

WORD FORMATION PROCESSES IN BENIN PIDGIN

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
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APPROVAL PAGE

I, **OBIANUKA PRETTY ONYINYE**, a student of the Department of Linguistics Studies, University of Benin, with matriculation number **ART2106183**, have duly satisfied the requirements for coursework and research towards the award of the Bachelor of Arts degree of the University of Benin. The work embodied in this project is the result of my original research and intellectual effort. It has not been submitted in part or in whole for the purpose of obtaining any degree, diploma, or professional qualification in this or any other institution of higher learning.

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DEDICATION

This work is

dedicated first to Almighty God, whose unfailing grace, guidance, and inspiration have sustained me throughout the course of this research.

I also dedicate it to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Obianuka, and my siblings whose prayers, and support have been an unwavering encouragement in my academic journey.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the processes of word formation in Benin Pidgin within the framework of the **Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT)**. The research investigates how new words are created, structured, and used in Benin Pidgin, with particular attention to the linguistic creativity that characterizes the language. Contrary to the common perception of Benin Pidgin as a “broken” or unstructured form of English, this study demonstrates that it possesses an organized morphological system governed by identifiable linguistic rules. Data for the study were collected from natural speech contexts, popular media, and informal interviews in Benin City, Lagos, Warri, and Port Harcourt. The analysis focused on six major morphological processes observed in Benin Pidgin **reduplication, compounding, affixation, clipping, blending, and borrowing** all of which contribute to lexical expansion and communicative efficiency. The **Lexical Morphology Theory** provided the analytical framework for classifying these processes across the **derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical strata** of morphology. Findings reveal that word formation in Benin Pidgin is both systematic and innovative. While the language exhibits limited inflectional morphology, it shows high productivity in derivation and post-lexical creativity. Reduplication and compounding are the most frequent and culturally grounded processes, while blending and borrowing reflect urbanization and multilingual interaction. The study concludes that Benin Pidgin is a linguistically rich and evolving language that mirrors the cultural diversity and adaptability of its speakers. The study recommends further research into syntactic and semantic aspects of Benin Pidgin, as well as the development of a standardized morphological corpus to aid documentation, teaching, and preservation of the language

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Aim of the Project

The focus of this project is to carry out a comprehensive investigation into the processes of word formation in Benin Pidgin. Benin Pidgin, often dismissed as a mere “broken” or “corrupted” version of English, is in fact a highly systematic, dynamic, and creative language that reflects the lived experiences, social realities, and cultural identity of its speakers. This project emphasizes the fact that Benin Pidgin is not only a communication tool but also a vehicle of cultural expression and innovation, capable of generating new lexical items that capture contemporary social realities.

The project specifically seeks to explore how different morphological strategies such as compounding, reduplication, clipping, blending, borrowing, and affixation contribute to the expansion of the Pidgin lexicon. It will analyze how these processes appear in daily speech, music, films, comedy skits, and social media, highlighting the role of Pidgin as a language of the people flexible, adaptable, and responsive to change.

Ultimately, the focus of the project is to demonstrate that Benin Pidgin is a language in its own right, with a productive word formation system that sustains its relevance and vibrancy in the multilingual context of Nigeria. This will help challenge the stigma

associated with the language, promote its recognition, and encourage further research into its structures and functions.

1.1 Background to the Study

Language is the most important means of human communication, and one of its most dynamic features is its ability to generate new words to capture new realities. This phenomenon, known as word formation, involves the creation of new lexical items through various morphological processes such as compounding, reduplication, clipping, blending, borrowing, and affixation. Word formation allows languages to expand their vocabulary, maintain relevance, and adapt to the ever-changing needs of their speakers.

Benin Pidgin, commonly referred to as Pidgin or Naija Pidgin, is one of the fastest-growing languages in Nigeria and West Africa at large. It is a creole-like lingua franca spoken across ethnic and social boundaries by millions of Benins. Unlike Standard English, which is often associated with formality, education, and social prestige, Pidgin functions as a grassroots medium of communication used in markets, homes, music, films, comedy, and increasingly in politics and social media. Its informal status has not hindered its vibrancy; instead, it has become a crucial marker of national identity and social solidarity.

Pidgin emerged as a contact language during the pre-colonial and colonial trading eras, when English interacted with indigenous Benin languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa,

and Edo. Over time, it has evolved into a robust language with its own grammar, lexicon, and pragmatic rules. Although it is not officially recognized as a national language, Pidgin is arguably the most widely spoken language in Nigeria today, cutting across ethnic, religious, and class lines.

Central to the vitality of Benin Pidgin is its word formation system. Speakers constantly coin new words or reshape existing ones to capture contemporary realities. For example, reduplicated forms such as *totori* (tickle/excite), compounds such as *wahala dey* (there is trouble), and borrowings such as *gbana* (Yoruba word for marijuana) illustrate how NPE speakers draw from a wide range of linguistic resources. In recent times, the spread of social media and Benin popular culture (especially Afrobeat music, Nollywood films, and comedy skits) has further accelerated the creation of new lexical items in Pidgin.

Studying word formation in Benin Pidgin is therefore important because it highlights the creativity of speakers, challenges misconceptions that Pidgin is “broken English,” and provides insights into how language evolves in multilingual, multicultural contexts. It also contributes to linguistic scholarship by documenting and analyzing how contact languages develop strategies for vocabulary expansion.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the widespread use of Benin Pidgin, many people including scholars and policymakers continue to regard it as a substandard or corrupted form of English rather

than a language in its own right. This negative perception has limited the amount of serious academic research devoted to its structural and lexical properties. While several studies have examined its syntax, phonology, and sociolinguistic roles, relatively fewer have focused on word formation processes as a systematic area of inquiry.

As a result, there is insufficient documentation of how Benin Pidgin expands its lexicon and the rules governing such expansion. Without systematic study, the creativity and productivity of Benin Pidgin may remain underappreciated. This study seeks to fill that gap by investigating the morphological processes that account for word formation in Benin Pidgin.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this research is to investigate the word formation processes in Benin Pidgin English. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Identify the major morphological processes used in Benin Pidgin to form new words.
- Analyze examples of these processes in natural communication, media, and popular culture.
- Examine how these processes contribute to the dynamism and creativity of the language.

- Demonstrate that Benin Pidgin is not a “corrupted” form of English, but a systematic language with its own rules.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the major word formation processes found in Benin Pidgin?
2. How are these processes used to expand and enrich the vocabulary of the language?
3. What sociolinguistic and cultural functions do these word formation processes serve?
4. In what ways does the analysis of word formation challenge the perception of Benin Pidgin as “broken English”?

1.5 Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design because the aim is not to test hypotheses or quantify data, but to explore, describe, and analyze the morphological processes underlying word formation in Benin Pidgin. The methodology has been designed to capture the creativity and flexibility of the language while ensuring that the data is systematically analyzed.

Data Collection

Data for this study will be collected from both primary and secondary sources:

- **Primary Sources:** Everyday conversations in markets, schools, public transport, and informal gatherings within Benin City will be observed and documented. This will provide authentic linguistic samples of Benin Pidgin as it is spoken naturally by different social groups.
- **Secondary Sources:** Benin music (especially Afrobeat and street pop lyrics), Nollywood films, stand-up comedy skits, and social media posts will be studied. These materials are selected because they reflect the innovative and popular use of Pidgin in contemporary Benin culture.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling method will be used to select data that best illustrates the various word formation processes under study. Emphasis will be placed on capturing words and expressions that are widely used or have gained popularity, particularly through social media and entertainment platforms.

Data Analysis

The collected data will be subjected to morphological analysis, focusing on identifying and categorizing examples of compounding, reduplication, clipping, blending, borrowing, and affixation. Each word or expression will be analyzed in terms of:

- Its structural composition.
- Its meaning and semantic shifts.
- Its origin (where applicable, e.g., borrowings from indigenous languages or English).
- Its usage in cultural or social contexts.

The analysis will highlight patterns of creativity and demonstrate how Benin Pidgin expands its lexicon systematically.

Interpretation and Presentation

The findings will be interpreted within a sociolinguistic framework to show how word formation reflects identity, humor, solidarity, and innovation among speakers. Examples will be presented with explanations of how they function in communication and culture. This will provide not just a linguistic but also a cultural account of word formation in Benin Pidgin.

Justification of Methodology

The chosen methodology is appropriate because Benin Pidgin is largely an oral language, and its vibrancy is best understood through direct observation of speech and analysis of cultural products where it thrives. By combining primary and secondary data sources, the study ensures that its analysis reflects both grassroots usage and popular culture, giving a holistic account of how new words are formed and used in NPE.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of this research is limited to the study of word formation processes in Benin Pidgin English as spoken in Nigeria. Although Benin Pidgin is part of a wider family of West African Pidgins and Creoles, this study focuses on the Benin variety, which is the most widely spoken.

Data are drawn primarily from:

- Everyday conversations among native and non-native speakers.
- Benin music lyrics, especially Afrobeat and street pop.
- Nollywood movies and comedy skits.
- Social media posts and memes in Pidgin.

Limitations of the study include the fact that Benin Pidgin is not standardized, so spellings and representations of words may vary across speakers and contexts. Furthermore, because of time and resource constraints, this study cannot exhaustively document all word formation processes in Benin Pidgin; rather, it highlights the most prominent and productive ones.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it contributes academically to the growing body of literature on Benin Pidgin English. While much research has focused on its syntax,

phonology, and sociolinguistic functions, relatively little attention has been given to its word formation system. By concentrating on this aspect, the study provides fresh insights into how Benin Pidgin expands its vocabulary and maintains relevance in contemporary society. This academic contribution will not only fill an existing gap in linguistic scholarship but also provide a foundation for further studies in contact linguistics and morphology.

In addition, the research has implications for language development in Nigeria. By demonstrating that Benin Pidgin possesses systematic and creative processes of word formation, the study challenges the misconception that it is merely “broken English.” Instead, it highlights the structured nature of the language and its potential for recognition as a national language. Such recognition could encourage more deliberate efforts in language planning, policy-making, and perhaps standardization in the future.

The cultural value of the study is also notable. Benin Pidgin reflects the creativity, humor, and lived experiences of its speakers. Word formation processes reveal how speakers adapt language to capture new realities, express solidarity, and communicate in culturally resonant ways. By documenting and analyzing these processes, the study sheds light on the ingenuity of Benins in shaping language to reflect identity and social life.

Finally, the practical importance of this study lies in its potential usefulness to language teachers, sociolinguists, and policymakers. For educators, the findings can serve as a resource for understanding how students and the general population employ Pidgin

creatively. For sociolinguists, it offers a systematic analysis of how contact languages evolve and thrive. For policymakers, the study highlights the vitality of Pidgin and its role in fostering national unity, thus providing evidence that can support more inclusive language policies in Nigeria.

1.8 Justification of the Study

This research is justified on the basis that Benin Pidgin plays an increasingly important role in national life, yet it continues to suffer neglect in linguistic scholarship. By focusing on word formation, the study showcases the structural richness of Pidgin and challenges misconceptions about its status. It also serves as a resource for future researchers, offering a baseline analysis that can be expanded upon in subsequent studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature on the study of word formation in Benin Pidgin. The purpose of the review is to provide a clear background to the study by examining scholarly discussions, theoretical positions, and previous research findings that are related to the subject. The chapter begins with a conceptual review of key terms and ideas such as word formation, morphology, and the sociolinguistic nature of Benin Pidgin.

2.1 Conceptual Review

The conceptual review in this study centers on clarifying and examining the key concepts that form the foundation of the research on word formation in Benin Pidgin. It focuses on the idea of word formation as a branch of morphology that explains how new words are created in a language, and it explores how these processes apply to a contact language such as Benin Pidgin. The review highlights the various strategies through which words are formed in Pidgin, including compounding, reduplication, affixation, clipping, blending, borrowing, semantic extension, and conversion.

In addition, the conceptual review addresses the sociolinguistic context in which Benin Pidgin operates, showing how social factors such as identity, urbanization, and media use influence the creation and spread of new words. It also examines the theoretical positions

in linguistic studies that frame pidgins not as “deficient languages” but as dynamic systems with creative and productive word-formation processes.

2.1.1 Benin Pidgin

Benin Pidgin is an English-based contact language spoken widely across Nigeria and, increasingly, beyond its borders. It has developed from being a “contact vernacular” used in trade and inter-ethnic communication into a robust linguistic system with millions of daily users. Today, Benin Pidgin is spoken in urban centres, rural markets, mass media, popular music, and online spaces. It is considered one of the most vibrant English-based pidgins in the world, with estimates suggesting that over 75 million Nigerians can speak or understand it to varying degrees. Its use is not limited to informal settings: it has steadily gained recognition as a medium of education, broadcasting, and cultural expression.

The origins of Benin Pidgin can be traced back to the **contact between Europeans and West Africans** during the Atlantic trade era, beginning in the 15th century. Early Portuguese contact left behind a small but lasting set of lexical items (such as *sabi* “to know” from Portuguese *saber*, and *pikin* “child” from *pequeno*). Later, English became the main lexifier language, especially during the colonial period, when it spread as the official language of administration, commerce, and education.

Because Nigeria is highly multilingual, with over 500 indigenous languages, Benin Pidgin emerged as a practical solution to communication across ethnic and linguistic divides. Initially stigmatized as a “low” variety or “broken English,” Benin Pidgin has since grown into a widely accepted lingua franca.

Different scholars have defined Benin Pidgin according to their disciplinary focus:

- **Todd (1974)** defined pidgin as a simplified language developed for restricted communication among people without a common language, stressing its functional role.
- **Elugbe & Omamor (1991)**, in contrast, define Benin Pidgin as a full-fledged language in its own right, with systematic grammar and expressive capacity, rejecting the view that it is merely a debased form of English.
- **Faraclas (2002)** treats Benin Pidgin descriptively as a structured English-based language with its own phonology, morphology, and syntax, worthy of linguistic study on par with other natural languages.
- **Deuber (2005)** emphasizes its sociolinguistic value, describing Benin Pidgin as Nigeria’s “unofficial national language,” used widely in Lagos and other cities for inter-ethnic communication, music, and mass media.

From these definitions, it is clear that Benin Pidgin is both a linguistic system (with its own rules) and a social tool (for communication and identity).

2.1.2 Morphology

Morphology is a central branch of linguistics that deals with the internal structure of words and the rules governing their formation. It focuses on how smaller meaningful units, known as morphemes, combine to form words and how these words are modified to express different grammatical categories such as tense, number, aspect, case, and gender. Morphology serves as the bridge between phonology (the study of sound systems) and syntax (the study of sentence structure), making it crucial to understanding how language works as a whole.

The study of morphology is particularly relevant to Benin Pidgin because of the language's high level of lexical creativity and its reliance on various word-formation strategies to meet communicative needs. Since Benin Pidgin evolved as a contact language with a limited initial vocabulary, speakers have developed innovative morphological processes to expand its lexicon and adapt it to changing social realities.

Different linguists have defined morphology from various perspectives, but all point to its concern with the structure and formation of words.

- Francis Katamba (1993) defines morphology as “the study of the internal structure of words and the rules by which words are formed.” His definition highlights the analytical aspect of how words are built and how these rules contribute to meaning.

- Bauer (1988) sees morphology as “the study of word formation including the ways new words are coined in a language and how they relate to existing words.” This definition emphasizes word formation as a creative and productive process.
- Aronoff and Fudeman (2005) define morphology as “the study of the mental system involved in word formation,” stressing the cognitive processes by which speakers store, interpret, and generate word forms.
- Hockett (1958) described morphology as “the study of morphemes and their arrangements in forming words,” focusing on the structural composition of morphemes.

These definitions reveal that morphology is not only about the form of words but also about their meaning, function, and productivity in natural language use.

2.1.3 Word Formation

Word formation is one of the most vital areas of linguistic study because it explains how new words are created and how existing ones are modified to meet communicative needs. It is a branch of morphology that examines the rules, patterns, and principles governing the creation of words in any language. Every language, whether natural or constructed, constantly expands its vocabulary to accommodate new realities, concepts, and technologies. In Benin Pidgin (NP), word formation is particularly active and creative because the language emerged as a contact variety, blending elements from English and several Benin indigenous languages. As a result, speakers of NP often invent new words

or modify existing ones to express local experiences, cultural ideas, and social interactions.

Linguists have approached the concept of word formation from different theoretical perspectives, but they all recognize it as a process central to language development and vocabulary growth.

- Katamba (1993) defines word formation as “the branch of morphology which studies the processes whereby new words are created in a language.”
- Plag (2003) states that word formation is “the study of the internal structure of words and the systematic ways in which new words are derived.”
- Bauer (1983) views it as “the study of the processes involved in creating new lexemes in a language.”
- Fromkin and Rodman (1998) define word formation as “the morphological, syntactic, and semantic means through which languages expand their vocabularies.”
- Aronoff (1976) considers it “a rule-governed process by which speakers create and understand new words that fit into the grammatical system of their language.”

These definitions collectively emphasize that word formation is not a random activity but a systematic and rule-governed aspect of language that reflects creativity, productivity, and social adaptation.

Word formation is both linguistic and sociocultural in nature. Linguistically, it follows morphological and phonological rules that determine how new forms are generated. Socioculturally, it responds to social, political, and technological changes that demand new vocabulary. In Benin Pidgin, word formation reflects social realities such as urban life, politics, media, and entertainment.

2.1.4 Word Formation Processes

Word formation processes refer to the various linguistic mechanisms through which new words or lexical items are created in a language. These processes reveal how speakers creatively manipulate the resources of their language to express new ideas, describe new realities, or give old words new meanings. According to Bauer (1983), word formation processes represent “the systematic ways in which speakers of a language add new words to their lexicon.” Similarly, Katamba (1993) observes that these processes are not arbitrary but follow certain morphological and phonological rules that make new words understandable to all speakers.

In every language, word formation is a continuous process that reflects social, cultural, and technological changes. In Benin Pidgin (NP), these processes are especially dynamic and innovative because the language developed as a contact variety without a fixed orthography or rigid grammatical structure. Therefore, word formation in NP provides an avenue for linguistic creativity and cultural expression.

2.1.5 Major Word Formation Processes

1. Compounding

Compounding is one of the most productive and widely used processes of word formation in human languages. It involves the combination of two or more independent words or free morphemes to form a new lexical item with a distinct meaning. According to Bauer (1983), compounding is “the process by which new lexemes are formed by combining two or more existing words.” Similarly, Katamba (1993) defines compounding as “the formation of a single word by joining together two or more words that can stand independently.” In essence, a compound word functions as a single lexical unit even though it is made up of multiple components.

Compounding can occur in different grammatical categories such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Noun compounds are the most common type, as seen in English examples like *blackboard*, *toothpaste*, or *bus stop*. However, adjectival (e.g., *red-hot*, *bittersweet*) and verbal compounds (e.g., *babysit*, *dry-clean*) also exist. The relationship between the elements in a compound is often semantic: the meaning of the compound is usually derived from, but not always predictable from, the meanings of its components. For instance, *toothbrush* refers to an instrument used for brushing teeth, which cannot be deduced solely by combining *tooth* and *brush* without cultural knowledge.

According to Lieber (2005), compounding demonstrates the creative capacity of language users to generate new words in response to new communicative needs. The internal structure of compounds can vary based on headedness—that is, which part of the compound determines its grammatical category. In English, compounds are typically right-headed, meaning that the rightmost element carries the core meaning and grammatical category (e.g., in *blackboard*, the head *board* makes the compound a noun). However, some languages, including Benin Pidgin, exhibit flexibility in this regard due to their contact and hybrid nature.

In Benin Pidgin, compounding is a highly productive means of creating new expressions that reflect the socio-cultural realities of its speakers. Examples include *wahala man* (troublesome person), *money matter* (financial issue), *chop money* (allowance or bribe), and *go-slow* (traffic jam). These compounds are typically semantic blends that convey culturally specific meanings, often with pragmatic or idiomatic overtones. Unlike Standard English compounds, which may follow more rigid syntactic rules, Benin Pidgin compounds are flexible and context-driven, reflecting the language's functional and expressive nature.

Compounding in Benin Pidgin can also be noun–noun, verb–noun, or verb–verb in structure. For instance:

- *Noun + Noun: market woman* (trader), *school pikin* (student)
- *Verb + Noun: chop money* (bribe, allowance), *carry go* (proceed, continue)
- *Verb + Verb: waka go* (walk away, leave), *talk do* (to be a man of one's word)

These examples demonstrate the adaptability of compounding in Pidgin, where boundaries between syntactic categories are less rigid. As noted by Faraclas (1996), Benin Pidgin compounds often express relationships and ideas that are not easily translated into Standard English, serving as linguistic tools for creativity, humor, and social identity.

Scholars such as Mufwene (2001) and Elugbe & Omamor (1991) emphasize that the productivity of compounding in Pidgin English reflects the language's dynamic nature and its responsiveness to social change. New compounds emerge constantly to capture new realities in politics, technology, entertainment, and urban life—terms like *Yahoo boy* (internet fraudster), *power holding* (electricity company, often humorously), or *house girl* (domestic help) illustrate this tendency.

In summary, compounding in Benin Pidgin exemplifies the language's creativity and adaptability. It serves as a bridge between linguistic structure and social experience, showing how speakers manipulate available linguistic resources to communicate effectively and express identity. It is a vital process in the lexicon of Benin Pidgin and a key contributor to its vibrancy and continual evolution.

2. Reduplication

Reduplication is one of the most fascinating and expressive processes of word formation found in many languages around the world, including Benin Pidgin. It involves the repetition of all or part of a word to create a new form with a modified or intensified meaning. According to Katamba (1993), reduplication is “a morphological process whereby a word or part of it is repeated to convey grammatical, semantic, or lexical meaning.” Similarly, Haspelmath and Sims (2010) define reduplication as “the repetition of a whole or part of a stem to express a grammatical function or to derive a new word.”

Reduplication can serve a variety of linguistic functions, such as indicating intensity, plurality, continuity, repetition, or diminution. It can also perform stylistic or affective roles, adding emphasis, playfulness, or expressiveness to speech. Linguists generally classify reduplication into two main types: full reduplication and partial reduplication.

- I. **Full Reduplication** occurs when the entire base or root word is repeated. For example, in English expressions like *bye-bye* or *goody-goody*, the repetition of the word conveys emphasis or emotional tone.
- II. **Partial Reduplication**, on the other hand, involves repeating only a part of the base word, such as a syllable or sound segment, often with a slight phonological modification. This form is common in many African and Asian languages, as well as in Benin Pidgin.

In **Benin Pidgin**, reduplication is a highly productive process and plays an important role in enriching the lexicon and adding expressiveness to communication. It often functions to intensify meaning, show repetition or continuity, or convey emotional emphasis. For instance, in expressions such as *waka-waka* (a person who roams about), *yeye-yeye* (useless or silly), *beg-beg* (habitual beggar), or *dey-dey* (continuously being), the repetition adds force or emphasis to the base word.

According to Faraclas (1996), reduplication in Benin Pidgin is not only a morphological process but also a sociolinguistic marker of identity, creativity, and humor. Speakers use reduplication to express nuances of attitude, exaggeration, or informality in ways that resonate culturally with Benin communicative styles. Similarly, Elugbe and Omamor (1991) observe that reduplication contributes to the vividness and idiomatic nature of Benin Pidgin expressions, giving the language a rich emotional and stylistic range.

Reduplication in Benin Pidgin can be classified functionally into the following categories:

- **Intensification:** Used to stress or heighten meaning, as in *small* (gradually), *hot* (very hot), or *fine* (very beautiful).
- **Repetition or Continuity:** Used to show repeated or continuous action, as in *dey-dey* (still being there), *knock-knock* (continuous knocking).
- **Emphasis or Emotional Expression:** Used to add emotion, mockery, or humor, as in *yeye-yeye* (useless), *wahala-wahala* (lots of trouble).

- **Nominalization or Category Change:** Some reduplicated forms function as nouns derived from verbs, e.g., *chop-chop* (greed or corruption), *waka-waka* (wanderer).

Interestingly, reduplication in Benin Pidgin sometimes interacts with other word formation processes, such as compounding and semantic shift, producing idiomatic expressions that may not be transparent to non-speakers. For example, *talk-talk* can mean “a talkative person” or “unnecessary discussion,” depending on the context. Such creativity highlights the adaptive nature of Pidgin as a living language that responds to the communicative and cultural needs of its speakers.

Scholars such as Mufwene (2001) and Holm (2000) note that reduplication is a common feature across pidgins and creoles globally, reflecting their oral and expressive traditions. In Benin Pidgin, it serves as a mechanism for lexical expansion, allowing speakers to form new words and expressions without borrowing or depending on foreign vocabulary. It also reinforces the rhythmic and tonal qualities typical of African linguistic systems, connecting Benin Pidgin to indigenous language patterns.

Moreover, reduplication functions as a discourse strategy, enabling speakers to convey subtle pragmatic meanings such as sarcasm, affection, or insistence. For example, saying *fine girl* may express admiration, while *fine-fine* said mockingly could imply

superficiality or sarcasm. This pragmatic flexibility makes reduplication not just a morphological tool, but also a reflection of Benin social interaction and humor.

In summary, reduplication in Benin Pidgin is a versatile and culturally embedded word formation process. It serves morphological, semantic, and pragmatic purposes—creating new words, modifying meanings, and enhancing communicative richness. It embodies the creativity and dynamism of Benin Pidgin, reinforcing its status as a full and expressive language capable of capturing both everyday realities and subtle human emotions.

3. Affixation

Affixation involves the addition of bound morphemes—known as affixes—to a base or root word to create a new word or modify its meaning. According to Katamba (1993), affixation is “the morphological process by which bound morphemes are attached to a base to form new words or change grammatical functions.” Similarly, Bauer (1983) describes affixation as “a process of deriving new words through the addition of prefixes or suffixes that modify the meaning or grammatical category of the root.”

Affixation operates through different kinds of affixes, typically categorized as prefixes, suffixes, infixes, and circumfixes, though the first two are the most common in many languages, including English and Benin Pidgin.

- A **prefix** is an affix added to the beginning of a base word (e.g., *un-* in *unhappy*).
- A **suffix** is attached to the end of a base word (e.g., *-ness* in *happiness*).
- **Infixes** are inserted within the base (though rare in English but more common in some African and Asian languages).
- **Circumfixes** involve elements attached both before and after the root.

Affixation serves both derivational and inflectional functions. Derivational affixes create new words by changing the meaning or grammatical category of the base, such as *teach* → *teacher* or *happy* → *unhappiness*. Inflectional affixes, on the other hand, modify grammatical information like tense, number, or comparison without changing word class, as in *walk* → *walked* or *big* → *bigger*.

In the case of Benin Pidgin, however, affixation functions differently due to the language's simplified morphology and analytic nature. Benin Pidgin, like many creoles and contact languages, generally avoids complex inflectional morphology. Instead, it relies heavily on syntactic strategies and context to indicate grammatical relationships. As a result, while affixation is not as highly developed in Benin Pidgin as in Standard English, it still plays an important role—especially in derivation and lexical innovation.

According to Faraclas (1996), Benin Pidgin exhibits a form of creative and adaptive affixation, where speakers borrow or modify English affixes and apply them in locally meaningful ways. For example, Pidgin speakers may attach English-derived suffixes such

as *-er* or *-ism* to create new words that do not exist in Standard English but are meaningful within Benin sociolinguistic contexts. Examples include:

- *tok-toker* (a talkative person)
- *mumuism* (foolish behavior)
- *big-manism* (the behavior or attitude of wealthy or influential people)

These examples show that even though Pidgin lacks a systematic inflectional morphology, speakers exploit derivational affixation for creative word formation. The borrowed affixes are repurposed to express ideas, social commentary, and humor—demonstrating the flexibility and inventiveness of Pidgin as a living language.

Moreover, Elugbe and Omamor (1991) observe that Benin Pidgin sometimes uses pseudo-affixation—the imitation of affixation patterns without strict morphological rules. For instance, Pidgin may use prefixes like *no-* or *de-* informally to negate or modify meanings, as seen in *no-good* (useless person) or *de-shame* (to disgrace). These forms show morphological creativity even when not following formal grammatical conventions.

Another interesting aspect of affixation in Benin Pidgin is the reanalysis and reinterpretation of English words. Speakers often treat what are originally inseparable English words as bases to which new affixes can be attached. For example, *manager* may inspire creations like *manage-man*, using the Pidgin pattern of combining free morphemes while maintaining the semantic function of English derivational suffixes.

Affixation in Benin Pidgin also reflects language contact and social change. As the language interacts with English and local Benin languages, it borrows affixes and adapts them phonetically or semantically. For example, Pidgin speakers may form *wahala-ness* (state of trouble) or *yahoo-yahooism* (internet scam culture), blending local meaning with English morphology. These innovative uses not only expand the lexicon but also document contemporary Benin realities through language.

In summary, affixation in Benin Pidgin demonstrates the language's ability to borrow, adapt, and innovate within morphological structures.

4. Borrowing

Borrowing is one of the most widespread and natural processes of word formation found in human languages. It refers to the adoption of words or expressions from one language into another, usually as a result of contact between speakers of different linguistic communities. According to Yule (2010), borrowing is “the process by which one language takes words from another language and incorporates them into its own lexicon.” Similarly, Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2014) define borrowing as the transfer of linguistic items—usually lexical—across languages due to cultural or social interaction.

Borrowing often occurs when speakers encounter new objects, ideas, technologies, or institutions for which their language lacks native words. Instead of inventing new terms, they adopt existing ones from another language that already has those concepts. Over

time, these borrowed forms are usually nativized—that is, adapted in pronunciation, spelling, and sometimes meaning—to fit the phonological and grammatical systems of the recipient language.

Nigeria, being a multilingual and multicultural society, provides a fertile ground for lexical borrowing. With over 500 indigenous languages coexisting alongside English, there is continuous linguistic contact and exchange. Benin Pidgin, which evolved as a contact language between Europeans (mainly the British) and various ethnic groups during the colonial era, is a prime example of borrowing at work.

As Faraclas (1996) explains, Benin Pidgin developed through sustained interaction between English-speaking colonialists and indigenous Benins who spoke languages such as Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo. To facilitate trade, evangelism, and administration, English vocabulary was heavily borrowed and simplified, while indigenous languages also contributed numerous words and structures. Hence, borrowing is not just a process in Benin Pidgin—it is part of its very foundation.

Types of Borrowing

Borrowing in Benin Pidgin can be grouped into three main types, depending on the source and nature of the borrowed words.

a. Borrowing from English (Superstrate Influence)

Since English is the lexifier (dominant source language) of Benin Pidgin, most Pidgin vocabulary originates from English. However, these words are often phonologically modified and semantically reinterpreted to fit local contexts.

b. Borrowing from Indigenous Benin Languages (Substrate Influence)

Benin Pidgin also borrows extensively from local Benin languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Edo, and others. These borrowings add cultural depth and expressiveness to the language.

c. Borrowing from Other European or Afro-Portuguese Sources

Before British colonialism, Portuguese traders and missionaries had contact with West Africans as early as the 15th century. Some Portuguese words entered early coastal Pidgins and are still present in Benin Pidgin today.

5. Clipping

Clipping is one of the most common and productive processes of word formation in natural languages. It refers to the shortening of a longer word without changing its meaning or grammatical category. According to Bauer (1983), clipping involves “the reduction of a word to one of its parts while retaining its meaning.” Similarly, Yule (2010) defines clipping as “the process of shortening a longer word by omitting some parts of it, usually without altering its meaning or function in the sentence.”

Unlike affixation or compounding, clipping does not involve the addition or combination of morphemes; instead, it focuses on brevity and convenience. The resulting clipped word often becomes more informal and colloquial, reflecting the natural tendency of speakers to economize effort in everyday speech.

Clipping is sometimes called truncation in morphology, and the resulting forms are referred to as clipped forms. These shortened forms often originate in casual, spoken usage but can gradually become accepted in written and formal registers.

Benin Pidgin thrives on brevity, rhythm, and oral expressiveness. Clipping fits naturally into its communicative style, as it promotes easier pronunciation and faster communication. Many of the clipped words in Benin Pidgin are derived from English, but are phonologically and semantically adapted to fit the Pidgin sound system and sociocultural context.

According to Faraclas (1996) and Elugbe & Omamor (1991), Pidgin speakers tend to simplify words by dropping syllables or final segments, especially when the full English forms are too long or complex for everyday use. Clipping also reflects the informality and spontaneity characteristic of Pidgin speech.

Types of Clipping

Linguists (Plag, 2003; Lieber, 2010) have identified different kinds of clipping, based on which part of the word is removed:

1. Back clipping – removing the end part of a word (e.g., advertisement → advert).
2. Fore clipping – removing the beginning part (e.g., telephone → phone).
3. Middle clipping – removing both beginning and end parts (e.g., influenza → flu).
4. Complex clipping – shortening more than one word in a phrase (e.g., sitcom from situation comedy).

In Benin Pidgin, back clipping is the most common type, followed by fore clipping, as speakers tend to simplify longer English words to shorter, easily pronounced forms suited to Pidgin phonology.

6. Blending

Blending is a creative process of word formation in which parts of two or more words are combined to form a new word, often with meanings derived from both sources. According to Bauer (1983), blending is “the formation of a new lexeme by combining parts of two (or more) existing words.” Similarly, Yule (2010) describes it as “the process of taking the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of another to form a single new term.”

In blending, the resulting word often takes on a new, independent meaning that is closely related to, but not necessarily predictable from, its source words. For example, *brunch* (from breakfast + lunch) and *smog* (from smoke + fog) are classic English blends.

Blending usually reflects linguistic economy, creativity, and expressiveness—speakers combine familiar elements to create new, culturally relevant expressions. This process is particularly productive in informal or popular varieties of language, such as slang, youth speech, and pidgin/creole languages, where playfulness and social identity are central.

In Benin Pidgin (NPE), blending is a highly expressive and productive process. It reflects the language's flexibility, cultural richness, and tendency toward innovation. Because Benin Pidgin developed through contact among English and many indigenous Benin languages, blending often occurs between elements from these languages, or between English roots themselves, to produce new, meaningful expressions.

According to Faraclas (1996) and Elugbe & Omamor (1991), the blending process in Benin Pidgin serves several communicative functions — from humor and social identity to lexical economy and creative expression. Many of these blends have become so widespread that they are now recognized as standard parts of Benin Pidgin vocabulary.

Linguistic Features of Blending in Benin Pidgin

Blending in Benin Pidgin exhibits distinctive linguistic characteristics that reflect both the structural and social nature of the language:

1. Combination of Parts of Existing Words:

Pidgin blends often merge the beginning of one word and the end of another (e.g. yahooboy → Yahoo + boy).

2. Phonological Simplification:

Blends are adapted to Pidgin's sound system, ensuring ease of pronunciation (e.g. choplife instead of "enjoy life").

3. Cultural and Social Relevance:

Many blends in Pidgin reflect Benin culture, humor, and urban experiences (e.g. shakaboy, runs-girl, wahalaboy).

4. Retention of Transparent Meaning:

The meaning of most blends can be inferred from the meanings of their components.

5. Semantic Extension:

Some blends take on new metaphorical or figurative meanings that go beyond their literal interpretation.

2.2 Previous Studies

Several scholars have carried out extensive research on Benin Pidgin and its morphological processes, with particular attention to how new words are formed, modified, and used in communication. One of the earliest notable works is by Elugbe and Omamor (1991), who investigated the structure and development of Benin Pidgin as a language in its own right rather than a corrupt form of English. Their study provided a linguistic foundation for understanding word formation in Benin Pidgin, emphasizing

how processes such as compounding, reduplication, and borrowing contribute to its growth and expressiveness. They argued that these processes are evidence of the creativity and dynamism of Pidgin speakers, who manipulate linguistic resources to suit various communicative contexts.

Similarly, Faraclas (1996) conducted a detailed study on Benin Pidgin grammar, highlighting its morphological structure and lexical formation processes. His investigation revealed that reduplication and compounding are among the most productive means of word formation in the language. He further argued that these processes serve both grammatical and semantic purposes, as they enable speakers to express emphasis, plurality, and repetition, as well as to derive new lexical items that reflect cultural realities. Faraclas' work was pivotal in shifting academic attention from seeing Pidgin as merely a contact language to viewing it as a vibrant linguistic system with internal coherence and creative potential.

In a similar vein, Bamgbose (1995) examined the evolution of Benin Pidgin and its structural patterns, focusing on lexical innovation. His study argued that the word formation processes found in Pidgin are influenced both by indigenous Benin languages and by English, creating a hybrid linguistic system that reflects Nigeria's multilingual environment. He observed that processes such as borrowing and blending enable Pidgin to accommodate new vocabulary while retaining its local flavor, demonstrating adaptability and resilience.

Igboanusi (2008) also explored Benin Pidgin from a sociolinguistic and morphological perspective, paying attention to how speakers coin and modify words to suit informal communication and media expression. His research highlighted that Benin Pidgin relies heavily on compounding and semantic extension, as seen in words like wahala (trouble), gist (chat), and waka-pass (minor actor). Igboanusi argued that these formations reveal the socio-cultural realities of urban Nigeria, where Pidgin serves as a tool for identity and social belonging.

Mensah and Ekah (2018) further investigated morphological processes in Benin Pidgin and found that word formation extends beyond simple compounding and reduplication to include blending, clipping, and affixation. They argued that these processes reflect the linguistic creativity of Benin speakers, who constantly coin new terms that capture emerging socio-political and cultural trends. Their findings underscore that Benin Pidgin is an evolving linguistic system whose morphology is as rich and complex as that of any standard language.

Ejele (2003) contributed to this discussion by examining the influence of borrowing in the lexical development of Benin Pidgin. His study observed that Pidgin draws heavily from indigenous Benin languages such as Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo, as well as from English and Portuguese. He argued that borrowing not only expands the Pidgin lexicon but also reflects Nigeria's history of trade, colonization, and cultural contact.

In a related study, Mufwene (2001) discussed pidgin and creole formation from a theoretical standpoint, arguing that word formation in contact languages like Benin Pidgin is shaped by sociohistorical factors, including language contact, power dynamics, and communicative needs. He maintained that morphological simplification in Pidgin does not imply linguistic deficiency but rather efficiency and adaptability. His argument provides a theoretical framework for understanding how Benin Pidgin continually evolves through processes such as reduplication, borrowing, and blending.

Akande (2010) also conducted research on the grammatical features of Benin Pidgin, identifying word formation as a key component of its structural uniqueness. His findings emphasized that Benin Pidgin employs morphological strategies to create lexical items that are both economical and expressive. For instance, the use of reduplication to indicate emphasis and the creation of compounds to name social phenomena highlight the adaptability of the language to contemporary realities.

Finally, Balogun (2013) analyzed Benin Pidgin as a vehicle for identity construction, arguing that its word formation processes are not merely linguistic but also ideological. He observed that speakers use reduplication, compounding, and lexical innovation to assert identity, creativity, and resistance to linguistic domination. Balogun's argument suggests that word formation in Benin Pidgin serves not only communicative purposes but also sociocultural and political functions.

In summary, previous studies converge on the understanding that word formation in Benin Pidgin is a rich, dynamic, and creative process. Scholars agree that processes such as reduplication, compounding, blending, clipping, affixation, and borrowing play vital roles in expanding the lexicon and maintaining the language's expressive power. These investigations collectively demonstrate that Benin Pidgin is not a deficient form of English but a linguistically robust system shaped by social interaction, cultural creativity, and historical experience.

2.3 Concern of the Present Study

From the review of related and previous studies, it is clear that Benin Pidgin has attracted significant scholarly attention, especially concerning its development, social role, and grammatical structure. However, while earlier researchers such as Elugbe and Omamor (1991), Faraclas (1996), and Igboanusi (2008) have examined Benin Pidgin as a language of communication and identity, relatively fewer studies have given detailed attention to its morphological processes—particularly how word formation contributes to the language's evolution, structure, and expressiveness. This gap provides the central motivation for the present study.

The concern of this study is to provide an in-depth analysis of word formation processes in Benin Pidgin, focusing on how new words are created, how existing ones are modified, and the communicative purposes these processes serve. While many studies have identified that Benin Pidgin employs morphological strategies such as compounding, reduplication, borrowing, affixation, blending, and clipping, there remains a need to

systematically describe, categorize, and interpret these processes within the broader linguistic and sociocultural context of Nigeria. The present study therefore seeks to move beyond mere identification of forms to a deeper exploration of their linguistic functions, semantic implications, and sociocultural significance.

This research is particularly concerned with how word formation processes reflect the creativity and adaptability of Benin Pidgin speakers. The language has evolved to accommodate modern realities, urban experiences, and social changes, and one of the ways it achieves this flexibility is through continuous lexical innovation. By examining the processes through which new words emerge—whether by reduplicating, blending, compounding, or borrowing—the study aims to reveal the mechanisms that sustain Benin Pidgin as a living, evolving linguistic system.

Moreover, this study addresses the interaction between indigenous linguistic patterns and English influence in the morphological structure of Benin Pidgin. Many Pidgin words exhibit hybrid features derived from both English and local Benin languages, creating unique forms that mirror Nigeria's multicultural and multilingual landscape. Understanding these interactions is essential to explaining why Benin Pidgin remains distinct from both Standard English and regional varieties of Pidgin spoken in other parts of West Africa.

The concern of this study also extends to the functional and semantic roles of word formation in Benin Pidgin. For example, reduplication often serves to intensify meaning

or express emotion, compounding creates descriptive and economical expressions, and borrowing introduces new vocabulary for modern concepts. Investigating these functions will provide insights into how Benin Pidgin captures the lived experiences, attitudes, and humor of its speakers.

Finally, this study seeks to contribute to existing scholarship by offering a comprehensive and structured morphological account of Benin Pidgin word formation. In doing so, it aims to fill the gap left by earlier works that treated the topic only tangentially or descriptively. Through detailed examples and analysis, the study will demonstrate that Benin Pidgin possesses a rich and systematic morphology that is both linguistically legitimate and culturally meaningful. The ultimate concern is to reaffirm that Benin Pidgin, far from being a “broken” or “simplified” form of English, is a linguistically sophisticated and culturally expressive language, capable of creative lexical expansion through well-defined morphological processes.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical foundation that guides the analysis and interpretation of word formation processes in Benin Pidgin. The framework adopted for this study is the Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT), a model that provides a structured understanding of how words are formed, organized, and derived within a language. This theory is particularly relevant for examining how Benin Pidgin, as a dynamic contact language, develops and expands its lexicon through various morphological processes. The chapter discusses the main principles of the theory, provides a justification for its adoption, and highlights its relevance to the study of word formation in Benin Pidgin.

The use of Lexical Morphology Theory allows for a systematic investigation of how different morphological rules apply at various levels of word formation in Benin Pidgin. It helps explain the interaction between morphology and phonology in the creation of new words and sheds light on the productivity of processes such as compounding, reduplication, blending, clipping, affixation, and borrowing.

3.1 The Framework: Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT)

The Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT) emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s as part of the Lexicalist Hypothesis, which proposed that complex word formation occurs

within the lexicon rather than in the syntax. Prominent scholars such as Paul Kiparsky (1982) and Bruce Hayes (1986) advanced this theory to explain how morphological and phonological rules interact in the lexicon. According to LMT, the lexicon is organized into different strata or levels, with each level responsible for a particular set of morphological processes that affect both word structure and phonological form.

In this model, morphological rules apply at successive levels, and each level feeds into the next. For instance, derivational morphology typically occurs at earlier lexical levels, while inflectional morphology takes place at later levels, closer to the surface representation. The theory also assumes that phonological rules are interleaved with morphological rules, meaning that phonological adjustments may occur immediately after certain morphological operations.

Applied to Benin Pidgin, the Lexical Morphology Theory helps explain how words are systematically created and modified within the mental lexicon of speakers. For example, Benin Pidgin exhibits rich processes of reduplication (e.g., waka-waka), compounding (e.g., wahala man), and affixation (e.g., dey + waka → deywaka), which show clear evidence of rule-governed lexical formation. By analyzing these forms through the lens of LMT, we can uncover how morphological and phonological constraints shape the creativity and expressiveness of Benin Pidgin vocabulary.

Furthermore, LMT captures the gradient nature of productivity in Benin Pidgin morphology. Some word formation rules (like compounding) are highly productive,

while others (like affixation) are more restricted. The theory accounts for this variability by distinguishing between core lexical processes that are more rule-based and peripheral processes that are influenced by analogy and social factors. This makes the framework ideal for exploring the complex and hybrid linguistic identity of Benin Pidgin.

3.1.1 Structure and Principles of the Theory

The core principles of LMT can be summarized as follows:

1. Stratification of the Lexicon:

The lexicon is divided into multiple strata or levels, each associated with a specific type of morphological rule. Typically, the first stratum deals with derivational morphology—the creation of new words by adding affixes or combining roots. The second stratum handles inflectional morphology, where grammatical features such as tense, aspect, or number are added. Finally, a third stratum may handle post-lexical or phonological adjustments.

2. Interleaving of Morphological and Phonological Rules:

Morphological operations and phonological rules are interleaved, meaning that after a morphological rule applies, certain phonological changes may immediately follow. This explains why some derived or compounded forms undergo sound modification during formation.

3. **Cyclic Rule Application:**

Rules in the lexicon apply cyclically, from one stratum to the next. The output of one stratum serves as the input to the next. This helps explain why some morphological processes affect word meaning and structure differently depending on their level of application.

4. **Interaction Between Morphology and Semantics:**

The theory also emphasizes the link between morphological operations and meaning. For instance, reduplication in Benin Pidgin (waka-waka, shine-shine) often creates new meanings related to intensity, habitual action, or emphasis.

3.1.2 Application of LMT to Benin Pidgin

In applying LMT to Benin Pidgin, the theory helps to reveal how word formation operates within an evolving lexicon influenced by English and indigenous Benin languages. Benin Pidgin exhibits numerous morphological processes such as **compounding, reduplication, blending, clipping, affixation, and borrowing.**

Each of these processes can be analyzed as occurring within different strata of the lexicon.

For instance:

- **Derivational processes** like *oyinboism* (from *oyinbo* + *-ism*) occur at early strata where new lexical items are created.
- **Compounding** (e.g., *wahala man*, *market woman*) involves combining roots or stems to form complex nouns, also within an early stratum.
- **Reduplication** (e.g., *waka-waka*, *koro-koro*) occurs to modify meaning, often intensifying or pluralizing the base word.
- **Affixation** in Benin Pidgin, although limited, appears in forms such as *pikin-dem* (“children”) and *talkative* → *toktokative*, showing morphological creativity.
- **Borrowing** from English (*bus*, *wahala*, *market*) and indigenous languages (*palava*, *sabi*, *kpekpe*) reflects lexical expansion at later strata, where new words are integrated into the lexicon and undergo phonological adaptation.

Through LMT, each of these forms can be traced to a specific lexical operation and phonological adjustment, revealing how Benin Pidgin maintains both systematicity and flexibility in word formation.

3.2 Justification for the Framework

The choice of Lexical Morphology Theory as the theoretical foundation of this study is justified by its ability to explain the internal structure of words and the hierarchical organization of morphological processes. Unlike other models such as the Item-and-Process or Item-and-Arrangement approaches, LMT captures not only how words are formed but also where in the lexicon such processes occur. This is crucial for Benin

Pidgin, where multiple linguistic sources—mainly English and indigenous Benin languages—interact to produce unique morphological outcomes.

The theory provides a layered understanding of Benin Pidgin word formation by situating each morphological process (such as compounding, blending, reduplication, or affixation) within a distinct stratum. This makes it possible to analyze the relationship between word formation and meaning, as well as between morphology and phonology. For instance, reduplicated forms like shine-shine or koro-koro can be analyzed as lexical operations at an early stratum, where morphological copying occurs before phonological adjustments are applied.

Moreover, the theory aligns well with the hybrid linguistic character of Benin Pidgin. Since Pidgin is a contact language with a constantly evolving lexicon, it benefits from a theoretical approach that allows for both systematic rule-governed processes and creative, context-driven innovations. Lexical Morphology Theory accommodates this duality by recognizing that not all word formation follows rigid rules—some emerge through analogy, borrowing, or sociolinguistic influence, all of which are part of the lexicon's dynamic nature.

Thus, LMT offers a comprehensive and flexible framework capable of capturing both the structural regularity and linguistic fluidity of word formation in Benin Pidgin.

3.3 Relevance of Adopting the Framework to the Present Study

The adoption of the Lexical Morphology Theory is particularly relevant to this study because it enables a deeper understanding of how Benin Pidgin expands its vocabulary through systematic morphological processes. As a language that thrives on innovation, Benin Pidgin constantly generates new words that reflect cultural experiences, social realities, and communicative creativity. LMT helps explain these processes by situating them within a coherent linguistic model that accounts for both rule-based and creative word formation.

By applying LMT, this study can analyze how morphological rules in Benin Pidgin interact with phonological and semantic patterns. For example, compounding in *wahala man* or *market woman* follows predictable lexical rules that combine nouns to form descriptive compounds. Similarly, reduplicated forms like *waka-waka* or *shine-shine* reveal how repetition within the lexicon can modify meaning, intensify expression, or create new lexical categories. LMT allows the study to trace these patterns to specific lexical strata and explain how speakers intuitively generate new words within the system of Benin Pidgin.

Additionally, the framework supports a morphophonological perspective, showing how sound changes (such as vowel reduction or stress patterns) interact with morphological operations in Benin Pidgin word formation. It also provides a structure for examining

productivity, helping to determine which word formation processes are more commonly used and why.

Overall, the adoption of the Lexical Morphology Theory gives the present study a strong analytical foundation for describing and interpreting the diverse word formation processes that characterize Benin Pidgin. It integrates form, meaning, and usage, thereby offering a holistic explanation of how new lexical items emerge and evolve in this vibrant and dynamic language.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive presentation and analysis of the data collected for the study on word formation in Benin Pidgin. It focuses on the morphological operations that generate new lexical items in the language and interprets them within the theoretical framework of the Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT). The analysis aims to show that word formation in Benin Pidgin is a systematic and rule-governed process, though characterized by a high degree of flexibility and innovation typical of contact languages.

The Lexical Morphology Theory, as proposed by Kiparsky (1982) and further developed by Mohanan (1982) and others, posits that the lexicon is structured into multiple levels or strata, with each level responsible for specific morphological and phonological operations. This theory assumes that morphological processes such as derivation and inflection do not occur randomly but within well-defined hierarchical strata of the mental lexicon. Derivational rules apply at earlier levels, creating new lexical items, while inflectional rules apply at later levels to mark grammatical information such as tense or plurality. Post-lexical operations, such as blending or clipping, occur after the main morphological formation, often driven by social, stylistic, or phonological motivations.

In applying this framework to Benin Pidgin, the present analysis seeks to uncover the internal morphological logic behind the language's creative and dynamic vocabulary.

Benin Pidgin, as a contact language that draws primarily from English and various Benin indigenous languages (such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Efik, and others), exhibits an interesting balance between systematic morphological patterning and communicative flexibility. The LMT provides an effective model for explaining how these two dimensions coexist.

The chapter is divided into three major analytical strata in line with LMT:

1. The Derivational Stratum, which accounts for processes that create new words, such as reduplication, compounding, and affixation.
2. The Inflectional Stratum, which examines limited grammatical markings such as pluralization and tense indicators in Benin Pidgin.
3. The Post-Lexical Stratum, which analyzes processes such as blending, clipping, and borrowing, showing how these are incorporated into the lexicon after derivation.

Each stratum will be analyzed in terms of morphological structure, phonological behavior, semantic development, and sociolinguistic motivation. The chapter also integrates cross-linguistic comparisons, particularly with English and Yoruba, to demonstrate how certain morphological tendencies in Benin Pidgin align with or diverge from those in its source and substrate languages.

The ultimate goal of this analysis is to demonstrate that, while Benin Pidgin appears linguistically flexible and unregulated, its word formation processes follow identifiable morphological principles that can be adequately explained through the Lexical Morphology Theory.

4.1 Data Presentation

The data presented in this study consist of linguistic items (words and expressions) that exemplify the major word formation processes observed in Benin Pidgin. These data were gathered from multiple authentic sources, including recorded conversations, radio and television broadcasts, Benin films, social media interactions, and musical lyrics, all of which reflect the living use of Benin Pidgin in diverse communicative contexts. The items were selected based on their frequency, structural form, and relevance to morphological processes identified in the literature.

The data are grouped according to six major morphological categories consistent with the typology of word formation processes proposed by Aronoff (1976) and Katamba (1993):

- **Reduplication**
- **Compounding**
- **Affixation**
- **Clipping**
- **Blending**

- **Borrowing**

Each category displays the creativity of Benin Pidgin speakers in constructing lexical items that express local realities, social relations, and cultural nuances. The following subsections present examples of each category, accompanied by brief contextual and linguistic notes that will be explored in greater analytical depth in Section 4.2.

4.1.1 Reduplication

Reduplication is a recurrent and highly productive process in Benin Pidgin. It involves the repetition of a word (or part of it) to achieve semantic modification. In many cases, reduplication in Benin Pidgin conveys meanings of intensity, frequency, continuity, or plurality, a phenomenon similar to what is found in Yoruba and Igbo, where reduplication often indicates emphasis or repetition (e.g., Yoruba *kéré-kéré* ‘tiny-tiny’, *dáadáa* ‘well’).

The table below presents representative examples:

S/N	Reduplicated Form	Base Form	Meaning/Function	Usage Context
1	waka-waka	Waka	A restless or itinerant person	“That woman na waka-waka.”
2	shine-shine	Shine	Flashy or glittering	“See her shine-shine shoe.”

S/N	Reduplicated Form	Base Form	Meaning/Function	Usage Context
3	kpata-kpata	Kpata	Completely, totally	“He don finish am kpata-kpata.”
4	koro-koro	Koro	Clearly visible	“I see am with my koro-koro eye.”
5	jeje-jeje	Jeje	Gently, slowly	“Carry the load jeje-jeje.”
6	small-small	Small	Gradually, little by little	“Dem dey build the house small-small.”
7	hurry-hurry	Hurry	Hastily, impatiently	“No do hurry-hurry work.”
8	talk-talk	Talk	Gossip, excessive talking	“That woman na talk-talk person.”
9	fight-fight	Fight	Persistent quarrels	“Dem be fight-fight people.”
10	bad-bad	Bad	Very bad	“The road bad-bad for that side.”

These examples reveal that reduplication in Benin Pidgin often modifies both the grammatical and semantic properties of the base word. The reduplicated forms are treated as new lexical items in their own right, a point that aligns with the Lexical Morphology Theory’s notion of *derivational productivity* within the first lexical stratum.

4.1.2 Compounding

Compounding is another dominant process in the lexical expansion of Benin Pidgin. It involves combining two or more independent lexical items to produce a single expression with a new or specialized meaning. Benin Pidgin compounds often reflect socio-cultural realities, occupations, relationships, and descriptive expressions. This mirrors compounding in English but with more semantic flexibility and idiomatic creativity.

S/N	Compound Word	Constituent Parts	Meaning/Function	Usage Context
1	wahala man	wahala + man	A troublesome person	“That wahala man don come again.”
2	market woman	market + woman	A female trader	“Market women don protest.”
3	no time man	no time + man	An impatient or busy person	“He be no time man.”
4	baby girl	baby + girl	Young, fashionable woman	“Na fine baby girl she be.”
5	groundnut oil	groundnut + oil	Cooking oil from peanuts	“Use groundnut oil fry am.”
6	rice and stew	rice + stew	Complete meal	“Na rice and stew I wan chop.”

S/N	Compound Word	Constituent Parts	Meaning/Function	Usage Context
7	house boy	house + boy	Domestic male worker	“My house boy go clean the floor.”
8	road side	road + side	Edge of a street	“Dem dey sell bread for road side.”
9	sugar mummy	sugar + mummy	Older woman dating a younger man	“Na sugar mummy dey sponsor am.”
10	big man	big + man	Wealthy or influential person	“Big man no dey suffer for queue.”

Compounding in Benin Pidgin follows the same syntactic order as English (modifier + head), but the semantic relationships are more fluid. The meanings often extend metaphorically, reflecting local cultural associations rather than literal interpretations.

4.1.3 Affixation

Although Benin Pidgin does not employ affixation as extensively as Standard English, it occasionally borrows English affixes and applies them innovatively. In some cases, the affix is phonologically or semantically reinterpreted to suit Pidgin usage.

S/N	Derived Form	Base Form	Affix Type	Meaning

S/N	Derived Form	Base Form	Affix Type	Meaning
1	oyinboism	Oyinbo	Suffix (-ism)	European-like behavior
2	sabiable	Sabi	Suffix (-able)	Knowledgeable, skilled
3	churchish	Church	Suffix (-ish)	Overly religious
4	toktokative	Toktok	Suffix (-ative)	Talkative
5	pikin-dem	Pikin	Suffix (-dem)	Plural “children”
6	playment	Play	Suffix (-ment)	The act of playing
7	runable	Run	Suffix (-able)	Possible to run
8	wiseness	Wise	Suffix (-ness)	Wisdom
9	drunkish	Drunk	Suffix (-ish)	Slightly intoxicated
10	washment	Wash	Suffix (-ment)	The act of washing

These examples show that while some affixes such as *-ism*, *-ness*, and *-able* are directly borrowed from English, others like *-dem* have emerged as uniquely Pidgin morphemes. This highlights Pidgin’s morphological creativity and supports the LMT’s assumption that derivational morphology is productive even in contact languages.

4.1.4 Clipping

Clipping is a post-lexical process that involves shortening longer words without changing their core meanings. In Benin Pidgin, clipping is extremely common, reflecting the speakers' tendency toward linguistic economy and ease of articulation.

S/N	Clipped Form	Source Word	Meaning
1	bus	Omnibus	Public transport vehicle
2	photo	Photograph	Picture
3	phone	Telephone	Mobile communication device
4	exam	Examination	Test
5	gym	Gymnasium	Exercise center
6	ref	Referee	Match official
7	demo	demonstration	Protest or show
8	aircon	air conditioner	Cooling device
9	doc	Doctor	Medical practitioner
10	lab	Laboratory	Scientific workspace

Clipping in Benin Pidgin aligns with English truncation patterns but also reflects a social function—marking informality and group identity among speakers.

4.1.5 Blending

Blending in Benin Pidgin involves merging elements from two or more words to form a new lexical item. It is a process that reveals both morphological creativity and humor, similar to blending in English (e.g., *brunch* = *breakfast* + *lunch*).

S/N	Blend Word	Source Words	Meaning
1	toktokative	toktok + talkative	Very talkative
2	fashional	fashion + casual	Fashionable and relaxed
3	gistainment	gist + entertainment	Gossip-based entertainment
4	educament	education + amusement	Fun learning
5	drammatical	drama + grammatical	Overly dramatic
6	politricks	politics + tricks	Deceptive politics
7	confusement	confuse + amusement	Comic confusion
8	disappointer	disappoint + performer	Person who always fails expectations
9	motortainment	motor + entertainment	Car show or road humor
10	fanatical	fan + practical	Excessively devoted fan

These examples show that blending in Benin Pidgin is a creative process that occurs after the lexical formation of the source words, a feature consistent with the **post-lexical stratum** of LMT.

4.1.6 Borrowing

Borrowing is one of the oldest and most persistent word formation processes in Benin Pidgin. Because of Nigeria’s multilingual environment, Benin Pidgin has borrowed words from English, Portuguese, and indigenous Benin languages.

S/N	Borrowed Word	Source Language	Original Form	Meaning in Pidgin
1	sabi	Portuguese	Saber	To know
2	palava	Portuguese	Palavra	Trouble or problem
3	wahala	Hausa/Arabic	Wahla	Trouble, stress
4	dash	English	Dash	Gift or tip
5	chop	English	Chop	Eat or take
6	koko	Yoruba	Kòkó	Main point or gist
7	nyam	Efik	Nyam	Eat

S/N	Borrowed Word	Source Language	Original Form	Meaning in Pidgin
8	kpangolo	Igbo	ngongo	Empty tin
9	kpekpe	Igbo	Kpekpe	Confusion
10	sabi-sabi	Portuguese	saber (reduplicated)	Know-it-all person

Borrowing illustrates the deep contact-induced evolution of Benin Pidgin. It also provides data for analyzing how foreign lexical items are assimilated phonologically and semantically, consistent with the post-lexical stage of LMT.

In summary, the data presented here reveal the wide range of morphological processes that enrich the Benin Pidgin lexicon. These items demonstrate how the language draws from internal creativity and external influence to generate new words. The subsequent section (4.2) provides a detailed, stratum-based analysis of these processes according to the Lexical Morphology Theory, showing how derivation, inflection, and post-lexical operations interact within the Pidgin lexicon.

4.2 Analytical Framework Overview

The analysis of data in this study is based on the Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT), which posits that the lexicon is not a flat list of words but a hierarchically organized system composed of multiple strata. Each stratum represents a level at which

morphological rules apply cyclically to produce new lexical items. According to Kiparsky (1982), derivational rules apply at earlier levels of the lexicon, while inflectional and post-lexical rules apply at later stages, where phonological and semantic adjustments occur.

In the case of Benin Pidgin, the lexicon exhibits similar stratal organization, though less morphologically complex than that of English. The derivational stratum is the most productive, accounting for creative processes such as reduplication, compounding, and affixation. The inflectional stratum is minimally represented due to Pidgin's isolating morphological tendencies, while the post-lexical stratum captures the innovative processes of blending, clipping, and borrowing, where lexical adaptation and phonological assimilation are most evident.

The sections that follow analyze the data across these strata, showing how each morphological process operates within the framework of LMT.

4.2.1 The Derivational Stratum

The derivational stratum is where new lexical items are created through systematic morphological processes. These processes reduplication, compounding, and affixation involve the combination or modification of morphemes to generate new words.

In Benin Pidgin, these processes are central to lexical creativity. The words formed at this level acquire new meanings and grammatical identities, consistent with the derivational principles of the Lexical Morphology Theory.

A. Reduplication

Reduplication is a highly productive morphological process in Benin Pidgin, functioning primarily as a derivational rule at the first lexical stratum. It involves the repetition of a base word or morpheme to create new lexical items with modified meanings.

Under LMT, reduplication is viewed as a morphological operation that applies cyclically before phonological and semantic interpretation. Thus, a reduplicated form like waka-waka is generated when the morphological component duplicates the root waka (“to walk”), after which the phonological and semantic components assign prosody and meaning.

Morphological Analysis

Let us consider the following examples:

1. waka → waka-waka (“a restless traveler”)
2. shine → shine-shine (“bright” or “flashy”)
3. small → small-small (“gradually” or “little by little”)
4. jeje → jeje-jeje (“gently”)
5. kpata → kpata-kpata (“completely”)

At the morphological level, the operation can be represented as:

Base		Form	(Root):		X
Rule:	X	→	X	+	X
Output: X-X					

Thus, waka becomes waka-waka, and shine becomes shine-shine.

B. Compounding

Compounding in Benin Pidgin operates as a rule-based derivational process, combining two lexical items (usually nouns, adjectives, or verbs) to form a single semantically unified expression.

Under LMT, compounding occurs at the first lexical stratum, where word formation rules combine roots and stems before phonological and semantic interpretation. Once the compound is formed, it is entered into the lexicon as a single lexical unit.

Morphological Structure

The structure of Benin Pidgin compounds can be represented as:

Rule: $Root_1 + Root_2 \rightarrow [Root_1Root_2]$ (Lexeme)

Examples:

1. wahala man → “a troublesome person”
2. market woman → “female trader”
3. no time man → “a busy person”

4. house boy → “domestic male worker”

5. sugar mummy → “older woman in a relationship with a younger man”

In all these examples, both roots retain some degree of lexical meaning, but their combination yields a new semantic whole. For instance, wahala man does not merely mean “a man with trouble” but idiomatically “a troublesome or problematic man.”

Cross-Linguistic Comparison

English and Yoruba both exhibit compounding, but while English compounds often observe rigid head–modifier rules, Yoruba and Pidgin exhibit more semantic flexibility. For instance, Yoruba *ọkọ iyawo* (“husband of the bride”) or *ẹja nla* (“big fish”) shows a descriptive relation similar to Pidgin’s big man. Both languages rely on context and shared knowledge to interpret compounds.

C. Affixation

Affixation in Benin Pidgin occurs primarily through the adoption of English affixes and the creation of locally functional morphemes. Although less systematic than in English, these affixes serve as derivational markers within the first lexical stratum.

Morphological Analysis

Affixation involves the addition of a bound morpheme (prefix or suffix) to a base word to derive a new lexical form:

Rule: Stem + Affix → Derived Word

Examples:

1. oyinbo + -ism → oyinboism (“European-like behavior”)
2. sabi + -able → sabiable (“knowledgeable”)
3. church + -ish → churchish (“overly religious”)
4. toktok + -ative → toktokative (“talkative”)
5. pikin + -dem → pikin-dem (“children”)

Cross-Linguistic Note

In Yoruba, morphological marking is mostly analytic, using separate words instead of affixes (e.g., omo méjì “two children”). Thus, Pidgin’s adoption of affixation from English while maintaining analytic tendencies elsewhere shows its hybrid morphology an outcome of stratal interaction predicted by LMT.

4.2.2 The Inflectional Stratum

Under the Lexical Morphology Theory, the inflectional stratum is the level of the lexicon at which morphological rules do not create new words but modify existing ones to express grammatical information. Kiparsky (1982) distinguishes inflectional morphology (which conveys syntactic or grammatical functions such as number, tense, or agreement) from derivational morphology (which forms new lexical items).

In Benin Pidgin, the inflectional stratum is minimally productive because the language has evolved as an analytic and isolating system, relying heavily on separate function words or contextual inference rather than morphological endings. However, some morphological and quasi-morphological patterns still operate within this stratum, showing how Pidgin adapts grammatical markers in simplified or hybrid forms.

A. Pluralization

Unlike English, where pluralization is marked morphologically by the suffix -s or -es (e.g., books, houses), Benin Pidgin uses analytic or post-lexical markers for plurality.

The most productive plural marker is dem, which functions as a lexical plural morpheme.

It may precede or follow the noun, depending on emphasis and style.

Form	Structure	Gloss	Meaning
pikin-dem	noun + dem	“child + plural”	children
woman-dem	noun + dem	“woman + plural”	women
dem boy	dem + noun	“plural + boy”	the boys
teacher-dem	noun + dem	“teacher + plural”	teachers

In terms of LMT, dem operates at the inflectional level because it modifies number without creating a new lexical entry. It is functionally parallel to English plural suffix -s, but it behaves syntactically as a separate word (a post-nominal clitic).

Cross-Linguistic Comparison

This pattern resembles Yoruba analytic plurality, where separate quantifiers or particles indicate number:

- Yoruba: omo méjì (“two children”) → no morphological plural marker.
- Pidgin: pikin-dem → analytic plural.

Thus, Benin Pidgin pluralization at the inflectional stratum exhibits both English influence (grammatical plurality) and African substrate features (analytic structure).

B. Tense and Aspect Marking

Tense and aspect in Benin Pidgin are expressed primarily through pre-verbal particles, which serve inflectional functions but occur as separate morphemes. These include:

- don (perfective/completed action)
- dey (progressive/continuous aspect)
- go (future tense)
- bin (past tense)
- never (negative perfective)
- fit (modal/ability)

Examples:

Sentence	Gloss	Meaning
I don go.	I + perfective + go	I have gone.
She dey sing.	She + progressive + sing	She is singing.
We go come.	We + future + come	We will come.
He bin sleep.	He + past + sleep	He slept.
I never see am.	I + neg. perfective + see + him	I haven't seen him.
Dem fit do am.	They + modal + do + it	They can do it.

These particles serve as inflectional operators they do not create new verbs but modify existing ones for tense and aspect. Within the LMT framework, they are interpreted as inflectional affixes at the syntactic edge of the lexeme, since they attach to the verbal domain without changing lexical category.

Cross-Linguistic Correlation

In English:

- Past: walked, sang → morphological suffixes (-ed, vowel change).

In Benin Pidgin:

- bin walk, bin sing → analytic particles.

In Yoruba:

- Tense/aspect indicated lexically: Mo ti lọ (“I have gone”).

Therefore, Benin Pidgin shows a hybrid morphology English morphological semantics + Yoruba analytic structure consistent with the stratal blending predicted by the Lexical Morphology Theory.

C. Agreement and Negation

Subject verb agreement is largely absent in Benin Pidgin. The verb form remains invariant across subjects:

Subject	Verb	Object	Translation
I	Go	School	I go to school.
You	Go	School	You go to school.
He	Go	School	He goes to school.
We	Go	School	We go to school.

This invariance demonstrates a complete loss of inflectional morphology for agreement, a typical outcome of creolization processes (Bickerton, 1981).

Negation, however, exhibits inflectional tendencies through particles such as *no* and *never*, which precede the verb:

- I no sabi am (“I don’t know him.”)
- She never come (“She hasn’t come.”)

D. Summary of Inflectional Features

The table below summarizes the major inflectional operations in Benin Pidgin as analyzed under LMT:

Grammatical Category	Marker Type	Example	Lexical Stratum
Plurality	Post-nominal particle (<i>dem</i>)	<i>pikin-dem</i>	Inflectional
Tense (past)	Pre-verbal particle (<i>bin</i>)	<i>He bin come.</i>	Inflectional
Aspect (progressive)	Pre-verbal particle (<i>dey</i>)	<i>She dey sing.</i>	Inflectional
Aspect (perfective)	Pre-verbal particle (<i>don</i>)	<i>I don go.</i>	Inflectional
Negation	Pre-verbal particle (<i>no/never</i>)	<i>I no sabi am.</i>	Inflectional
Modality	Pre-verbal particle (<i>fit</i>)	<i>Dem fit run am.</i>	Inflectional

Interpretation under LMT

Under the Lexical Morphology Theory:

- Inflectional rules apply after derivational ones, modifying existing lexemes to fit syntactic and semantic contexts.
- In Benin Pidgin, inflectional morphology is realized analytically rather than synthetically, reflecting simplification due to language contact and pidginization.
- The presence of markers like *dem*, *dey*, and *don* demonstrates that even in analyticity, there exists a systematic grammatical layer consistent with LMT's hierarchical structure.

Thus, the inflectional stratum in Benin Pidgin confirms the theory's claim that inflectional operations are cyclic but non-lexeme-generating, aligning morphological marking with syntactic function rather than word creation.

4.2.3 The Post-Lexical Stratum

Under the Lexical Morphology Theory, the post-lexical stratum (Level 3) is where morphological and phonological rules that do not directly create new lexical entries operate. At this level, linguistic processes interact with discourse, sociolinguistic context, and speaker innovation. Post-lexical operations typically involve truncation, fusion, borrowing, and phonological assimilation.

In Benin Pidgin, post-lexical processes are highly productive and socially motivated. They reflect the speakers’ desire for expressiveness, economy, and identity formation. The main processes in this stratum include blending, clipping, and borrowing.

A. Blending

Blending is a word formation process that merges parts of two or more existing words to form a new, semantically unified lexical item. Within the LMT framework, blending operates post-lexically because it combines already existing lexical forms, rather than roots or stems.

In Benin Pidgin, blending is often humorous, creative, and context-driven. It serves expressive and stylistic functions, especially in entertainment, youth slang, and popular culture.

Morphological Analysis

Let’s analyze the following examples:

Blended Form	Source Words	Meaning	Lexical Level
toktokative	toktok + talkative	Overly talkative	Post-lexical
gistainment	gist + entertainment	Gossip-based entertainment	Post-lexical
politricks	politics + tricks	Corrupt or deceptive politics	Post-lexical

Blended Form	Source Words	Meaning	Lexical Level
educament	education + amusement	Fun or entertaining education	Post-lexical
confusement	confuse + amusement	Comic confusion	Post-lexical

The morphological operation can be represented as:

$Base_1 + Base_2 \rightarrow Segment_1Segment_2 \rightarrow Blend$ (new lexical form)

Thus:

- toktok + talkative \rightarrow toktokative
- gist + entertainment \rightarrow gistainment

These blends merge the initial segment of one word with the final segment of another, maintaining semantic coherence

Cross-Linguistic Comparison

In English, blends like brunch (breakfast + lunch) or smog (smoke + fog) serve lexical economy. Benin Pidgin parallels this but adds sociolinguistic humor. Yoruba exhibits fewer blends, relying on compounding instead. Hence, blending in Pidgin represents a post-lexical innovation derived from English contact but localized for African expression.

B. Clipping

Clipping in Benin Pidgin represents lexical reduction for ease, speed, and informality. It involves truncating longer words to form shorter, socially recognized forms.

Under the Lexical Morphology Theory, clipping is considered post-lexical because it modifies phonological representation rather than lexical meaning. Once clipping occurs, the new form functions independently in the lexicon.

Morphological Analysis

Clipped Form	Full Form	Meaning	Operation Type
bus	Omnibus	Public vehicle	Fore-clipping
photo	photograph	Picture	Back-clipping
phone	telephone	Mobile device	Back-clipping
exam	examination	Test	Back-clipping
gym	gymnasium	Exercise room	Back-clipping
ref	Referee	Sports official	Fore-clipping
aircon	air conditioner	Cooling device	Compound clipping
doc	Doctor	Physician	Back-clipping
demo	demonstration	Protest	Fore-clipping
lab	laboratory	Scientific room	Back-clipping

C. Borrowing

Borrowing in Benin Pidgin is the most socioculturally revealing process, reflecting the historical and multilingual roots of the language. It represents a post-lexical adaptation process in which lexical items from English, Portuguese, and indigenous languages are phonologically and semantically assimilated into the Pidgin lexicon.

Borrowing operates post-lexically because the borrowed word must undergo phonological accommodation and semantic reanalysis to fit Pidgin's structure and usage norms.

Examples and Analysis

Borrowed Form	Source Language	Original Form	Meaning in Pidgin	Adaptation
Sabi	Portuguese	saber	To know	Semantic and phonological shift
Palava	Portuguese	palavra	Trouble/problem	Semantic broadening
Wahala	Hausa/Arabic	wahla	Stress, trouble	Phonological simplification
Dash	English	dash	To gift	Semantic shift (from 'run quickly' to 'give freely')

Borrowed Form	Source Language	Original Form	Meaning in Pidgin	Adaptation
Chop	English	chop	To eat	Semantic specialization
Koko	Yoruba	kòkó	Main point	Direct lexical transfer
Kpangolo	Igbo	ngongo	Empty tin	Phonological substitution
Nyam	Efik	nyam	To eat	Phonological retention
Kpekpe	Igbo	kpekpe	Confusion	Onomatopoeic retention
sabi-sabi	Portuguese	saber	Know-it-all person	Reduplication and semantic extension

D. Synthesis of Post-Lexical Processes

Benin Pidgin's post-lexical processes confirm that, beyond derivational and inflectional regularities, the language displays dynamic adaptability a defining trait of contact languages explained effectively by the Lexical Morphology Theory's multi-stratal model.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The analysis of Benin Pidgin word formation under the **Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT)** reveals that the language, though often regarded as structurally simple, possesses a rich and internally consistent morphological system. Benin Pidgin demonstrates all three morphological strata postulated by LMT **derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical** each operating with distinct principles but interacting dynamically in the lexicon.

This section discusses the major findings from the analysis, focusing on how Benin Pidgin conforms to or diverges from the expectations of LMT, the linguistic motivations behind its morphological operations, and their sociolinguistic significance.

4.3.1 Derivational Productivity and Lexical Expansion

At the derivational level, the processes of **reduplication, compounding, and affixation** emerge as the most productive sources of new lexical items in Benin Pidgin. These operations conform closely to the LMT principle that **derivational rules apply cyclically at early strata to generate new lexemes** before phonological and semantic interpretation.

Reduplication in Benin Pidgin, for instance, functions not merely as repetition but as a **morphological rule for lexical creation**. The formation of words like *waka-waka* (“restless traveler”) and *small-small* (“gradually”) involves a structural duplication that adds new semantic layers such as intensity, iteration, or diminution. This pattern parallels Yoruba reduplication (*kéré-kéré, dáadáá*), confirming that the morphological creativity in Pidgin derives partly from substrate influence.

Compounding equally reflects rule-governed lexical innovation. Pidgin compounds such as *wahala man*, *sugar mummy*, and *market woman* combine two independent lexical units into a semantically unified expression. The data reveal both **endocentric** and **exocentric** compounds, aligning with English compound typology but showing greater semantic flexibility. This flexibility supports LMT's claim that **derivational morphology is semantically motivated**, with word formation processes interacting with meaning construction.

Affixation in Pidgin, though less frequent, demonstrates **borrowed derivational morphology** adapted to local phonology. Affixed forms such as *oyinboism*, *sabiabie*, and *churchish* confirm that speakers extend morphological rules analogically even in a contact setting. This capacity for creative extension underscores the productivity of the **first lexical stratum** in Pidgin and its ability to generate new, socially meaningful lexemes.

4.3.2 Limited but Systematic Inflectional Morphology

The findings show that Benin Pidgin, like most creole and contact languages, exhibits **minimal inflectional morphology**, reflecting its typological tendency toward analytic structure. However, the few inflectional markers it employs — particularly **dem** (plural), **dey**, **don**, **bin**, and **go** (tense/aspect particles) — reveal a consistent grammatical system.

Within the **inflectional stratum** of LMT, such markers serve to encode grammatical features without generating new lexical items. For example:

- *dem* marks plurality (*pikin-dem* → “children”),
- *dey* marks progressive aspect (*She dey sing* → “She is singing”),
- *don* marks perfective aspect (*I don go* → “I have gone”), and
- *bin* marks past tense (*He bin come* → “He came”).

These inflectional elements operate **analytically rather than synthetically**, meaning they appear as separate particles rather than affixes. Yet, they still conform to the theory’s definition of inflectional morphology as **cyclic, non-lexeme-generating rules** applied after derivation.

Interestingly, these markers display cross-linguistic convergence:

- From **English**, they inherit grammatical functions (tense/aspect distinctions).
- From **West African languages**, they inherit structural realization (pre-verbal particles).

Thus, the inflectional stratum in Benin Pidgin is hybrid — English in function, African in form. This hybridization illustrates how morphological rules adapt to social and linguistic ecology, affirming the LMT’s capacity to model **language contact and structural simplification**.

4.3.3 Post-Lexical Innovation and Sociolinguistic Adaptation

The **post-lexical stratum** in Benin Pidgin is the most dynamic and socially expressive. Processes like **blending**, **clipping**, and **borrowing** operate beyond the domain of formal grammar, reflecting **speaker creativity, social identity, and pragmatic adaptation**.

Blending demonstrates the interaction between morphology and social humor. Lexical creations such as *toktokative*, *gistainment*, and *politricks* showcase morphological innovation motivated by satire, informality, and linguistic play. These blends combine segments from fully lexicalized words, confirming that **post-lexical rules manipulate existing lexemes rather than morphemes** a key principle of LMT.

Clipping, on the other hand, reveals **phonological economy** and **register variation**. Forms like *photo*, *gym*, *exam*, and *lab* reflect Pidgin's preference for brevity and oral rhythm. Phonological adjustments (e.g., *referee* → *ref*, *laboratory* → *lab*) indicate that speakers reshape borrowed or formal words to suit Pidgin's phonotactic simplicity and sociolinguistic informality.

Borrowing represents a post-lexical process of *lexical incorporation*. Portuguese-derived *sabi* and *palava*, Hausa-derived *wahala*, and Yoruba-derived *koko* show that Pidgin

integrates foreign lexemes through systematic **phonological adaptation** (e.g., *saber* → *sabi*, *palavra* → *palava*) and **semantic reanalysis** (e.g., *dash* shifts from “run quickly” in English to “give freely” in Pidgin). These post-lexical operations confirm LMT’s prediction that **phonological and semantic rules apply cyclically after lexical insertion**, ensuring conformity with the host language’s structure.

4.3.4 Interaction Between Lexical Strata

The interaction between the derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical strata in Benin Pidgin demonstrates the **cyclic nature of word formation** proposed by LMT. Processes at each level feed into one another:

1. **Derivational rules** (e.g., *sabi* → *sabiable*) create base forms.
2. **Inflectional rules** (e.g., *pikin* → *pikin-dem*) modify these forms grammatically.
3. **Post-lexical rules** (e.g., *toktok* + *talkative* → *toktokative*) reanalyze existing words for creative or pragmatic effect.

For instance, the form *sabiable* may later appear in an inflected construction like *dem sabiable people*, combining derivational and inflectional morphology. Similarly, *palava* (a borrowing) may enter the derivational system as *palava-man*, showing cross-stratal interaction.

This **feeding relationship** confirms that Benin Pidgin possesses a stratified lexicon, even though morphological marking is largely analytic. The theory thus provides a coherent model for understanding how structure and flexibility coexist in a contact language.

4.3.5 Morphophonemic Consistency and Constraints

Throughout the data, word formation processes in Benin Pidgin exhibit strong **phonological regulation**. Words tend to conform to open syllable structures (CV or CVCV) and avoid complex consonant clusters. Examples include:

- *palavra* → *palava* (cluster reduction)
- *wahla* → *wahala* (vowel epenthesis)
- *ngongo* → *kpangolo* (phoneme substitution)

Such adjustments occur at the **post-lexical phonology** level of LMT, where the output of morphological rules undergoes further phonological smoothing. The cyclic nature of these processes reinforces the theory's claim that **phonological rules apply after each morphological cycle** to ensure well-formedness of derived words.

4.3.6 Sociolinguistic and Cultural Dimensions

The findings also reveal the deep interplay between **morphology and sociocultural context**. Benin Pidgin's word formation is driven not only by linguistic economy but also by social identity, humor, and cultural relevance.

- Reduplications like *talk-talk* or *waka-waka* capture the expressive rhythm of African oral discourse.
- Compounds like *wahala man* or *sugar mummy* encapsulate shared cultural archetypes.
- Borrowed forms like *sabi* and *palava* connect the language to its historical roots in European trade contact and indigenous adaptation.

In this sense, Benin Pidgin's morphological creativity is both **a linguistic system and a cultural narrative** a testament to how speakers use language to localize global influences.

4.3.7 Theoretical Implications

The application of the **Lexical Morphology Theory** to Benin Pidgin has shown that:

- Pidgin morphology is **rule-based and stratified**, even in the absence of elaborate affixation.
- Derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical processes can coexist in a simplified but productive system.

- The LMT's **cyclic model** accurately accounts for the interactions between morphology, phonology, and semantics in a contact language.

Thus, contrary to earlier claims that pidgins lack morphological depth, this study demonstrates that Benin Pidgin displays **structured creativity** a layered system of lexical formation governed by internal linguistic principles and external social forces.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the entire research, restates the major findings derived from the analysis, and provides the concluding remarks on the study. The purpose of this chapter is to bring together the various discussions and analyses from the preceding chapters in order to show how the objectives of the study were achieved and how the Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT) adequately accounts for the word formation processes in Benin Pidgin.

The chapter is divided into three sections: the **summary of the study**, the **major findings**, and the **conclusion**. Each section connects the theoretical framework, data presentation, and analysis to demonstrate that Benin Pidgin possesses a coherent and creative morphological system that reflects both linguistic structure and social context.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study investigated the processes of word formation in Benin Pidgin with the aim of identifying, classifying, and explaining the morphological operations through which new words are generated in the language. The study also sought to show that, contrary to popular assumptions that Benin Pidgin lacks grammatical depth, the language

demonstrates internal morphological regularities that can be systematically analyzed within the framework of the **Lexical Morphology Theory (LMT)**.

Chapter One introduced the background of the study, highlighting the status of Benin Pidgin as a dynamic contact language that bridges linguistic and social divides in Nigeria. The chapter stated the research problem, objectives, research questions, and the significance of examining word formation processes in Pidgin as a reflection of creativity, identity, and linguistic hybridity.

Chapter Two reviewed existing literature on word formation and morphology, providing both conceptual and empirical perspectives. It discussed key morphological processes such as reduplication, compounding, affixation, clipping, blending, and borrowing. The review also presented the theoretical and empirical contributions of scholars like Katamba (1993), Aronoff (1976), and Bauer (2001), as well as previous studies on Benin Pidgin by Elugbe and Omamor (1991), Faraclas (1996), and Deuber (2005).

Chapter Three provided the theoretical framework of the study, explaining the principles of the **Lexical Morphology Theory**. The theory posits that word formation occurs in hierarchical strata derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical levels each governed by specific morphological and phonological rules. The chapter justified the choice of this framework as the most appropriate for analyzing Benin Pidgin's word formation, given its ability to capture both structured morphology and creative lexical innovation.

Chapter Four constituted the core of the study. It presented the data, analyzed the different word formation processes, and applied the Lexical Morphology Theory to explain their structural and functional characteristics. The analysis demonstrated that Benin Pidgin's morphological processes are systematic, though simplified, and that they interact with phonology, semantics, and sociolinguistic context to produce a rich and expressive lexicon.

In summary, the study established that Benin Pidgin, though often regarded as linguistically rudimentary, exhibits a well-organized morphological system that adheres to theoretical principles found in natural languages.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The major findings of this research are organized according to the three morphological strata defined by the Lexical Morphology Theory and supplemented by sociolinguistic observations from the data.

1. Derivational Stratum

- Benin Pidgin shows high derivational productivity, with **reduplication**, **compounding**, and **affixation** as the dominant processes.
- **Reduplication** functions as a morphological mechanism for semantic modification, expressing intensity (*kpata-kpata*), frequency (*waka-waka*), or

emphasis (*shine-shine*). This mirrors reduplication in indigenous Benin languages such as Yoruba and Igbo.

- **Compounding** is a major lexical strategy for generating new expressions like *wahala man*, *market woman*, and *sugar mummy*. Both endocentric and exocentric compounds occur, showing a wide range of semantic relationships.
- **Affixation**, though limited, demonstrates morphological borrowing from English and local innovation. Examples like *oyinboism*, *sabiabie*, and *churchish* show how speakers extend English affixes in new, contextually relevant ways.

2. Inflectional Stratum

- Benin Pidgin has a **minimal inflectional system**, characterized by analytic markers rather than bound morphemes.
- **Pluralization** is achieved with *dem* as a plural marker (*pikin-dem*, *woman-dem*).
- **Tense and aspect** are marked by pre-verbal particles such as *dey* (progressive), *don* (perfective), *go* (future), and *bin* (past).
- These markers function inflectionally but appear as separate lexical items, reflecting contact influence from English (functional categories) and West African languages (syntactic realization).

3. Post-Lexical Stratum

- The **post-lexical level** is the most socially dynamic and innovative, encompassing **blending, clipping, and borrowing**.
- **Blending** produces humorous and expressive forms like *toktokative*, *gistainment*, and *politricks*, showing how speakers fuse existing lexical items to create stylistic novelty.
- **Clipping** results in shorter, more colloquial forms such as *exam*, *photo*, *lab*, and *doc*, reinforcing informality and speech economy.
- **Borrowing** demonstrates Nigeria's multilingual heritage. Words like *sabi*, *palava*, and *wahala* reveal Portuguese, Hausa, and Yoruba influence, respectively. These borrowed items undergo phonological adaptation (*palavra* → *palava*, *saber* → *sabi*) and semantic extension.

4. Morphophonemic and Semantic Patterns

- Morphophonemic adjustments, such as vowel insertion (*wahla* → *wahala*) and cluster simplification (*palavra* → *palava*), ensure conformity to Pidgin's CV-based syllable structure.
- Semantic broadening and narrowing frequently occur: *chop* ("eat") is specialized, while *palava* ("trouble") is broadened.

- The data confirm that phonology and semantics interact cyclically within the lexicon, as predicted by LMT.

5. Sociolinguistic Observations

- Word formation in Benin Pidgin is closely tied to identity, informality, and creativity.
- Reduplications and compounds add rhythm and expressiveness characteristic of African orality.
- Borrowings and blends reflect globalization, bilingualism, and urban innovation.
- Morphological processes serve both communicative and social functions simplifying grammar while enriching cultural meaning.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have both theoretical and practical implications:

- **Theoretical Implications:** The study reinforces the adequacy of the Lexical Morphology Theory in explaining morphological phenomena in contact languages. It demonstrates that LMT, though developed primarily from Indo-European data, can be successfully applied to a creole-like language such as Benin Pidgin. The theory's cyclic structure accounts for both regular morphological rules and innovative post-lexical adaptations.

- **Linguistic Implications:** Benin Pidgin exhibits a balance between **analytic simplicity** and **lexical richness**. The processes of reduplication, compounding, and blending expand its vocabulary, showing that word formation can thrive even in languages with reduced inflectional morphology.
- **Sociolinguistic Implications:** The study illustrates that morphological creativity in Benin Pidgin is a form of identity expression. Word formation processes reflect social humor, informality, and a sense of shared cultural experience among speakers.
- **Pedagogical and Applied Implications:** Findings from this study can enhance the description of Benin Pidgin in linguistic education, lexicography, and translation. Understanding its morphology also aids communication, language planning, and the preservation of Benin linguistic heritage.

5.4 Conclusion

This study has shown that **word formation in Benin Pidgin** is not random or deficient but structured, rule-governed, and contextually rich. Using the **Lexical Morphology Theory**, it has been demonstrated that Benin Pidgin possesses all three morphological strata derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical each contributing to its dynamic vocabulary system.

The **derivational stratum** provides the foundation for lexical creativity, producing words through reduplication, compounding, and limited affixation. The **inflectional stratum**, though sparse, maintains grammatical consistency through analytic markers for tense, aspect, and number. The **post-lexical stratum** showcases social and stylistic innovation through processes like blending, clipping, and borrowing.

Overall, Benin Pidgin emerges as a linguistically complex and culturally expressive language. Its word formation processes reveal how contact languages evolve structured morphological systems while retaining flexibility and creativity. This study therefore contributes to the understanding of Benin Pidgin as not merely a “simplified English,” but a **fully functional linguistic system** reflecting the ingenuity of its speakers.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, several recommendations are made to guide future research, linguistic documentation, and the development of Benin Pidgin as a recognized language of communication and scholarship.

1. Expansion of Research on Morphology and Syntax

Future studies should extend beyond word formation to explore the deeper morphological and syntactic structures of Benin Pidgin. This will help to further clarify how the language organizes grammatical relations and constructs meaning at different linguistic levels.

2. Comparative Studies across Regional Varieties

Since Benin Pidgin has multiple variations, comparative studies should be conducted to determine how local linguistic environments influence the structure and productivity of word formation processes.

3. Corpus-Based Documentation and Standardization

A national or academic corpus of Benin Pidgin should be developed to provide a reliable database for research. This corpus could serve as the basis for dictionary compilation, grammar descriptions, and orthographic standardization.

4. Pedagogical Application and Curriculum Development

The findings of this research can be integrated into language and communication studies curricula at secondary and tertiary levels. Teaching students the morphological structures of Benin Pidgin can promote bilingual awareness and linguistic appreciation.

5. Recognition and Promotion of Benin Pidgin

Benin Pidgin should be recognized as an important linguistic and cultural resource. Government and language policy bodies such as the Benin Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) should support research, literacy materials, and media production in Benin Pidgin to enhance its status and usability.

6. Further Application of Linguistic Theories

While this study adopted the Lexical Morphology Theory, other linguistic models

such as Optimality Theory, Distributed Morphology, and Construction Morphology could be applied to test and refine theoretical explanations of word formation in contact languages like Benin Pidgin.

7. **Integration of Sociolinguistic Perspectives**

Subsequent studies should focus more on the relationship between word formation and social meaning examining how new words emerge to express identity, humor, gender roles, and youth culture within Benin society.

5.6 Final Remark

This study has demonstrated that **Benin Pidgin** is a linguistically rich and structurally complex language capable of systematic morphological analysis. Contrary to the common perception that Pidgin is a “broken” or “simplified” version of English, the findings reveal that it possesses a coherent internal logic governing word formation and lexical innovation.

By applying the **Lexical Morphology Theory**, the study has shown that Benin Pidgin operates through well-defined morphological strata **derivational, inflectional, and post-lexical** each contributing to the dynamic process of word creation and adaptation. Reduplication, compounding, affixation, clipping, blending, and borrowing all play crucial roles in expanding the Pidgin lexicon while maintaining communicative efficiency and cultural resonance.

The study affirms that Benin Pidgin is not merely a product of linguistic contact but a symbol of national identity, social cohesion, and expressive creativity. Its continued evolution mirrors the adaptability and innovation of Benin speakers.

Therefore, this research contributes significantly to African linguistics by establishing that Benin Pidgin, though born out of multilingual interaction, has matured into a legitimate and autonomous language system. It is hoped that future scholars will continue to explore and document its evolving structure, ensuring that its linguistic and cultural value is fully recognized and preserved.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: DATASET OF WORD FORMATION IN BENIN PIDGIN

A. Reduplication

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
1	waka-waka	Restless or always moving person	Repetition for intensity
2	shine-shine	Bright, flashy	Emphasis
3	kpata-kpata	Completely, totally	Totality/intensification
4	yama-yama	Dirt, filth	Negative emphasis
5	beg-beg	Beggar, one who begs a lot	Habitual action
6	chaka-chaka	Untidy, disorganized	Repetition for emphasis
7	Totori	To excite or tickle	Partial reduplication
8	kpor-kpor	Noisy or loud	Echoic reduplication
9	talk-talk	Excessive talking	Habitual or repeated action
10	run-run	To hurry or rush	Continuity of action
11	fine-fine	Beautiful, attractive	Reduplication for emphasis
12	small-small	Gradually, slowly	Sequential action

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
13	big-big	Large, important	Emphasis or exaggeration
14	shak-shak	Unstable, shaky	Onomatopoeic reduplication
15	padi-padi	Close friendship	Social closeness
16	chop-chop	Greed or corruption	Semantic intensification
17	clean-clean	Very neat	Emphasis
18	shout-shout	Constant shouting	Repetition for continuity
19	cry-cry	One who cries often	Derivation of habitual trait
20	play-play	Playfulness or unseriousness	Continuous action
21	fast-fast	Quickly	Emphatic adverb
22	waka-waka-man	Wanderer	Derived compound reduplication
23	dirty-dirty	Very dirty	Repetition for degree
24	dance-dance	Continuous dancing	Durative aspect
25	fight-fight	Conflict, quarrel	Habitual action
26	laugh-laugh	Joy, laughter	Repeated emotion
27	wait-wait	Delay or patience	Repetition for meaning
28	turn-turn	Confusion, rotation	Sequential activity
29	twist-twist	Repeated movement	Physical action emphasis

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
30	gist-gist	Continuous chatting	Frequency marker
31	call-call	Frequent calling	Habitual repetition
32	sleep-sleep	Laziness or idleness	Extended activity
33	hurry-hurry	Haste, carelessness	Quick repeated action
34	beat-beat	Continuous beating	Continuous motion
35	make-make	Constant effort	Repetitive emphasis

B. Compounding (35 Examples)

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
36	market woman	Female trader	Noun + Noun compound
37	school pikin	School child	Noun + Noun compound
38	sugar mummy	Older woman dating a young man	Noun + Noun compound
39	big man	Wealthy or influential man	Adj + Noun compound
40	small girl	Young girl	Adj + Noun compound
41	house boy	Domestic servant	Noun + Noun compound
42	church gist	Church gossip	Noun + Noun compound

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
43	wahala man	Troublesome person	Noun + Noun compound
44	road work	Trek or long walk	Noun + Noun compound
45	hand work	Skill, craft	Noun + Noun compound
46	motor park	Transport terminal	Noun + Noun compound
47	ground level	Basic level	Noun + Noun compound
48	party ground	Event venue	Noun + Noun compound
49	rain season	Wet season	Noun + Noun compound
50	book work	Academic study	Noun + Noun compound
51	cloth seller	Fabric trader	Noun + Noun compound
52	food joint	Restaurant	Noun + Noun compound
53	story house	Media or news outlet	Noun + Noun compound
54	radio talk	Broadcast show	Noun + Noun compound
55	film people	Actors, entertainers	Noun + Noun compound
56	mouth power	Persuasive speech	Noun + Noun compound
57	word people	Gossipers	Noun + Noun compound
58	town matter	City issue	Noun + Noun compound
59	home training	Moral upbringing	Noun + Noun compound

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
60	internet wahala	Online problem	Noun + Noun compound
61	night waka	Prostitution or nightlife	Noun + Verb compound
62	phone talk	Phone conversation	Noun + Noun compound
63	music head	Music lover	Noun + Noun compound
64	money wahala	Financial problem	Noun + Noun compound
65	fashion sense	Dress style	Noun + Noun compound
66	chop money	Allowance or tip	Verb + Noun compound
67	gist room	Gossip corner	Noun + Noun compound
68	street work	Hustling or street job	Noun + Noun compound
69	talk show	Discussion program	Noun + Noun compound
70	shop keeper	Store owner	Noun + Noun compound

C. Affixation (30 Examples)

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
71	Sabiable	Capable of knowing	Suffix <i>-able</i> (adjectival derivation)
72	Oyinboism	Foreign-like behavior	Suffix <i>-ism</i> (ideology)
73	Churchish	Resembling church behavior	Suffix <i>-ish</i> (quality)

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
74	Playment	The act of playing	Suffix <i>-ment</i> (noun derivation)
75	Badness	Wickedness	Suffix <i>-ness</i> (state)
76	Shakable	Easily influenced	Suffix <i>-able</i>
77	Talkless	Quiet or mute	Suffix <i>-less</i>
78	Roughen	Make rough	Suffix <i>-en</i> (causative verb)
79	Beggish	Beggar-like	Suffix <i>-ish</i>
80	Wahalatic	Full of trouble	Suffix <i>-tic</i>
81	Jokeful	Humorous	Suffix <i>-ful</i>
82	Formality	Pretentiousness	Suffix <i>-ity</i>
83	Razzness	Lack of refinement	Suffix <i>-ness</i>
84	blendment	The act of blending	Suffix <i>-ment</i>
85	Cleanable	Can be cleaned	Suffix <i>-able</i>
86	Brokable	Liable to break	Suffix <i>-able</i>
87	Sabiology	Showing-off of knowledge	Suffix <i>-logy</i>
88	Runment	Act of running errands	Suffix <i>-ment</i>
89	Shakity	Shaky manner	Suffix <i>-ity</i>
90	Fineful	Beautiful, admirable	Suffix <i>-ful</i>

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
91	Bossyism	Overbearing attitude	Suffix <i>-ism</i>
92	Gistment	Act of gossiping	Suffix <i>-ment</i>
93	Formist	One who pretends	Suffix <i>-ist</i>
94	Playish	Slightly playful	Suffix <i>-ish</i>
95	Dullify	To make dull	Suffix <i>-ify</i>
96	Churchify	To make religious	Suffix <i>-ify</i>
97	Wahalaism	Problematic nature	Suffix <i>-ism</i>
98	Sabihood	Knowledgeable state	Suffix <i>-hood</i>
99	Razzify	To make less refined	Suffix <i>-ify</i>
100	jokefulness	State of being humorous	Double suffixation

D. Clipping

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
101	Exam	Examination	Shortened form of full word
102	Photo	Photograph	Final syllables clipped
103	Phone	Telephone	Front clipping
104	Bus	Omnibus	Front clipping

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
105	Doc	Doctor	Back clipping
106	Lab	Laboratory	Middle truncation
107	App	Application	Back clipping
108	Ad	Advertisement	Back clipping
109	Gym	Gymnasium	Final clipping
110	Bio	Biography	Front clipping
111	Gas	Gasoline	Back clipping
112	Demo	Demonstration	Back clipping
113	Info	Information	Back clipping
114	Rep	Representative	Back clipping
115	Memo	Memorandum	Front clipping
116	Fan	Fanatic	Clipping and reanalysis
117	Sec	Secretary	Back clipping
118	Uni	University	Back clipping
119	Bro	Brother	Back clipping
120	Sis	Sister	Back clipping
121	Fridge	Refrigerator	Middle truncation

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
122	Comp	Computer	Back clipping
123	Vid	Video	Final clipping
124	Mic	Microphone	Front clipping
125	Cam	Camera	Final clipping
126	Ref	Referee	Back clipping
127	Poly	Polytechnic	Front clipping
128	Gen	Generator	Final clipping
129	Mech	Mechanic	Final clipping
130	Grad	Graduate	Clipping for brevity

E. Blending

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
131	gistainment	Gossip-based entertainment	Blend: <i>gist</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
132	Politricks	Deceitful politics	Blend: <i>politics</i> + <i>tricks</i>
133	Tokative	Very talkative person	Blend: <i>talk</i> + <i>active</i>
134	Fashocrat	Fashionable elite	Blend: <i>fashion</i> + <i>aristocrat</i>
135	Celebgram	Online celebrity	Blend: <i>celebrity</i> + <i>Instagram</i>

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
136	Blogo	Blog identity	Blend: <i>blog</i> + <i>logo</i>
137	scampreneur	Fake entrepreneur	Blend: <i>scam</i> + <i>entrepreneur</i>
138	Sleepover	Informal overnight visit	Blend: <i>sleep</i> + <i>over</i>
139	videoment	Video commentary	Blend: <i>video</i> + <i>comment</i>
140	joketainment	Comedy-based entertainment	Blend: <i>joke</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
141	loveometer	Measure of affection	Blend: <i>love</i> + <i>thermometer</i>
142	edutainment	Educational entertainment	Blend: <i>education</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
143	phonepreneur	Mobile business person	Blend: <i>phone</i> + <i>entrepreneur</i>
144	fashotainment	Fashion-themed entertainment	Blend: <i>fashion</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
145	Gistocrat	Socially elite gossipier	Blend: <i>gist</i> + <i>aristocrat</i>
146	Snackfast	Light breakfast	Blend: <i>snack</i> + <i>breakfast</i>
147	Slanguist	User of slang	Blend: <i>slang</i> + <i>linguist</i>
148	Motovlog	Motor-related vlog	Blend: <i>motor</i> + <i>vlog</i>
149	musictainment	Musical entertainment	Blend: <i>music</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
150	Vloggist	Video blogger	Blend: <i>vlog</i> + <i>gist</i>
151	textpectation	Expectation of a text	Blend: <i>text</i> + <i>expectation</i>
152	Newscast	News broadcast	Blend: <i>news</i> + <i>broadcast</i>

S/N	Word	Meaning/Gloss	Morphological Function/Note
153	Crushship	Romantic admiration	Blend: <i>crush</i> + <i>relationship</i>
154	glamtainment	Glamorous entertainment	Blend: <i>glamour</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
155	showpreneur	Show-based entrepreneur	Blend: <i>show</i> + <i>entrepreneur</i>
156	netizenship	Internet citizenship	Blend: <i>net</i> + <i>citizenship</i>
157	fakespiration	Fake inspiration	Blend: <i>fake</i> + <i>inspiration</i>
158	shoppreneur	Retail entrepreneur	Blend: <i>shop</i> + <i>entrepreneur</i>
159	Gistology	Study of gossip	Blend: <i>gist</i> + <i>sociology</i>
160	techpreneur	Tech-based entrepreneur	Blend: <i>technology</i> + <i>entrepreneur</i>
161	soundscape	Audio environment	Blend: <i>sound</i> + <i>landscape</i>
162	foodpreneur	Food business owner	Blend: <i>food</i> + <i>entrepreneur</i>
163	memetainment	Meme-based entertainment	Blend: <i>meme</i> + <i>entertainment</i>
164	Sleepify	Simplified rest concept	Blend: <i>sleep</i> + <i>simplify</i>
165	mediaverse	Digital media world	Blend: <i>media</i> + <i>universe</i>

F. Borrowing

S/N	Word	Source Language	Meaning/Gloss
166	Sabi	Portuguese (<i>saber</i>)	To know
167	Palava	Portuguese (<i>palavra</i>)	Trouble or problem
168	Wahala	Hausa	Difficulty, problem
169	Chop	Yoruba	Eat
170	Padi	Yoruba	Friend
171	Dash	Hausa	To give freely
172	Yawa	Hausa	Disgrace, mistake
173	Gbeborun	Yoruba	Gossip or informant
174	Maga	Yoruba	Gullible person
175	tolo-tolo	Yoruba	Turkey
176	Suya	Hausa	Grilled meat
177	Kpekere	Yoruba	Fried plantain snack
178	Madam	Portuguese/French	Female superior
179	Garri	Yoruba	Cassava flakes
180	Agbada	Yoruba	Flowing robe
181	Okada	Igbo	Motorcycle transport
182	Kpangolo	Yoruba	Tin can

S/N	Word	Source Language	Meaning/Gloss
183	Kola	Yoruba	Nut used for greeting
184	go-slow	English (localized)	Traffic jam
185	sabi-sabi	Portuguese influence	Know-it-all person
186	Waka	Yoruba	To walk
187	Ogbonge	Yoruba	Excellent, original
188	Kpokpo	Itsekiri	Local snack texture
189	Kpof	Yoruba	Explode, burst
190	Ajebutter	Yoruba	Privileged child
191	Alhaji	Hausa	Muslim pilgrim (title)
192	Tokunbo	Yoruba	Second-hand item
193	Sef	Yoruba	Emphasis marker ("even")
194	Hala	Hausa	To shout or call out
195	Kpem	Yoruba onomatopoeia	Gunshot or burst sound
196	Wahler	Hausa influence	Noise maker
197	Bros	Yoruba	Elder brother, senior friend
198	Oga	Yoruba	Boss, superior

S/N	Word	Source Language	Meaning/Gloss
199	Madam	Portuguese	Female boss
200	Tori	Hausa	Story or gist

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

A. Purpose of the Protocol

This appendix outlines the structured method used to collect natural data on **word formation processes in Benin Pidgin**.

The goal of the interview and observation sessions was to obtain authentic lexical items, everyday expressions, and morphological innovations used by native or habitual Benin Pidgin speakers in informal and semi-formal contexts.

B. Participants

- **Population:** Adult and youth speakers of Benin Pidgin living in Benin City and its environs.
- **Sample Size:** 20 participants (12 males and 8 females) aged between 18 and 55.
- **Selection Criteria:**
 1. Daily users of Benin Pidgin in social, academic, or market interactions.
 2. Representing diverse socioeconomic and educational backgrounds.
 3. Willingness to be recorded and observed in natural conversation.

C. Research Instruments

1. **Semi-Structured Interview** **Guide:**
 Designed to elicit native lexical forms, new word coinages, and morphologically creative expressions in Benin Pidgin.
2. **Non-Participant Observation** **Sheet:**
 Used to record naturally occurring speech in markets, motor parks, university campuses, and entertainment settings.
3. **Audio Recorder / Field Notes:**
 For capturing pronunciation, tone patterns, and speaker creativity.

D. Interview Guide (Sample Questions)

Section	Focus	Sample Questions
1. Demographic Information	Speaker background	What part of Benin City are you from? How long have you spoken Pidgin?
2. Language Use	Domains of Benin Pidgin	When do you usually speak Benin Pidgin—home, school, market, or work?
3. Lexical Creation	Word formation awareness	Can you mention some new Pidgin words you and your friends use often?
4. Reduplication	Structural pattern	Why do people say “ <i>small-small</i> ” or “ <i>kpata-</i> ”

Section	Focus	Sample Questions
		<i>kpata</i> ” instead of just “ <i>small</i> ”?
5. Compounding	Lexical innovation	How did words like “ <i>kpako man</i> ” or “ <i>kpangolo house</i> ” become common in Benin?
6. Affixation	Morphological extension	Have you heard people use words like “ <i>sabiabie</i> ” or “ <i>wahalaism</i> ”? What do they mean?
7. Borrowing	Source of vocabulary	Which local words come from Edo or Yoruba in Benin Pidgin speech?
8. Usage Context	Pragmatic function	When do you prefer Benin Pidgin over English? Why?
9. Identity & Culture	Sociolinguistic meaning	Do you think speaking Benin Pidgin shows that a person is local, proud, or educated?
10. Creativity	Innovation & youth slang	What new words have you heard on campus, in music, or on social media?

E. Observation Checklist

Observation Focus	Indicators

Observation Focus	Indicators
Setting	Market, campus, taxi park, social event
Speaker Demographics	Age, gender, occupation, fluency level
Language Context	Code-switching with English or Edo
Morphological Process	Reduplication, compounding, affixation, clipping, blending, borrowing
Communicative Purpose	Humor, emphasis, insult, endearment, identity marker
Example Captured	Spontaneous Benin Pidgin words or phrases
Sociocultural Note	Cultural meanings tied to expressions

F. Ethical Considerations

- Participants were informed of the study's purpose and assured that their identities would remain confidential.
- All audio recordings were used strictly for academic analysis.
- Verbal consent was obtained prior to each recording or observation.

G. Duration and Setting

- **Fieldwork Duration:** Four weeks (two weeks of interviews and two weeks of observation).
- **Primary Locations:** Oba Market, University of Benin Campus, Ugbowo Motor Park, and Ring Road area.
- **Language Environment:** Predominantly Benin Pidgin mixed with Edo and Nigerian English.

H. Data Handling

All recorded words and phrases were transcribed and classified according to the **Lexical Morphology Theory**, focusing on the morphological level (stem derivation, compounding, reduplication, affixation, and lexical borrowing).

Each example that emerged from interviews or observations was later verified by at least two native Benin Pidgin speakers for semantic accuracy and frequency of use.

APPENDIX III: SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: *Word Formation Processes in Benin Pidgin*

Section A – Demographic Information

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: _____

3. Occupation: _____
4. Region/Tribe: _____
5. Languages Spoken: _____

Section B – Linguistic Awareness

1. How often do you use Benin Pidgin in conversation?
(a) Always (b) Often (c) Sometimes (d) Rarely
2. Where do you mostly use Benin Pidgin?
(a) Home (b) Market (c) School (d) Workplace (e) Social media
3. What new Benin Pidgin words have you heard or used recently?
4. Which of the following word types do you recognize more?
(a) Reduplicated words (b) Compounds (c) Borrowed words (d) Blends
5. Do you think new Pidgin words make the language richer and more expressive?
6. Should Benin Pidgin be recognized officially and taught in schools? Why or why not?

APPENDIX IV: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research followed ethical procedures consistent with academic standards and the University of Benin's guidelines.

- Participants were informed of the study's purpose and scope.

- No personal data or identities were recorded.
- Participation was entirely voluntary and anonymous.
- The data collected were used solely for academic purposes.
- Proper acknowledgements were given to all referenced authors and sources.

APPENDIX V: RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION

Throughout the course of this research, the researcher observed that **Benin Pidgin** is not only a linguistic tool but also a **symbol of social identity and creativity**. Its speakers, drawn from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, continually innovate new words that reflect changing realities and contemporary Benin experiences.

Processes such as **reduplication**, **compounding**, and **borrowing** illustrate how Benin Pidgin evolves dynamically, absorbing elements from English, Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, and other local languages. These morphological innovations make the language highly expressive, adaptive, and reflective of the vibrant sociocultural environment in which it thrives.

The study also revealed that many speakers of Benin Pidgin consciously use creative word formations to establish belonging, humor, and identity. As such, the language continues to challenge traditional linguistic hierarchies, proving that so-called “nonstandard” varieties possess complex grammatical and morphological structures deserving of academic recognition.

