important to note that each noun root mentioned above cannot take any of the three forms without altering the interpretive index of the respective verb. In other words, some verbs take *-v-*, others take *-ng'w-*, and others take *-w-*. This situation is influenced by the phonotactics of the Kisukuma language. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that the derived nouns from the verb encompass different semantics, which is accounted for within the prototype model of cognitive semantics. See Table 11.

Table 11: Prototype senses of passive suffixes

Nouns	Core meaning	Peripheral meaning
Mbehwa	The smoked (one)	The minded one
Nteng'wa	The cut one	The lead one
Ng'iwa	The one who is drunk	The beaten one
Nemva	The cheated one	The one who is made to settle

The nouns show two interpretations; this is reciprocally illustrated in Rosch (1978)'s prototype theory. The theory argues that categories are matters of degrees, as explained in the core and peripheral or extra meanings of the derived noun. Thus, Kisukuma encompasses a gradient of meanings pertinent to nouns that have been derived from the verb class. See more in Rosch (1973).

Causative noun suffixes: Causative suffixes are morphemes that cause someone or something to do something or make someone or something do something. The study revealed the causative suffixes, such as *-ch-*, *-sh-*, *-ish-*, *-j-*, *-y-*, and *-ny-*. These morphemes are summarized in Table 12 below:

Table 12: Causative suffix extensions

Prefix	Verbs	Gloss	Suffixes	Noun extension	
-m-	Ponda	Throw	-y-	m-pond-y-a	The one who makes to throw
-n-	Yela	Walk	-j-	n-ye-j-a/i	The one who makes to survey
-n-	Zuga	Cook	-j-	n-zu-j-a	The one who makes to cook
-n-	Seka	Laugh	-ch-	n-se-ch-a/i	The causee for laughing
-n-	Lemba	Cheat	-y-	n-emb-y-a	The causee for cheating
-n-	Ng'wa	Drink	-ish-	ng'w-ish-a	The one who causes to drink
-n-	Gwa	Fall	-ish	n-gw-ish-a	The one who causes to fall

The causative suffix *-j-* is attached to verbs with roots ending in either 'l' or 'g'. The verbs to which *-j-* is inserted can be disyllabic, trisyllabic, transitive, or intransitive. The noun causative suffix *-y-* is attached to disyllabic or trisyllabic verb roots that end with one of the following consonants: 't', 'β', 'h', 'm', 'mb', 'n', 'nd', 'p', or 'd'. While this is true, the noun causative suffixes *-sh-* and *-ish-* are



attached to most verbs that are monosyllabic. However, a few disyllabic verbs also attach *-sh-* and *-ish-*. Additionally, most of these verbs that attach *-sh-* and *-ish-* are intransitive and end with the phoneme 'k'.

The derived nouns above justify prototype implication following the sense that they have more than one meaning. Consider the data in table 13 below

Table 13: Prototype senses of causative suffixes

Nouns	Core meaning	Peripheral meaning
Pondya	The one who makes to throw	The one who rapes
Nyeji	The one who makes to walk	The one who walks
Nsechi	The causee for laughing	The player
Nembya	The causee for cheating	The slower

The multiple meanings resulted from the derived verb into noun classes are best substantiated in Taylor (1990) whose base was that semantic categories are assimilated with that of the first meaning.

Applied noun suffix extensions: The verb 'applied' comes from the noun application, therefore, suffixes of applied verb are known as applicative morphemes. These are morphs which denote different roles when attached to the noun as in locative, instrumental, benefactive and valence increaser. See the table 14 below:

Table 14: Applied noun suffixes

Prefix	Verbs	Gloss	Suffixes	Noun extension	
-m-	Ponda	Throw	-ej-	m-pond-ej-a/i	The one who throws for
-n-	Gema	Try	-j-	n-gem-ej-a/i	The one who tries for
-n-	Zuga	Cook	-ij-	n-zug-ij-a/i	The one who cooks for
-n-	Simba	Uproot	-ij-	N-simb-ij-i	The one who uproots for
-n-	Koja	Dip in	-gi-	n-ko-ge-j-i	The one who dips in for
-ʃ-	Kilija	Hold	-ig-	n-kil-ig-ij-a/i	The one who holds for

In Table 14, data show that the noun applicative suffixes *-ej-* and *-ij-* occur when the root of the verb ends with *ch* and *k* consonants. The noun applicative allomorphs *-gi-* and *-ge-* attach to roots ending with the consonant *j*. The same realisation of the *-gi-* and *-ge-* morphs is observed in noun causative verbs, which normally take the form of the *-j-* morph. It is important to note that the final formative vowels /a/ and /i/ appear interchangeably with the same semantics.

When the noun suffix *-i-* is attached at the end of a word, it sometimes results in multiple senses. This phenomenon is known as semantic flexibility in cognitive linguistics. Within the same assumption, the variability of word meaning has, for example, been observed by Quine (1987, p. 63), who argues that, "meanings are not to be thought of as if they were specimens in a museum of ideas, each with its own label." Instead, they tend to vary according to their contexts of use. See table 15 below:

Table 15: Prototype senses of applied suffixes

Nouns	The core meaning	The peripheral meaning
Mpondeja	The one who throws for	The one who grinds for
Ngemeji	The one who tries for	The one who tests for
Nzugiji	The one who cooks for	The one who put out for
Nkogeji	The one who dips in for	The good wine maker on behalf
Nkiligiji	The one who holds for	The one who crushes two things for



The data in table 15 above shows more than one meaning. From this base Taylor (2002, p. 98) argued that this idea of having words referring to different concepts in different contexts has been described in as semantic flexibility.

Conclusion

The study has identified a number of issues relevant to the semantics of noun affixes in the Kemunang'weli dialect of the Kisukuma language. It revealed diminutive, vast, locative, deverbal, and adjective prefixes, as well as causative, applied, and passive derivational suffixes. In this regard, it has been observed that Kisukuma affixes and prefixes can align together in a single noun, and that the maximum number of these prefixes is three semantically. Each prefix has its own semantic scope, which can include smallness, vastness, hugeness, shortness, singularity, or plurality. From another perspective, the study indicates the presence of multiple semantics of these suffixes when the verb is derived; this evidence falls within the specific realms of cognitive semantics and prototypes. The article calls for further studies on the incorporation analysis of prefixes and suffixes relevant to nouns within the framework of government and binding theory.

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