

Bello S. Y. Al-Hassan
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Does Hausa Really Have Infixation?*

Abstract

Hausa is often indicated with the three most common types of affix, viz. prefix, infix and suffix. Whereas the availableness of prefixes and suffixes in the language is not in doubt, that of infixes may have resulted from erroneous perspectives. The so-called infixes in Hausa are, in truth, a relay of suffixes that became obscured by phonology or deletion, envisaged parallactically as infixation. In two other instances, infixation either arose as a simple case of unscrupulous use of terminology or was established on a seemingly irrelevant premise, namely the non-occurrence of a tonal phenomenon. Conclusively, the existence of infixation in Hausa is extra-evidential, and therefore questionable.

*I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Đalhatu Muhammad, my teacher and agile critic in Zaria, for his thoroughgoing observations. I thank Stephanie Maiwald, my bosom friend, for optimistically and tirelessly procuring hard-to-get linguistic articles for me. To Prof. Herrmann Jungrathmayr, my teacher in Frankfurt, without whose unrelenting encouragement this paper would not have been written, I say, "Nehmen Sie meine Dankbarkeit an", and having missed the ceremony in Frankfurt, I commit this article to my personal celebration of his 75th birthday.

1. Introduction¹

This paper aims at demonstrating that there is no infixation in Hausa by subjecting the so-called instances of infixation to intensive scrutiny and providing alternative explanations that account for the linguistic phenomena mistaken for infixation, to show that Hausa does not contain any such morphology.

Infixation tends to be an elusive and illusive phenomenon in language. Allusions to its peculiarity are found in Mathews (1974: 125), Marantz (1982: 45 fn.) and Newman (1990: 46; 2000: 431), for instance. It is probably this seemingly enigmatic nature of infixation, plus its absence in the best known modern languages of the world, that justifies Sapir's (1970: 72) alluding to it as "a very curious type of affixation" which he describes further as "utterly unknown in English²."

For the description of infixation, a good starting point could be Mathews (1974: 126) who provides contrastive insight into the nature of the three most common types of affixation thus "in infixation the internal structure of the operand is [...] broken into, whereas in prefixation and suffixation it is left intact". Sequel to this description, it is now possible to forge ahead and define infixation as a morphological process by which an affix is admitted into a root (Crystal 1987: 243)³.

¹ I wish to acknowledge the contribution of a *SAL* reviewer, a Hausaist of sterling knowledgeability, who, in spite of his/her critical observations, recommended the earlier version of this paper for publication. The reviewer's suggestions, even where disagreeable, were kept in view and have ultimately influenced the decision to split the original paper into the current one, purely on infixation, and a forthcoming one dealing with transfixation. I hope he/she finds the modifications in tandem with his/her perspective.

² Crystal (1987: 90) indicates an outlandish instance of infixation in English: 'abso-blooming-lutely', which he says - as is the case with all 'expletive infixation' in English - is only for emphatic purposes.

³ Some definitions of infixation had to be scouted on the account of either superfluity or vagueness. Crystal (1991: 176) explains infix as "[...] an affix which is added within a root or a *stem*." Trask (1996: 178) refers to it as "[...] an affix which occupies a position in which it interrupts another *morpheme*." Whereas Mathews (1997: 178) defines it as "[an] affix or bound morpheme which is inserted within another *form*", Haspelmath (2002: 19)

2. The so-called infixation in Hausa

For the purpose of this paper, the types of infixal cases indicated for Hausa will be divided into two, viz. traditional and other cases of infixation. Traditional infixation will refer to such cases of infixation in Hausa as, from the experience of the current author, have gained general acceptance in publications and other formal and non-formal forums of Hausa grammatical discussion. Such cases are found in, for instance, Abubakar (2000), Wolff (1993), Schuh (1983), and Leben (1976 and 1977), being samples of serious enterprise in Hausa grammar. This category of infixes is comprised of vowels only, which are **-aa-**, **-ee-**, **-oo-**, and **-u-**. Other cases of infixation, on the other hand, will refer to such cases as represent individual positions that have either not attracted much attention or gained general recognition as infixal instances in the Hausa linguistic scholarship. The likes of these cases of infixation are found in Abubakar (2000), Leben (1976 and 1977), Zarruk (1996) and Newman (2000). The relevant infixes are made up of the vowel **-i-**, **-C-** as any operating consonant, and the following combinations of consonants and vowels, **-CV-**, **-CCV-** and **-CVC-**.

2.1. Traditional infixation

2.1.1. Inventory of infixes

-aa- infixation

Instances of *-aa-* infixation are found in Leben (1976: 433; 1977: 92), Schuh (1983: 12), Wolff (1993: 181, 183) and Abubakar (2000: 4), with such cases as *kírtù* ‘recruit’ > *kíràátáá*, *kwálbáá* ‘bottle’ > *kwáàbéé*, *bírní* ‘city’ > *bírànéé*, *gúrgùù* ‘cripple’ > *gúràgúú*, *dámóó* ‘monitor lizard’ > *dámàméé*, *káfàà* ‘foot’ > *káfàfiú* and *tsúiwèè* ‘testicle’ > *tsúwàwíú*.

says it “occurs inside the *base*.” All the highlighted words in these definitions (emphasis current author’s) imply more than the root. For instance, both *morpheme* and *form* may mean either root or affix (which includes infix itself). As no instance of infixation occurring outside the root has ever been discussed and demonstrated so far in language, these otherwise useable definitions had to be considered unsafe.

-ee- infixation

Cases of -ee- infixation can be found in Abubakar (2000: 4), Wolff (1993: 187ff.) and include *gàrmáá* ‘plough’ > *gàrèémáníí*, *gàrwáá* ‘four-gallon can’ > *gàrèèwáníí* and *sàlkáá* ‘skin bottle’ > *sálèèkáníí*.

-oo- infixation

Instances of -oo- infixation are to be seen in Leben (1976: 424) and Wolff (1993: 183) which, among others, are *táágàà* ‘window’ > *tááógóogíí*, *bàràà* ‘servant’ > *bàróórii*, *táásàà* ‘metal basin’ > *táásóóshíí*, *dábbàà* ‘animal’ > *dábbóóbíí* and *?iskàà*⁴ ‘spirit’ > *?iskóókíí*.

-u- infixation

Cases of -u- infixation are found in Leben (1976: 430fn.), among which are *tákòòbíí* ‘sword’ > *tákúbàà*, *gààtáaríí* ‘axe’ > *gáátúràà*, and *máágàníí* ‘medicine’ > *máágúnàà*.

The above examples indicate that the most often cited representation of Hausa infixation is found in plural nouns.

2.1.2. Newman’s Pluralization Rule

For the purpose of disconfirming traditional infixation in Hausa, Newman (2000) is tentatively sufficient. Newman (2000: 430ff.) has in a more recent and generally accepted (though not incontrovertible) position in Hausa pluralizational studies explained the morphology of the plural forms indicated in 2.1.1 with infixation as arising from suffixation⁵. The hitherto cited plural forms that were traditionally analyzed as containing -aa-, -oo- and -u- infixes are now explained by Newman as being formed of a composition of the base and a V(V)XVV suffix where the underlined portion represents

⁴ The symbol /ʔ/ represents glottal stop. In traditional orthography, it is not marked in word initial position, whereas in the middle of the word the symbol /ʔ/ stands for it.

⁵ For an alternative interpretation, see Al-Hassan in “Transfixation in Hausa” (in this issue) where the type of plural forms in question is presented as both non-infixal and non-suffixal but transfixal in nature.

the so-called infixes in the 2.1.1 examples⁶. The **X** occurring between two vowels is always either the last consonant of the base (where the base has three consonants as in gúrgùù ‘cripple’ > gúrààgúú, rí-yjìyáá ‘well’ ríyóójíí and gààtárríí ‘axe’ > gáátúràà) or a copy thereof (where the base has two consonants as in dámóó ‘monitor lizard’ dámààméé and táágàà ‘window’ > táágóógúú). Newman’s (2000) suffixal approach coincides with Al-Hassan’s (forthcoming) transfixational approach in that they both indicate the vowels on either side of **X** as co-ordinating elements, thereby excluding any part thereof from the function of infix.

As for the plural forms with the traditionally indicated *-ee-* infixes such as gàrmáá ‘plough’ > gárèèmáníí and sàlkáá ‘skin bottle’ > sálèèkáníí, Newman (2000: 450) opines that they are formed by ‘inserting’ (as opposed to infixing) *-ee-* after the second consonant of the base followed by the suffixation of *-áníí* after the third and final consonant. (Base is underlined in the singular while insertion and suffixation are underlined in the plural above.) Al-Hassan (the other paper in this issue) analyzes these forms as a variety of transfixation, as opposed to infixation.

2.2. Other cases of infixation

2.2.1. Abubakar’s infixation

Abubakar (2000: 4) cites an instance of infixation in Hausa, bááwàà ‘slave-boy’ > báìwáá ‘slave-girl’, which he posits as “the only example [...] in the language [which] indicates transformation from masculine to feminine by infixation of vowel *-i-*.”

Critically examined, the derivation of báìwaa (HL-H) from bááwàà (H-L) may fail to qualify as a case of infixation but some phonological process which turned out to look like infixation at a glance. To show this will necessitate reviewing the possible history of this word.

⁶ It seems in the course of Hausa studies there was a pluralizational approach based in broken affixation with the insertion of a marked consonant that became redundant because of some inadequacies (see: Leben 1977: 95). Newman’s (2000: 430ff.) approach could be a revision.

The feminine counterpart of *bááwàà* (H-L) was initially derived by adding the feminine suffix *-iyáá* to the root *baaw-* which would render the form as *bááwìyáá* (H-L-H). This form later underwent the deletion of the initial vowel of the suffix and the retention of its tone, which move subsequently forced the vowel of the first syllable to shorten to *baw-* (as Hausa does not allow long vowels in closed syllables) thus giving rise to the form *báwiyáá* (HL-H), still extant in the Sokoto dialect. This form experienced the simplification of the first syllable from *baw-* to *boo-* as is the case with such syllables in Hausa⁷. The *-y-* of *bóòyáá* (HL-H) then became radicalized in some dialects like Kano thus losing its feminine suffix function and rendering *bóòy-* (HL-) into a renovated root in need of a feminine suffix. This time around *-wáá* became the suffix, giving rise to the form *bóòywáá*. Hausa language with its rule of vowel shortening and lowering in closed syllables would automatically replace the *-oo-* with *-a-* in the first syllable, which would now transform into *bay-*. With the new feminine suffix *-wa* the resultant form would be *báywáá* (HL-H), rendered conventionally as *báìwáá* (HL-H), and therefore making the *-i-* liable to (erroneous) analysis as an infix⁸. Like in the case of *-uu* in *gúrààgúú* (< *gúrgùù* ‘cripple’ (section 2.1.2)), the *-waa* of *bááwàà*/*báìwáá* is not part of the singular form. That it bears resemblance to the one in the singular form is just another disastrous coincidence in the phonology of Hausa.

⁷ Wolff (1993: 181) and Newman (2000: 433) show how *daw-* > *doo-* in **dawkii* > *dóókii* with the *daw-* form re-emerging in the plural form *dáwáákíí*.

⁸ The exhaustive *SAL* reviewer made the tempting suggestion [communication with David Odden, Editor *SAL*, Aug. 23, 2007] that, “If, for the purpose of exposition, one transcribes the glide part of diphthongs as semivowels, then it is clear that *baywa* is simply *bawya* with metathesis of the *y* and *w*.” Because of its simplicity, this is a very seductive theory which the current author had earlier on considered but discarded because the sequence *-wy-* (unlike *-yw-* in *saywa* ‘root’ > *sawya*) could not be found to be metathesized anywhere in both standard and non-standard Hausa. Caught between simplicity and plausibility, the current author lent more weight to the latter.

2.2.2. Zarruk's infixation

Zarruk (1996: 81) presents the following pairs to exemplify infixation in Hausa. The supposed infixes are underlined below:

<i>báárèè</i>	>	<i>bá<u>ntà</u>rée</i>	'to decorticate'
<i>cúúsàà</i>	>	<i>cú<u>nkù</u>sáá</i>	'to stuff'
<i>túúràà</i>	>	<i>tú<u>nzù</u>ráá</i>	'to instigate'
<i>múr dǎà</i>	>	<i>mú<u>rgù</u>dǎá</i>	'to twist'
<i>cáábàà</i>	>	<i>cá<u>ákù</u>báá</i>	'to make marshy'
<i>lááshéé</i>	>	<i>lá<u>ámù</u>shéé</i>	'to devour (food)'

Explaining these pairs as not exhibiting infixation will involve an over-simplified discussion of a category of Hausa words that can tentatively be referred to as onomatopoeic verbs (henceforth OV^s; see “Transfixation in Hausa” in this issue). The OV^s are composed of three parts which in linear order are the prefix, the root and the suffix. The identity index of the prefix is its structure as a characteristically heavy syllable, mainly CVC and seldom CVV, where the last C in the CVC sequence must be an alveolar. The prefixes in the above cases are *cun-*, *tun-*, *ban-*, *laa-* and *caa-*. On the other hand, the identity index of the root is its CVC structure within which must be contained at least one alveolar or velar sound which can be modified through either secondary articulation or (de)voicing, or both. The roots in the above cases are *-kus-*, *-zur-*, *-tar*, *-mus-* and *-kud̥*. The suffix is simply the Hausa verbal grade termination which will henceforth be indicated as *V*. Note that both the prefixal and root vowels fluctuate with accompanying semantic nuances and phonological implications such as vowel harmony. The onomatopoeia in the verbs is contained in the prefixes (see Jungraithmayr 1970). Most of the linguistic traits discussed above can be identified in the samples of OV^s below where two examples each of prefix and root will be used to elucidate the argument made here. Fully derived lexical items have H-L-H tone pattern.

2.2.2.1. Prefixes

- *tun-*, *tan-* ‘forth’; ‘sideways’, e.g.:

tunzurV ‘instigate’ (lit. push sb. forth), *tundukV* ‘uproot’; ‘depose’ *tuntsurV* ‘topple’; ‘fall over’, *tungumV* ‘take up’ (lit. ‘hug forth’), *tunkuyV* ‘butt’; ‘gore’ (lit. ‘knock forth’), *tuntudV* ‘to stumble’ (lit. ‘slip forth’), *tankadV* ‘to propel’; ‘jolt’, *tangadV* ‘to sway’; ‘stagger’, *tangalV* ‘to prop up’ (lit. ‘support forth’), *tanḵwarV* ‘to bend’, *tanḵwasV* ‘to bend’, **tanlabV* (> *tallaba*) ‘to carry’; ‘support on the palm’ (lit. ‘prop up’), **tanlafV* (> *tallafV*) ‘to support’ (lit. ‘prop up’)

- *laa-* ‘lightly’; superficially, *loo-* ‘weakly’, e.g.:

laamusV ‘to flatten’; ‘smoothen’; ‘clear’, *laafatV* ‘to stroke’, *laakutV* ‘to scrape (with the finger)’, *laakumV* ‘to cut quantity/size’, *laaguda* ‘to soften by handling’, *laaluba to* ‘groped around’, *loogayV* ‘to soften’; ‘become limp (SK)’, *loosarV* ‘to wither’

2.2.2.2 Roots

-*kaḵ-*, *kat-*, *-kiḵ-*, *-kit-*, *-kuḵ-*, *-kut-*, *-kwaḵ-*, *-gaḵ-*, *-gat-*, *-giḵ-*, *-git-*, *-gut-*, *-guḵ-*, *-gwaḵ-*, *-gyaḵ-* ‘to stir’; ‘move’; ‘shake’, as in:

bankadV ‘to knock aside’, *hankadV* ‘to lift up by the edge’, *markadV* ‘to grind’; ‘slew round’, *tankadV* ‘to jolt’, *wankadV* ‘to pour upon’, *zan-/zarkadV* ‘to abuse profusely’ (lit. ‘rattle verbally’), *barkatV* ‘to scatter’ (lit. ‘move indiscriminately’), *ḵarkatV* ‘achieve’ (i.e. ‘to move impactfully’) *tarkatV* ‘gather’ (lit. ‘move together’), *birkiḵdV* ‘to turn over; roll’, *birkitV* ‘to turn over/round’, *jirkitV* ‘to turn over/round’, *bunkudV* ‘to throw sand or powdery matter’ *tunkudV* ‘to push’, *zaakudV* ‘to mix contents by jolting container’, *zunkudV* ‘hitch sth. up’ *burkutV* ‘to upset’ (lit. ‘move round’), *runkutV* ‘to collapse’, *malkwadV* ‘to dent’, *rangadV* ‘to strike down’ (lit. ‘swing a blow upon sb.’), **targadV* (> *tárgáḵdèè* ‘a sprain’) ‘to dislocate’ (lit. ‘disu-

nite’), *taagadV* ‘poke a stick into a hole’, *balgatV* ‘to break off’, *firgitV* ‘to frighten’ (lit. ‘rattle sb. psychologically’), *mirgidV* ‘to twist’ (‘out of shape’), *rangwadV* ‘to sway’; ‘swagger’, *murgudV* ‘to twist’, *bulgutV* ‘to gossip’ (lit. ‘break off a piece of information’), *gyangyadV* ‘to nod from sleep’ (lit. ‘to sway’)

-kus-, -kis-, -kus-, kwas-, -gis-, -gaz-, giz- ‘to force (down)’:

cunkusV ‘to stuff’, *cinkisV* ‘to stuff’, *durkusV* ‘kneel/bow down’ (lit. ‘press down’) *murkusV* ‘to (fiercely) overcome’ (lit. ‘roll down’), *lan kwasV* ‘to bend’, *malkwasV* ‘to bend’, *rankwasV* ‘to hit with the knuckles’ (lit. ‘dent’), *tan kwasV* ‘to bend’, *dingisV* ‘to limp’, *bangazV* ‘to collide with’, **rangazV* (> *rángájíí* ‘swaying’) ‘to sway’ / ‘swagger’, *taagazV* ‘to make effort’ (lit. ‘stretch’ / ‘strain’ / ‘exert oneself’), *ʔaagazaa* ‘to assist’ (lit. ‘to stretch’ / ‘strain’ / ‘exert oneself altruistically’), *ʔangazV* (SK) ‘to nod from sleepiness’ (lit. ‘to push’), *wargazV* ‘to scatter’ (lit. ‘force things free’) *ʔingizV* ‘to push’, *maagizV* ‘to jolt sb.’, *dinguzV* ‘to push’.

On closer examination, Zarruk’s CCV infixes such as *nta*, *nku*, *nzu* in *bantaree*, *cunkusaa* and *tunzuraa* respectively are made up of the last segment of prefix and the first two segments of root, whereas the CV types like *gu*, *ku* and *mu* in *murgudaa*, *caakudaa* and *laamusee* are comprised of the first two segments of root. The apparent cross-morphemic and root-initial abstractions of Zarruk’s CCV and CV forms respectively exclude them from any infixal status – they are no morphological units! Alternatively, it is the longer forms of Zarruk’s (1996: 81) pairs that gave rise to the shorter ones via segmental retrenchment, otherwise deletion, and not the other way round through infixation.

2.2.3. Leben's infixation

Leben (1976: 433) says about such pairs as *birnii* ('city') > *bi-raanee* ('cities') and *kaskoo* ('earthen bowl') > *kasaakee* ('earthen bowls') that: "[...]The plurals contain the infix *-aa-* and the suffix *-ee*." According to Leben (1976: 433): "Newman's infixation rule places *-aa-* directly after the second consonant of the root", as a result of which CVCC- roots like *birn-* and *kask-* give rise to plurals of the form CVC-*aa*-C-*ee*. The placing of *-aa-* after the second consonant of a root like *kask* to render it into *kasaak* is what, in Leben's opinion, constitutes "Newman's infixation". Newman's (2000: 430ff.) pluralization rule, as described in 2.1.2. above, makes Leben's "Newman's infixation" doubtful. However Leben (1976: 435) formulates another infixation rule thus:

$$[[XCC]_{R-V-V}]_{pl} \Rightarrow [[XC]_{R-V-C-V}]_{pl}$$

1 2 3 4 5 1 2 4 3 5

which he simplifies in Leben (1977: 92 ; 100) to C-*aa-ee* > *aa-C-ee*. In this case, which he styled "preliminary infixation", the *aa-ee* broken morph is a suffix which, added to a root such as *kask-* to become *kaskaa-ee*, necessitates the placing of the final consonant of the root which is *k* into the gap provided by the *aa-ee* broken suffix, with *kàsààkée* as the resultant form. The placing of *k* into the broken suffix is Leben's 'preliminary infixation'.

That Leben must have lost track of his own analysis could be seen in the fact that in Leben (1976: 433) *aa-ee* is analyzed as a combination of infix and suffix whereas in Leben (1977: 92 ; 95) the form is presented as one discontinuous affix, specifically a suffix. Also describing the underlined *k* in the plural form *kàsààkée* as part of the root in the so-called Newman's infixation but as infix in the so-called preliminary infixation indicates arbitrariness. Finally, Leben failed to realize that in the fully derived form *kàsààkée* his Newman's infixation and preliminary infixation sit side by side, rendering the analysis rather doubtful.

Theoretically speaking, the *aa* and *k* in *kàsààkée* would still not represent infixation in Hausa, or in language generally, because the two controversial segments are, by both definition and function,

not affixes. In other words, they are not identifiable morphological materials attachable to a morphological base to which they contribute additional meanings. If they are not affixes in the first place, they can then not be infixes at all. Thus *aa* would be better analyzed as the first component of the *aa--ee* affix. As for the radical element *k*, this form of insertion, where an element in the base hops over to settle between elements outside the base, is not covered by any of the Greek terms (viz. prothesis, anaptyxis, excrescence, paragoge) denoting epenthesis.

Leben's major error consists basically in his identification of infix outside the root which introduces a peculiarity into the structure of Hausa since it contradicts both the theory and practice of infixation across languages.

2.2.4. Newman's infixation

Newman (2000: 430) introduces his infixal case thus:

My former view (as reflected in earlier writings) was that such reduplicated plurals as **cikunkunā** 'bellies' and **kwanunnukā** 'pans' should be analyzed in terms of two-syllable reduplication to the right, with dropping of the stem-final vowel, as is normal in Hausa derivation and inflection, i.e., ***cikun(ā)kunā** and ***kwānuk(ā)nukā** respectively. I am now convinced that infixal -CVC- reduplication in antepenultimate position, i.e. **ci-kun-kunā** is indeed the right analysis, both for plural nouns and for pluractional verbs...

Newman (2000) bases his current position on the following observations: "First, tone in Hausa is very stable and tends to be preserved when vowels are dropped. Thus, a structure of the type ***cikun(ā)kunā** would be expected to surface with a falling tone on

⁹ Schuh (1983: 13) is probably the first person to indicate infixation in such forms with *ta-far-fasa* (< *tafasa*) 'to boil-intensive' and *ma-gan-ganu* (< **maganu*) 'talks'/'issues' as examples. However, the fact that he indicates suffixation with the same words (in the same page) thus *tafar-fas-a* and *magan-gan-u* suggests that the analysis was purely for pedagogic purposes and tentative. Note the rhotacism in *tafas-* > *tafar-*.

the antepenultimate syllable, i.e. ****cikûnkunà** which is not what one finds. Second, there are plurals with internal -CVC- reduplication that parallel plurals with vowel insertion. These latter plurals allow one to see clearly that the expansion is in antepenultimate position; compare **kāyàyyakī** (<***kāyakī**), pl. **kāyā** ‘load’ + **akī**, with **garēmanī** (<***garmanī**), pl. of **garmā** ‘large hoe’ + **anī**” (Newman 2000: 430ff.).

The problem with Newman’s explanation is that it is based on a rule that seems not to occur in the morphological environment it is expected. The tone retention rule is a by-product of deletion as pure phonology and not of morphophonology. Thus it applies only to fully-derived forms (i.e. after the morphology is accomplished) and not forms being morphologically processed. For this reason the rule could apply to *ráyì* ‘life’ > *rài*, *zóóbèè* ‘ring’ > **zóóbààbáá* (H-L-H) > *zòbbáá*¹⁰(HL-H) after the deletion of the underlined vowel as a simple phonological incident. The phenomenon features in nouns like **béélà(à)-béélàà* (H-L-H-L) > *bâl-béélàà* (HL-H-L) ‘cattle egret’ also as phonology, i.e. deletion and not morphophonology as suggested by Newman (2000: 430). (See *bááwàà* (H-L) ‘slave-boy’ > *báìwáá* (HL-H) ‘slave-girl’ in 2.3.1 above also testifying to this). Yet this rule fails to apply in the morphological transition *ráyì/ráyùkàà* ‘life’/‘lives’ (H-L)/(H-H-L) and *kwáánòò/kwáánúkàà* ‘pan/pans’) which, by Newman’s rule, should have been (H-L/*HL-H-L). For Newman to expect the tone-retention rule in *cíkúnàà* > *cíkúnkúnàà* (H-H-L)/(H-H-H-L) and *kwáánúkàà* > *kwáánúnnúkàà* (H-H-L)/(H-H-H-L) to evidence tone retention is a gross oversight – which is very much unlike Newman – since the

¹⁰ Newman (2000: 441) says about this case that, “In an earlier work (Newman 1972b), I suggested that the reduplicated suffix was **-āCā*^{HLH} with a long penultimate vowel. This has to be wrong. The principle of syllable-weight polarity and the phonetic naturalness of the syncope rule indicate clearly that the historically lost vowel had to have been short.” Contrary to this view, the Hausa words *sàwríí* ‘youths’ and *bàtáwyyèè* ‘a twin’ were derived from *sàmààrìí* and *bàtágwááyèè* respectively via the deletion of the underlined long vowels and the occurrence of Klingenheben’s rule on the preceding *m* and *g* respectively (see Schuh 1972: 391; 394).

rule could not occur at the earlier pluralizational stage of *cikìì* > *cikkúnàà* (H-L)/(H-H-L) and *kwáánòò* > *kwáámúkàà* (H-L)/(H-H-L) where the morphophonological circumstances are the same as those cited by Newman (2000: 430), i.e. a low-tone syllable following a high-tone syllable loses its vowel during pluralization. Should the rule be working morphophonologically, these plural forms would have been **cikkúnàà* (HL-H-L) and **kwáànúkàà* (HL-H-L) respectively. If the tone retention rule does not really exist or exists only as result of a faulty analysis, then it cannot be cited as evidence for the existence -or lack- of any linguistic phenomenon in Hausa.¹¹

Newman's second point pertaining to "plurals with internal -CVC- reduplication that parallel plurals with vowel insertion" is also inapplicable. In the first instance, "plurals with internal -CVC- reduplication" (like *kááyàyyákíí* < **kaa-yak-yak-ii*) are premised only on the basis of Newman's problematic tonal analysis which is simply incorrect. Secondly, even if their existence could be proved, internal -CVC- reduplication can bear resemblance to vowel insertion only perceptually. In truth, the two occur at different linguistic levels, namely morphology and phonology respectively, which makes it unlikely for one to actually evidence the other theoretically. Thus the only way the *-ee-* insertion in *gárèèmáníí* could "allow one to see clearly that the expansion is in antepenultimate position" in *kááyàyyákíí*, if the distinction between phonology and morphology is blurred. Al-Hassan (1983 and 1998) explains that -CVC- reduplication in Hausa is just a matter of copying the first three or last three segments of the root or of the stem, in the case of double pluralization as in **kaayak-yak-ii* > *kááyàyyákíí*, and prefixing or suffixing

¹¹ Simply put, the problem emanated because Newman (2000: 430) started his analysis at midstream. The morphological chain has three stages, viz: A) *cikìì* 'belly' > B) *cikkúnàà* 'belly' plural > C) *cikúnkúnàà* 'belly' hyperplural. Newman opines that a low-tone retention should have occurred, as a rule, in the transition from stage B) to C). But if the rule were to be, a low-tone retention should also occur in the transition from A) to B) because the conditioning is the same. Of course this rule of tone retention would not occur during pluralization because, as is being suggested here, it is simply phonological and not morphophonological.

respectively. Newman's problematic cases of infixation are easily analyzable as products of double suffixation.

3.1. Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that the *-aa-*, *-ee-* and *-oo-* forms found within certain Hausa plural forms are not infixes, and neither are the *-i-* found in the form *baiwa* 'slave girl', the *-CCV/CV-* segmental sequences in *OV^s* and the C that intervenes between vocalic elements in pluralization, nor the *-CVC-* sequence that occurs in the middle of the so-called pluractionals and the similarly constructed plurals.

The claim for the existence of infixation in Hausa, which arose from doubtful analyses, has failed to stand scrutiny. Thus under rigorous examination, infixation as a morphological construct is – at least on the basis of the afore-reviewed cases – a linguistic mirage in Hausa.

References

- Abubakar A., 2000, *An Introductory Hausa Morphology*, Maiduguri: Department of Languages and Linguistics, University of Maiduguri Desktop Publishing.
- Al-Hassan, B. S. Y., 1983, *Intensivization: A Study of the Phonology and Semantics of a Category of Hausa Reduplicants*, M. A. dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Id., 1988, *Reduplication in the Chadic Languages: a Study of Form and Function*, (*European University Studies*; Series 21: *Linguistics* 191), Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang.
- Id., forthcoming "Transfixation in Hausa."
- Bargery, G. P., 1993, *A Hausa-English Dictionary and English-Hausa Vocabulary*, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.
- Crystal, D., 1987, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Id., 1991, *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haspelmath, M., 2002, *Understanding Morphology*, London: Hodder Education.

Jungrauthmayr, H., 1970, "On Root Augmentation in Hausa" *Journal of African Languages* 9, 83-88.

Leben, W., 1976, "Doubling and Reduplication in Hausa Plurals", in: A. Juilland (ed.), *Linguistic Studies Offered to Joseph Greenberg on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, Saratoga: Anna Libri.

Id., 1977, "Parsing Hausa Plurals", in: Paul Newman and Roxana Ma Newman (eds.), *Papers in Chadic Linguistics*, Leiden: Afrika-Studiecentrum, 89-105.

Marantz, A., 1982, "Re Reduplication", *Linguistic Inquiry* 13, 435-482.

Matthews, P. H., 1974, *Morphology: An Introduction to the Theory of Word-Structure*, London: Cambridge University Press.

Id., 1997, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Newman, P., 1972, "Syllable Weight as a Phonological Variable", *Studies in African Linguistics* 3, 379-97.

Id., 1990, "Nominal and Verbal Plurality in Chadic", (*Publications in African Languages* 12), Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

Id., 2000, *The Hausa Language: An Encyclopedic Reference Grammar*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sapir, E., 1970, *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*, London: Hart-Davis.

Schuh, R. G., 1972, "Rule Inversion in Chadic", *Studies in African Linguistics* 3, 379-97.

Id., 1983, *HA 302: Ilimin Harsuna*, Mimeo, Department of Nigerian and African Languages, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Trask, R. L., 1996, *A Dictionary of Phonetics and Phonology*, London: Routledge.

Wolff, E., 1993, *Referenzgrammatik des Hausa: zur Begleitung des Fremdsprachenunterrichts und zur Einföhrung in das Selbststudium*. Hamburg: LIT.

Zarruk, R. M., 1996, *Aikatau a Nahawun Hausa*, Zaria: Institute of Education Press, Ahmadu Bello University.