Affixation in Relation to Nominal Pronouns and their Contribution to Discourse in Ghanaian Language (Twi)

Peter Fosu[1], Adu David Tuffour[2], Mary Andoh[1], Agnes Adwoa Mensah[3], Kennedy Bandoh[1], Felicia Asamoah-Poku[4]

[1]Department of Languages, Akrokerri College of Education, Ghana

[2]Department of Languages, Atebubu College of Education, Ghana

[3]Department of Languages, Berekum College of Education, Ghana

[4]Department of Languages, St. Louis College of Education, Ghana

ABSTRACT

This **study** examined the phenomenon of affixation in relation to nominal pronouns and their contribution to discourse in **Twi**. Purposive sampling technique was used **to** select the participants for the study. The participants were selected based on their proficiency in Twi and their knowledge of affixation in relation to nominal pronouns. **Purposive sampling was used to elicit significant information for the study**. **In all one hundred (100) participants consisting of both native and non-native speakers of Twi were considered. Twenty-five (25) from Atebubu Senior High School, fifty (50) from Asare Bediako Senior High School Akrokerri and twenty-five (25) from Berekum Senior High School**. The instrument for data collection was unstructured interview consisting of open-ended questions. The unstructured interview was developed based on **Owu-Ewie (2010), unstructured interview is a flexible way of obtaining information from participants in the field of research.** The investigation revealed that, adding a morpheme, which is a meaningful linguistic unit, to a base word to change its meaning or create a new word is significant in Twi. The use of affixation in nominal pronouns contributes significantly to discourse in Twi by providing information about the speaker's social identity, the social relationship between the speaker and the addressee, and the context of the communication. The study of affixation in nominal pronouns and its contribution to discourse in Twi have significant implications for language teaching, language policy. **Theory that underpins this study is discourse analysis theory propounded by Foucault (1969). The theory explores the concepts of discourse and how knowledge is organized and produced through discursive formation.**

Keywords: affixation, affixes, prefix, suffix, discourse, linguistics, relation

INTRODUCTION

Affixation in relation to nominal pronouns is a **captivating** topic in linguistics that has significant implications for discourse in Twi. Nominal pronouns are an essential component of language, and they play a crucial role in creating meaning in discourse. Affixation is a process that involves adding a morpheme to a word to change its meaning or function. In Twi, nominal pronouns can be affix with various morphemes, such as suffixes and prefixes, to convey different meanings. The study of affixation in nominal pronouns is particularly relevant in Twi because of its contribution to discourse. Nominal pronouns with affixes can provide important information about the identity, gender, and number of the referent, as well as their role in the discourse. The use of a feminine suffix in a nominal pronoun can indicate that the referent is female, while a plural suffix can indicate that there are multiple referents.

Affixation refers to the process of, **according to Aboh (2014)**, adding a morpheme, which is the smallest

unit of language that carries meaning, to a word to modify its meaning or form. In the context of nominal pronouns, affixation can be used to indicate grammatical relationships between the pronoun and other elements in a sentence. Nominal pronouns are words that are used to replace nouns in a sentence, such as (("he", "she", "it" (**singular**) and "they", "we", and "you" (**plural**))). In Twi, nominal pronouns can be inflected with affixes to indicate grammatical relationships such as possession, number, and case. The use of affixation with nominal pronouns can also contribute to discourse in Twi. By inflecting a pronoun with a specific affix, speakers can provide additional information about the referent of the pronoun, which can help to clarify meaning and avoid ambiguity in communication.

This affixation provides additional information about the nature of the phone call, helping to clarify the meaning of the sentence. Affixation in relation to nominal pronouns plays an important role in Twi grammar and discourse. Modifying the form and meaning of pronouns through affixation, speakers can convey grammatical relationships and provide additional information about the referent of the pronoun, contributing to effective communication. The use of affixed nominal pronouns can also convey information about the speaker's attitude or stance towards the referent. For instance, the use of an honorific suffix can signal respect or politeness towards the referent, while the use of a diminutive suffix can indicate affection or condescension.

LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Affixation in relation to nominal pronouns and their contribution to discourse in Twi is **an academic field** that has been explored in several linguistic studies. In this literature review, we will discuss some of the relevant research that has been conducted in this area. Ameka & Essegbey (2006) examined the use of nominal pronouns and affixation in Ewe, a Ghanaian Language spoken in Ghana and Togo. They argued that nominal pronouns and affixation are used to mark grammatical relationships and discourse functions in the language. **Ameka & Essegbey (2006)** suggested that nominal pronouns and affixation contribute to the pragmatic and discourse functions of the language.

Owiredua and Amfo (2017) investigated the contribution of affixation to the discourse functions of nominal pronouns in Akan. They found that affixation is used to mark grammatical and discourse functions in the language, and that nominal pronouns with affixes play an important role in the identification and tracking of referents in discourse. In their study of Dagaare, a Ghanaian Language spoken in Ghana and Burkina Faso. Bodomo and Saah (2009) found that nominal pronouns and affixation are used to mark grammatical relationships and discourse functions in the language. They also observed that nominal pronouns with affixes are used to signal the topicality of referents in discourse.

Aboh (2014) investigated the use of nominal pronouns and affixation in Fon, a Ghanaian Language spoken in Benin. He argued that affixation is used to mark grammatical relationships and discourse functions in the language, and that nominal pronouns with affixes play an important role in the identification and tracking of referents in discourse.

The studies reviewed here suggest that affixation is an important feature of nominal pronouns in Twi, and that it contributes to the grammatical, pragmatic, and discourse functions of this language. Nominal pronouns with affixes are used to mark grammatical relationships, signal topicality, and identify and track referents in discourse. **This study focuses on affixation in relation to nominal pronouns in Ghanaian Language but in Twi. Though Ghanaian Languages are mutually intelligible, there are dialectal differences.**

From a discourse analysis perspective, affixation plays a role in establishing cohesion and coherence within a text or conversation. Affixes can be used to create cohesive relationships between words and phrases, such as through the use of prefixes and suffixes that indicate tense, plurality, or case. Discourse analysis is a

multidisciplinary field of study that focuses on the analysis of language use in social contexts. The theory of discourse analysis was propounded by Michel, F., Goffman, E. & Tannen, D. (1960; 1970). **Supports the investigation of affixation in relation to pronouns in Twi language. The theory explores the concepts of discourse and how knowledge is organized and produced through discursive formation.** Regarding the second part of your question, affixation refers to the process of adding prefixes or suffixes to words to create new words. Nominal pronouns are a type of pronoun that function as a noun phrase. In the context of Twi, nominal pronouns are an essential part of discourse, and their contribution to discourse can be analyzed through discourse analysis.

METHODOLOGY

This **study** was descriptive research design as it seeks to describe the relationship between affixation in relation to nominal pronouns and their contribution to discourse in Twi. The design was based on the analysis of existing literature, as well as primary data collected through survey research. Purposive sampling technique was adapted to elicit significant information for the analysis. The participants were selected based on their proficiency in Twi and their knowledge of affixation in relation to nominal pronouns. Agyekum (2006) stated that, the Twi People are Akans. It is the language that is called Twi. The Akans are the largest ethnic group in Ghana. According to Ghana National Statistical Service (GNSS), the 2020 national population and housing census posits that, 49.1% of the Ghanaian population is Akans and about 44% of this percentage speak Twi. The Akans occupy the greater part of the southern sector of Ghana. Twi is spoken as a native language (L1-first language) in eight of the sixteen regions in Ghana namely, Ashanti, Eastern, Western, Central, Brong, Ahafo and Bono East Regions. The Akan as a language that Asante Twi forms a part, is made up of various dialects that are mutually intelligible. These are Asante Twi, Akuapem Twi and Fante. Twi is studied from primary school up to the university level. The target sample size was 100 participants, consisting of fifty (50) in Asare Bediako Senior High School. This was made up of forty (40) students and ten (10) teachers. In Atebubu Senior High School, twenty-five (25) participants were purposefully selected and they were made up of twenty (20) students and five (05) teachers. In Berekum Senior High School, twenty-five (25) participants were also selected and they comprised twenty (20) students and five (05) teachers. The data was collected from the primary source. The instrument for data collection was unstructured interview consisting of open-ended questions and focus group discussion These instruments were selected to ensure its validity and reliability. The data was analyzed qualitatively by examining the responses to open-ended questions. The analysis was focus on identifying patterns and trends in the data and exploring the relationship between affixation in relation to nominal pronouns and their contribution to discourse in Twi.

Research sites

The data were collected in the Bono East Region and Ashanti Regions of Ghana. Majority of the population was into different ventures, for instance, politicians, health workers and education workers. **Since the study was in the academic field, education sector among the aforementioned population was used for the study.** The sites were suitable for the investigation based on the motive behind the study. The studies were carried out at public schools alone. Close attention was paid to all respondents during the interview and the observation to monitor the linguistics environment of affixation in relation to nominal pronouns and their contribution to discourse in Twi.

Data collection and Procedure

The tools used for data collection on this study were interview and observation. **A pilot study was conducted on the instruments to ascertain their effectiveness before they were administered in the research sites.** The interview and the observation were conducted in the senior high school in the three

selected Municipalities. On the 12th June, 2022 to 30th January, 2023. Permission was sought and granted by the Municipal Director of Education as well as the headmasters of the target senior high schools. One hundred (100) participants were interviewed in their own environment.

Discussion /Analysis

One common affixation process in Twi involves the addition of a possessive marker to nominal pronouns. For example, the pronoun "me" (I) can be modified by adding the possessive marker "me + a" to create "m'aduane" (my food). This affixation process can be used to indicate possession or ownership, and it is commonly used in Twi to express relationships between people and objects. In Twi, the pronoun "me" can be infected with the prefix "a-" to indicate possession, resulting in "me + a ", m'adwuma (my work) which means "my". Similarly, the pronoun "me" can be infected with the suffix "yɛ+n" to indicate a plural number, resulting in "yɛn", which means (plural).

In Akan (Twi), every stem takes a suffix and each of them has a specific duty to perform in the structure of a sentence. In such discourse pronominal affix play a significant role.

Me –   I   me -kɔ   me + atadeɛ = m'atadeɛ

Wo – you   wo-kɔ   wo + aduane = w'aduane

ɔno – he/she   ɔ- kɔ   ɔno + adwuma = n'adwuma

yɛn – we   yɛ-kɔ

mo – you   mo-kɔ

wɔn – they   wɔ-kɔ

Another affixation process in Twi involves the addition of a plural marker to nominal pronouns. For example, the pronoun "ɔno" (he/she) 'maame' can be modified by adding the plural marker "nom" to create "maamenom" (they). This affixation process can be used to indicate that many people or objects are being referred to, and it can help to clarify the subject of a sentence. Nominal suffixes also show plural form of so nouns.

'maame' – mother (singular)   maamenom – mothers (pl)

'wɔfa' – uncle (singular)   wɔfanom – uncles (pl)

'ohiani – poor person (singular)   ahiafoɔ – poor persons (pl)

'okuani – farmer (singular)   akuafoɔ – farmers (pl)

The suffixes '-ni' or '-foɔ' or '-nom' are added to some stems to show that the word stands for human being.

agyanom – fathers

akuafoɔ – farmers

obubuani – cripple

In affixation processes, nominal pronouns in Twi can also be modified by adding progressive prefix markers. Progressive markers are used to indicate ongoing activities. For example, the pronoun "wo"

(you) can be modified by adding the progressive marker "re" to create "wore" (you are). This affixation process is commonly used in formal and informal contexts, such as continuity of an action.

Ɛnsiiɛ agyinahyɛdeɛ 're' – (progressive prefix). This prefix shows that the activity is ongoing.

wo – re – kɔ	you are going
Ɔ – re – da	S/he is sleeping
yɛ- re – dɔ	We are weeding
mo – re – kɔ	You are going

Daakye kabea agyinahyɛdeɛ "bɛ-" anaa "rebɛ–" (future prefixes)

ɔ-bɛ-kɔ –	S/he will go
Yaa bɛ-da –	Yaa will sleep
yɛ-bɛ- kɔ –	We shall go

Nsianim a ɛkyerɛ ayɛasie (perfect prefix)

wɔ – a – ba	they have come
yɛ- a – di	we have eaten
Adwoa – a – su	Adwoa has cried

The use of affixation in Twi can contribute to discourse by providing additional information about the relationships between people and objects, clarifying the subject of a sentence, and indicating levels of respect or deference. By using affixation to modify nominal pronouns, speakers of Twi can communicate more effectively and efficiently, and convey a greater range of meanings and nuances in their language.

Negative prefixes

n – kɔ –	don't
m – fa –	don't take
ɔ – re – n – tɔ –	s/he won't buy
yɛ- re – m – fa –	we will not take

Affixation refers to the process of adding a prefix or suffix to a word to modify its meaning or form. In the context of nominal pronouns, affixation can be used to create new forms that contribute to discourse in **Twi**.

One way in which nominal pronouns contribute to discourse in **Twi** is through the use of affixation. In Twi, nominal pronouns can be modified through the addition of affixes, which can change their meaning and function in a discourse. For example, the prefix "a-" can be added to a nominal pronoun to indicate possession, as in m'apɔnkye (my goat) and m'ani (my eye).

Nominal suffixes

A suffix is an affix attached after a root or stem or base. They can be added to other form to form or change the form of a word. Some suffixes usually used in Twi '-e', '-ee', '-eɛ', '-i', '-iɛ', '-ni', '-fo', '-foɔ', '-nom', '-wa' ,'-ma' and '-aa'

#-

| ɔhene | + fo | | ahenfo – chiefs (pl) |

| nana | + nom | | nananom – grandfathers (pl) |

| nua | + nom | | anuanom- siblings (pl) |

| sukuuni + foɔ | | sukuufoɔ- students (pl) |

| hyɛnkani + foɔ | | ahyɛnkafoɔ – drivers (pl) |

| odwumayɛni + foɔ | | adwumayɛfoɔ – workers (pl) |

Affixation in nominal pronouns in Twi discourse, can gain insights into the cultural and social norms of the language community, as well as the communicative strategies used by speakers to achieve their discourse goals.

In Twi, only verbs in the past tense take suffixes. This means that the only function of the suffix is to show something which has past or the state of someone in the past such suffixes are in two categories. Those which take i/iɛ, or e/eɛ, as the suffix to form their past tense. These suffixes are used when the root word ends in 'a', 'e', 'ɛ', 'o', 'ɔ' or 'I', 'u' respectively.

| wɔba-eɛ | – | they came |

| ɔto-eɛ | – | s/he baked |

| yɛsu-iɛ | – | we cried |

| yɛkasa-eɛ | – | we spoke |

| ɔda-eɛ | – | s/he slept |

| mefa-eɛ | – | I took |

The suffixes whose coda doubled in the environment of intransitive verb has different structure.

| mekɔ-ɔ hɔ | – | I went there |

| yɛfa-a ne nyinaa | – | we took it all |

| mehyia-a + Human | – | I met + Human |

| ɔto-o ankaa no | – | s/he threw the oranges |

| wɔfe-e aduro no nyinaa | – | they vomited all the medicine |

When 'm', 'n' or 'w' takes coda position in word formation processes, we only prolong the last sound. 1. ɔtɔnn ntoma no nyinaa – s/he sold all the clothes

2.   yɛhwimm atadeɛ no   – we snatched the shirt

3.   monomm nsuo no nyinaa   – you drank all the water

Affixation in relation to nominal pronouns really contribution to discourse since it gives better understand in social, cultural, and linguistic contexts in which communication takes place and shed light on the ways in which language is used to shape and reflect our understanding of the word.

FINDINGS

Affixation is a linguistic process in which affixes, which are bound morphemes, are attached to a root word to create new words or alter the meaning of the root word. Nominal pronouns, on the other hand, are pronouns that are used to refer to nouns or noun phrases. In the context of linguistics, the relationship between affixation and nominal pronouns is not a well-established or widely discussed topic. However, we have explored the concept of affixation in relation to pronouns in Twi sense.

//Affixation of Pronouns//. While pronouns are typically considered invariable words, some languages use affixes to indicate various grammatical features, such as gender, number, case, or possession as indicated in the analysis. Prefixes are added to pronouns to indicate subject concord and possessive relationships. The use of affixes in this manner demonstrates how pronouns can be subject to affixation for various grammatical purposes. //Nominal Pronouns and Possession//. In many languages, nominal pronouns can be affixed to show possession. For example, in Twi, we can say, "me nwoma" (my book)" to indicate possession using the affix 'my'. In this case, affixation is used to modify the nominal pronoun (my/mine, your/yours, his, her/hers, our/ours, their/theirs) to express possession. It is important to note that the relationship between affixation and nominal pronouns varies significantly from one language to another. Not all languages use affixation to modify nominal pronouns, and the extent and purpose of affixation may differ. Additionally, some languages may use other mechanisms, such as clitics or word order, to express similar grammatical features instead of affixation. It was revealed that, affixation and nominal pronouns may not be directly linked in all languages, there are instances where affixation is used to modify or inflect nominal pronouns, especially in terms of possession, gender and number agreement. Understanding the specific affixation patterns in a given language can provide insights into the structure and morphology of nominal pronouns in that language.

//Politeness towards the referent//. In Twi, the addition of a suffix to a nominal pronoun can indicate respect or politeness towards the referent. Affixation in relation to nominal pronouns is an important aspect of discourse in Twi, allowing speakers to convey a range of nuanced meanings and emphasize certain aspects of their communication.

In Twi, affixation plays an important role in creating new nominal pronouns and modifying existing ones to contribute to discourse. Nominal pronouns with affixes can convey additional information about the referent, such as their social status, relationship to the speaker or level of formality.

CONCLUSION

Affixation plays a significant role in the formation of nominal pronouns in Twi. The use of affixes in creating nominal pronouns in Twi not only provides a means of indicating grammatical relationships between words but also contributes to the overall coherence of discourse. Nominal pronouns in Twi can be inflected

with prefixes, suffixes, and circumfixes to express different grammatical categories such as person, number, gender, and case. The proper use of nominal pronouns with affixes helps to avoid ambiguity and enhance clarity in communication. Thus, a thorough understanding of affixation and its relation to nominal pronouns in Twi is crucial for effective communication in this language. The study of affixation in relation to nominal pronouns in Twi is crucial for understanding how language is used to convey meaning in discourse. Understanding how nominal pronoun affixes are used in Twi, language learners can improve their communicative competence in the language. Language planners and policymakers can also use this knowledge to develop language policies that promote the use and preservation of Twi. Furthermore, researchers can use this information to document and analyze the structure and use of Twi in different contexts.

REFERENCE

1. Aboh O. E. (2014). The use of nominal pronouns and affixation in Fon, a GHL spoken in Benin. Springer, New York.
2. Agyekum, K (2006). The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Personal Names. University of Ghana, Legon. Nordic Journal of African Studies 15(2): 206–235 (2006)
3. Ameka & Essegbey (2006). Nominal pronouns and affixation in Ewe. Accra. Legon Press.
4. Bodomo & Saah (2009). Study of Dagaare, a GHL spoken in Ghana and Burkina Faso, Accra. Legon Press
5. Boeckx, C. Luigi, R. (2013). Asymmetry in Grammar: Volume 1: Syntax and Semantics Oxford University Press. Oxford, United Kingdom.
6. Foucault, M., (1969). The Archaeology of Knowledge. Pantheon, French
7. Goffman, E. (1959). The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.
8. Owiredua, E., & Amfo, N. A. (2017). The contribution of affixation to the discourse functions of nominal pronouns in Akan. Accra. Legon Press
9. Owu-Ewie, C. (2010). Introduction to Language Teaching: A resource for Language Teachers. Sam-Woode Ltd. Sahara- Dansoman. Ghana.