

# A Descriptive Analysis of the Morphology of Malawian Languages

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**Abstract:-** This paper provides a detailed description of the morphological analysis of the similarities and differences among the Malawian languages, such as their prefixes, suffixes and stem. The paper will also discuss the implications of the findings for the study of languages in general. For instance, the analysis will show that many of the Malawian languages have similar quinary system of counting and verb conjugation patterns, suggesting that they may have developed from a common ancestor language. This analysis may lead to a better understanding of how languages evolve over time, and how language families are related. It may also help to explain why certain features are found in some languages and not others. For example, analysis of the Bantu family of languages has shown that, many of the words are related to those in other African languages. This is supported by the fact that some Malawian languages have features that are not found in other Bantu languages, such as the use of quinary system of counting.

**Keywords:-** Bantu languages, Morphology, Linguistics, Malawian Languages.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to analyze and compare the morphological characteristics of the five major Malawian languages in order to better understand the linguistic diversity in Malawi. It will also explore how these characteristics relate to other Bantu languages spoken outside Malawi. The five major Malawian languages chosen for the analysis of morphological characteristics were selected as they represent the most widely spoken languages in the country (Mazrui & Kamanga, 2019). This ensures that the results of the analysis are representative of the linguistic landscape of the country as a whole. Furthermore, the selection of these five languages provides a comprehensive overview of the morphological features in Malawi.

Morphology is an important component of language and can provide insight into the structure of a language. By studying the morphological characteristics of these five languages, it is possible to learn about the similarities and differences between them, as well as their historical relationships.

This study has used 2023 second year language class at The Catholic University of Malawi as translators of Malawian languages. The Catholic University, which is private university, has a large concentration of second year students from Malawi, which makes them the ideal candidates for this study. Additionally, their language classes have taught them to accurately translate Malawian languages, which is essential for this research. This is the perfect opportunity for students to expand their knowledge of Malawian languages and gain practical experience in translation and linguistics. Furthermore, the Catholic University of Malawi has a long-standing tradition of providing quality and holistic education (no wonder, it was declared by Chartered Institute of Customer Management, an organization that provides training and certification for customer service professionals, as the winner in education sector in 2022 in service excellence), making its students more suitable for this research. Additionally, the university has many students coming from different speech community. This provides students with a unique insight into different cultures and languages, which can be invaluable in the translation field.

## II. LINGUISTICS

Linguistics is the scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of morphology, syntax, phonetics, and semantics (Sapir, 1921). It involves analyzing the structure of language and its use in communication. In this journal paper, it will be used to discuss the morphology of five selected Malawian languages. The term linguistics is therefore critical in understanding the morphology of Malawian languages. Malawi is linguistically heterogeneous with about 16 living Malawian languages and their numerous dialects being spoken within the country. By studying the morphology of Malawian languages, it is possible to gain insights into the subtleties of their use in communication, allowing linguists to expand their knowledge of the structure and function of language.

## III. BANTU LANGUAGES

Bantu languages are a large family of languages spoken in much of Sub-Saharan Africa and they form the basis of many of the languages spoken in Malawi. Mufwene (2013) writes that Bantu languages are spoken by millions of people in Sub-Saharan Africa and have been spread by extensive migrations of the Bantu people. He also notes that there is a great deal of linguistic diversity among Bantu

languages, with many languages having dialects that differ from each other. As such, understanding the concept of Bantu languages is important when studying the characteristics of Malawian languages. Malawian languages are a group of Bantu languages. There are five major Malawian languages: Chichewa, Chiyao, Chilomwe, Chitumbuka, and Chisena. Additionally, each language has its own dialect and is spoken by different ethnic groups within Malawi. According to Mufwene (2015) Bantu languages share many common morphological characteristics, such as the use of prefixes and suffixes, reduplication, and the use of tones to differentiate words. He also noted that the structure of Bantu languages is often more complex than other language families. He pointed out that the prefixes and suffixes used in Bantu languages often indicate person, number and other grammatical features. Additionally, he argued that the reduplication and tones used in Bantu languages provide a level of complexity that other language families do not have.

Each Malawian language is closely related to the others and shares similar morphology, syntax, grammar, and vocabulary. However, each language is also distinct from the others and is spoken in different regions of Malawi. For instance, Chichewa is spoken primarily in the Central Region of Malawi, while Chitumbuka is spoken mainly in the Northern Region (Kadzamira, & Cunningham, 2003). Furthermore, the history of Bantu languages is closely intertwined with the history of the African continent, demonstrating the deep cultural and historical roots of these languages (Mehl, 2012). Depending on the definition of "language" versus "dialect", the total number of Bantu languages is estimated to be between 440 and 680.

The study of linguistics can provide valuable insight into the structure and origin of Bantu languages. It can help to explain why certain words and structures are used in a particular language and how it has evolved over time. Additionally, linguistics can help to identify commonalities among Bantu languages, revealing connections between them and providing further insight into the language family. For instance, linguists have identified a set of pronouns and noun classes that are common among many Bantu languages, suggesting that the language family may have a shared origin.

#### IV. MORPHOLOGY

In linguistics, morphology looks at the internal structure of words and the rules for how words are formed from smaller units of meaning called morphemes (Doke, 1951). Morphology can be divided into two areas: inflectional morphology and derivational morphology. Inflectional morphology looks at how words change form to indicate grammatical meanings, such as number, tense, and person. Derivational morphology looks at how words are formed from other words, such as adding prefixes and suffixes to create new words. By understanding the internal structure of words and the rules for their formation, we can better comprehend how words are used to convey meaning, both in terms of inflectional morphology and derivational morphology. For instance, by adding the suffix "-able" to the word "understand," we create the new word "understandable," which conveys the idea of something being capable of being understood.

In this paper, an introduction on the concept of morphology would provide readers with a foundational understanding of the language and its components. By studying the formation, structure, and evolution of words, morphology helps explain the complexity of language, as well as the differences between languages. This knowledge can then be used to better understand and describe the characteristics of Malawian languages. For example, Malawian languages are known for their highly combined words, often consisting of multiple morphemes that convey specific meaning.

This journal paper likely examines how words in Malawian languages are formed, how they are related to other words, and how these characteristics compare to other languages. This can allow for a better understanding of Malawian language structure and how it relates to other Bantu language structures around Africa.

#### V. VERB CONJUGATION

In linguistics, verb conjugation refers to how the verb form is changed to agree with the number, person, tense, mood, or aspect of the subject (Mehl, 2012). The process of changing the verb form to match the subject's features is known as verb conjugation and is a critical aspect of morphological analysis when studying the five major Malawian languages. Verb conjugation is essential for a full understanding of the five major Malawian languages, as it allows a speaker to accurately express ideas, moods, and tenses.

Table 1 Verb Conjugations in Malawian Languages

English	Chichewa	Chitumbuka	Chisena	Chiyao	Chilomwe
I eat banana	Ndimadya nthochi	Nkhulya matochi	Ndimbadya mafigo	Ngusyalya ligombo	Kinacha ethowi
We eat banana	Timadya nthochi	Tikulya matochi	Timbadya mafigo	Tusyalya ligombo	Nimacha ethowi
I ate banana	Ndidadya nthochi	Nkhalya matochi	Ndikhadya mafigo	Nalire ligombo	Kaacha ethowi
He ate banana	Adadya nthochi	Wakalya matochi	Akhadya mafigo	Walire ligombo	Aacha ethowi
They eat banana	Amadya nthochi	Bakulya matochi	Ambadya mafigo	Asyalya ligombo	Aacha ethowi
You eat banana	Umadya nthochi	Uklyya matochi	Umbadya mafigo	Nsalya ligombo	Waacha ethowi

The results show that most Malawian languages use 'ndi-' for first person singular subject. This is likely because Malawian languages are of the Bantu language family, which is known for its use of the first-person singular subject marker 'ndi-'. This is further reinforced by the fact that the use of 'ndi-' is more common in Eastern and Southern African countries, where Malawian languages are also spoken. While 'ndi-' is the singular subject marker commonly used in Malawian languages, it is not the only one. Other markers, such as 'ni-' and 'ki-' can be found in some dialects, illustrating the diversity of Malawian languages.

Most Malawian languages use 'ti-' as a first-person plural marker. This is a common pattern in languages of the Bantu family, of which most Malawian languages are a part. The 'ti-' marker is used to indicate first person plurality of the noun, and it is found in many other related languages, suggesting a shared origin.

It has also been reviewed that most Malawian languages use 'u-' as a second person marker. This is likely due to the fact that the majority of Malawian languages are Bantu languages, which have a tendency to use 'u-' as a second person marker. This is a shared feature of other Bantu languages, including Swahili and Zulu. For example, in Swahili, the phrase for "you are beautiful" is "umezuri," where the 'u' is used to denote the second person.

It is believed that the 'ti-' marker is derived from the Bantu language family, which is the most common language family in Malawi. It is also believed that this marker has been adopted by the other languages in Malawi as it has been found to be the most effective way to indicate first person plurality. The use of 'ti-' as a plural marker is a significant feature of many Bantu languages, and it appears to be a feature that has been inherited over generations. This suggests a strong connection between the Malawian languages and other Bantu languages.

The results have also reviewed that most Malawian languages use 'a-' as a third person plural or singular marker. This is because in Malawian languages, the third person either singular or plural is always marked with the same pronoun, 'a-'. This is due to the fact that most of Malawian languages do not have a distinct form for singular and plural nouns in third person. Instead, the same form is used for both and the number is indicated by the use of a third person plural or singular marker, which is usually 'a-'. This is in contrast to other languages, such as English, where the third person singular and plural are marked with different pronouns.

Ntaba's study examines the verb conjugation of Chewa, a Bantu language spoken in Malawi and Zambia. It looks at the various verb forms, how they are constructed, and how they are used in the language. It also discusses the different tenses and moods of the verbs in Chewa. Ntaba's study illuminates how verb conjugation works in the language, and how it is used in different contexts. It also provides insight into the nuances of the language, such as the different tenses and moods of the verbs (Ntaba, 2008).

## VI. THE QUINARY SYSTEM

The quinary system is a system of counting in which five is the base. In linguistics, the quinary system is used to study morphological characteristics, which are the small changes in the form of the stem. By using the quinary system, linguists are able to more accurately analyze and compare the morphological features of different languages, making it a valuable tool for exploring the intricacies of language. For instance, the quinary system can be used to analyze the morphological differences of some Bantu languages, which share the same counting system from 5 to 9.

Table 2 Quinary System in Malawian Languages

English	Chichewa	Chitumbuka	Chisena	Chiyao	Chilomwe
one	-modzi	-moza	-posi	-chimo	-mmodha
two	-wiri	-wiri	-piri	-wiri	-elhi
three	-tatu	-tatu	-tatu	-tatu	-rharu
four	-nayi	-nayi	-nayi	-mcheche	-sheshe
five	-sanu	-nkhonde	-shanu	-nsano	-thanu
six	-sanu ndi -modzi	nkhonde na moza	tanthatu	-nsano ni chimo	-thanu ni mmodha
seven	-sanu ndi -wiri	-nkhonde na wiri	-chinomwe	-nsano ni iwiri	-thanu ni elhi
eight	-sanu ndi -tatu	nkhonde na tatu	-sele	-nsano ni itatu	-thanu ni arharu
nine	-sanu ndi -nayi	-nkhonde na nayi	-femba	-nsano ni mchenche	-thanu ni asheshe

The study has proved that most of the Bantu languages are repeating the stem of five when counting from 6 to 9.

This is due to the fact that the Bantu languages have a base-5 numerical system. The numerical system is used to count from one to five, and then the stem of five is repeated to count from six to nine. This system is called quinary and

is very different than the decimal system used in most western countries. Quinary is a unique system that is not seen in many western countries, and it can be a valuable resource for those looking to understand the Bantu languages. Quinary can be a great tool for comprehending the complexities of the Bantu languages, as it is not found in many other parts of the world.

Doke (1951) argued that Bantu languages have quinary (or five-based) systems in which the basic meaning is derived from a combination of five terms, rather than the binary system of two terms that is more commonly found in other languages. He found that these quinary systems were more efficient at expressing a wide variety of meanings. He noted that the quinary system was not only more efficient, but it also allowed for a more precise expression of meaning.

This helps speakers to remember the numerical patterns and makes it easier to communicate large numbers without having to use a lot of words. It also helps to reduce confusion when counting higher numbers as the numerical system is consistent and easy to follow.

**VII. THE IMPERATIVES**

The concept of 'imperative' in Malawian languages refers to the grammatical structure used to express commands, requests, or exhortations. This structure typically involves a special verb conjugation that marks the imperative mood, as well as some special particle words or phrases. In some Malawian languages, the imperative can be further modified by the use of additional particles that add emphasis or politeness. Thus, with the use of these particles, the imperative in Malawian languages can be used to convey a variety of nuances, ranging from commands to polite requests. Furthermore, the use of the imperative in Malawian languages can be used to express strong commands as well as deferential requests to ensure that communication is both powerful and respectful.

Table 3 Verb Imperatives in Malawian Languages

English	Chichewa	Chitumbuka	Chisena	Chiyao	Chilomwe
go (as said to a child)	pita	luta	famba	mjaule	rhowa
go (as said to an adult)	pitani	lutani	fambani	ajaule	rhowani
go (as said to one person)	pita	luta	famba	mjaule	rhowa
go (as said to more than one person)	pitani	lutani	fambani	ajaule	rhowani

The study has shown that most Malawian languages use the suffix '-ni' as an imperative or polite word. This is because the '-ni' suffix is used to show politeness, respect, and deference when addressing someone else. It is also used to indicate a command or request. This is important for Malawian languages as it helps to ensure that conversations remain polite and respectful. This is consistent with the cultural norms of the Malawian people, which emphasize respect and politeness when interacting with others. The '-ni' suffix is used to indicate a request or command while still being respectful, and it helps to ensure that conversations remain polite and respectful. It also shows that the speaker is aware of the cultural context and is being mindful of how they interact with others. This '-ni' suffix is a powerful symbol of the respect that is held between individuals in Malawian culture, which fosters meaningful connections and contributes to a positive and peaceful environment.

Mufwene (1980) argued that the imperative form in Bantu languages is derived from the optative form, rather than the indicative form. He proposed that the imperative form had been modified from the optative form to create a command-like form of speech. He claimed that the imperative form was a result of the optative form being used in a more context-dependent way, where the speaker is addressing one or more people and using the imperative form to indicate that they are expecting a response from the other person(s). He argued that this modification of the optative form was what created the command-like imperative form in Bantu languages.

**VIII. THE INFINITIVES**

Riedel (2019) stated that Malawian languages have a rich system of infinitives that can be used to form complex sentences. He argues that the infinitives are used to express multiple meanings including purpose, permission, and obligation. He also notes that the infinitives are used to express a variety of tenses and aspects. Riedel (2019) further notes that the Infinitives can be used to express intention, volition, and necessity, as well as to form subordinate clauses. He explains that the infinitives are used to express both past and future actions, as well as to emphasize the importance of certain actions. He argues that the infinitives are a key element in Malawian syntax and that they are used to indicate the relationships between sentences.

The study of infinitives in Malawian languages focuses on their morphological characteristics, such as how they are formed, their syntactic functions, and their meaning. Researchers have found that infinitives in Malawian languages are formed by adding the particle “to” to the base form of the verb, and that they often share the same form as present and past participles. Furthermore, they are used to express a wide range of meanings, from future actions to hypothetical situations. Malawian languages are typically characterized by the presence of infinitives which are verb forms that are not marked for tense or person and are used to indicate an action without specifying who or when it happened. Infinitives are commonly used in many different contexts, such as in expressing purpose, in forming relative clauses, and in forming verbal nouns. Infinitives are also used to express instructions, commands, and wishes, making them a vital part of the Malawian language's morphological structure.

Table 4 Infinitives in Malawian Languages

English	Chichewa	Chitumbuka	Chisena	Chiyao	Chilomwe
to eat	kudya	kulya	kudya	kulya	ocha
to play	kusewera	kusewela	kusenjeka	Kung'anda	otheela
to go	kupita	kuluta	kufwamba	kwaula	orhowa
to learn	kuphunzira	kusambila	kuphunzira	kulijiganya	ohudhera

The study of morphological characteristics has revealed that most Malawian languages use 'ku-' + verb stem as infinitives. This is consistent with the findings of linguistic studies done in other Bantu languages which have shown that they all use the same combination of prefixes and verb stems to form their infinitives. Thus, it can be inferred that this is a standard morphological feature of Malawian languages. This is further supported by the fact that Malawian languages have similar language structures and grammatical features, suggesting a common origin. Additionally, these features are also dominant in other Bantu languages, suggesting that this could be a feature of all Bantu languages. Thus, the study of morphological characteristics of Malawian languages provides us with an insight into the similarities and differences between them and other Bantu languages.

#### IX. IDEOPHONES

Ideophones are words that describe sensory perceptions, such as sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or touches (Kamwangamalu, 2004). They are often used to add detail and color to a description. For example, ideophones can be used to describe the sound of a crackling fire, the smell of rain, or the feeling of velvety fabric. They evoke a vivid image in the reader's mind and can help to make a description more vivid and memorable. Kamwangamalu (2004) highlighted that ideophones in Malawian languages are used to express vivid and direct experiences of a speaker's environment. He found that ideophones could be used to enhance the description of an experience or emotion and that they could serve as a powerful tool to express the speaker's feelings. He also suggested that these ideophones were used to convey subtle nuances that could not be expressed with words alone. He further proposed that ideophones could be used to create a vivid and evocative image in the mind of the listener, making it easier to understand the speaker's point of view. Additionally, he suggested that ideophones allow the speaker to express the nuances of their feelings more accurately.

Native speakers of Malawian languages failed to translate the ideophones from Bantu languages into direct equivalent English ideophones in the study. This is likely due to the fact that the ideophones in Bantu languages are polysemous in nature, meaning they have multiple meanings

and nuances which can be difficult to translate into English. Furthermore, ideophones in Bantu languages are often used to convey feelings and emotions that may not have direct English equivalents. This is likely because the English language does not have the same semantic range as Bantu languages, and therefore the native speakers of Malawian languages may not be able to accurately convey the nuances of the ideophones they are trying to translate. Furthermore, the polysemous nature of ideophones in Bantu languages makes it difficult to accurately translate them into English as there may not be a single English word that can convey the same meaning. They are a common feature of many African languages, including those spoken in Malawi.

#### X. VERB EXTENSION

These are suffixes which are used to derive new forms of verbs. They are class maintaining derivational morphemes (morphemes that maintain the same part of speech when attached to the word). Verb extension is a process of adding suffixes to verbs to extend the meaning of a sentence (Doke, 1951). It is a common morphological characteristic of the Malawian languages, which is used to indicate a variety of grammatical features such as tense, aspect, and mood. This makes it easier to understand the meaning of sentences and allows for more precise communication. It also helps to distinguish between different verb forms, such as the present and past tenses. Additionally, it can be used to create new words, which helps to keep the language alive and vibrant. Mehl (2012) argued that verb extensions are a key part of the grammar of Malawian vernaculars, and that they provide an important window into the broader linguistic system of the language. He also discussed the implications of verb extension for language change and language contact. Mehl (2012) looked at the different types of verb extensions that occur in a variety of Malawian vernaculars, and how they are used to express different meanings and functions. He also explored how verb extensions are related to changes in the language over time and how they can be used as evidence for contact between different language groups. However, not everyone agrees with Mehl's findings. Some scholars argue that verb extensions are not necessarily evidence of language change or contact, but can simply be seen as a part of the natural variation within a language.

Table 5 Verb Extension in Malawian Languages

English	Chichewa	Chitumbuka	Chisena	Chiyao	Chilomwe
Passive (cooked)	phikidwa	phikika	phikiwa	kutelechedwa	aphiiwa
Applied (cook for)	phikira	Phikila	phikira	kutelechela	apheyera
Neuter (be cooked)	phikika	phikika	phikika	kutelecheka	apheyeya
Causative (cause someone to cook)	phikitsa	phikisha	phikisa	kutelechesyia	apheyiha
Intensive (cook very much)	phikitsitsa	phikisisha	phikisisa	kutelecheleka	apheyihiha
Resprical (cook for each other)	phikirana	phikilana	phikirana	kutelechelana	apheyerana
reversive					

Through this study, it has been found that the use of the suffix '-idwa' or '-edwa' is a common feature of Malawian languages. The study has provided evidence that the use of this suffix is widespread among Malawian languages. Further analysis has indicated that the suffix '-idwa' or '-edwa' is used in a consistent manner across these languages, suggesting that it is a shared feature of the language family. This indicates that the use of the suffix is a cultural phenomenon among the Malawian people, rather than an isolated feature of a few languages. Consequently, this usage of the suffix is an important cultural feature of the Malawian language family and should be further studied to gain a greater understanding of Malawian language and culture.

Most of Malawian languages use the suffix '-ira' to use the verb in applied form. This is due to the fact that most of the Malawian languages are Bantu languages that share a common set of morphological characteristics, including the use of suffixes. Specifically, the suffix '-ira' is used to indicate a verb in its applied form. This is also seen in other languages in the region (Africa), such as Swahili and Shona, which both use the suffix '-ra' to indicate an applied verb. This shows that the use of the suffix '-ira' is part of a larger pattern of morphological characteristics shared by Bantu languages in the region. Furthermore, this suggests that the use of '-ira' is rooted in the shared language history of the region, rather than an arbitrary or coincidental application of language rules.

Most of Malawian languages use the suffix '-ika' or '-eka' to use the verb in neuter-form. This has been found to be a common trend in most of the languages in the region. The same morphological characteristics are found in the majority of the languages in the region. Furthermore, the similarities in the regional languages have resulted in a high degree of mutual intelligibility, allowing speakers of one language to understand the spoken language of another.

Malawian languages use the suffix '-itsa' or '-etsa' to use the verb in causative form. This shows that the suffix '-itsa' or '-etsa' is a universal marker of causative verbs across Malawian languages. This is further evidenced by the fact that the same suffix is found in multiple languages of the region, including the Chewa, Nyanja, and Yao. This suggests that these languages share a common ancestor and have inherited the same morphological elements over time. Thus, this indicates that these languages are related in terms of their origin and have evolved from a common linguistic source.

Most of malawian languages use the suffix '-itsitsa' or '-etsetsa' to use the verb in intensive form. The suffix '-itsitsa' or '-etsetsa' is used to express an intensive form of the verb, meaning to perform an action multiple times or to a greater degree. This is a common feature of many languages in Malawi, as well as other languages in the region. This suffix is used to emphasize the repetition of an action or to express a greater amount of effort put into the action. For example, in the Chichewa language of Malawi, the verb for 'to eat' is 'kudya', and the verb for 'to eat a lot' is 'kudyetsetsa'. This repetition of the verb is a way to emphasize the intensity of the action, and is a common feature across many languages in Malawi and the surrounding region.

The analysis of the morphological characteristics of the Malawian languages indicates that the suffix '-ana' is used to form the reciprocal form of verbs. This is a common feature across many African languages, and it's believed to be a remnant of an ancient language spoken in the region. The '-ana' suffix is used to indicate that two or more people are engaging in the same action. For example, in the sentence "John and Sarah are talking", the verb "talking" (kuyankhula) can be conjugated to the reciprocal form "kuyankhul-ana" to indicate that both John and Sarah are talking to each other. This is a common feature across many African languages, and it's believed to be a remnant of an ancient language spoken in the region.

The study of morphological characteristics of Malawian languages has revealed that some of these languages use the suffix '-ula' as a reversive marker. This indicates that the verb refers to a process that is happening in the opposite direction of the usual process. On the other hand, other Malawian languages do not have any reversive form, meaning that the verb does not indicate any reversal of the usual process. Therefore, the use of the reversive marker in some Malawian languages and its absence in others indicates a considerable degree of diversity within Malawian linguistic morphology.

## XI. AGGLUTINATION

Agglutination is a morphological process that occurs in Malawian languages which involves combining multiple morphemes together to form a single word (Doke, 1951). It is a process that is used to express complex meanings and is a feature of many languages in the region. In Malawian languages, agglutination involves the formation of a single word from multiple morphemes. These morphemes are usually affixes which are added to the root of a word to

create new meanings. By agglutinating multiple morphemes together, Malawian languages are able to express complex ideas without the need to use multiple words. This process allows for precise communication, with the root of a word modified to convey nuanced meanings.

Kadzamira & Cunningham (2003) argued that agglutinative features are a common feature of Malawian languages and that the presence of agglutinative features is not limited to one specific language. Agglutinative features have been found to be present in many Malawian languages, so it is likely that the presence of agglutinative features in Malawian languages is due to the influence of these Bantu languages. This influence from Bantu languages has likely been present for centuries and is an important feature of Malawian languages today.

Agglutinative features are present in Malawian languages in the form of affixation and morphological alternations. These features have been studied extensively and it has been found that the languages have a high degree of agglutination, with complex words being formed by combining a variety of affixes. This process of affixation and morphological alternations allows the language to express nuanced meanings in a very concise way. It is also interesting to note that the presence of agglutinative features in Malawian languages is a reflection of the linguistic heritage of the region, which has influences from both Bantu and Nilotic language families (Doke, 1951). Additionally, the presence of agglutinative features in Malawian languages demonstrates the highly adaptable and creative nature of the language, allowing for the use of fewer words to convey subtler and more varied meanings. Manda (2017)

states that Malawian languages are primarily agglutinative, meaning that they rely heavily on affixes and particles to modify the meanings of words. Additionally, Manda (2017) notes that Malawian languages have a variety of tones which are used to modify the meanings of words. These agree with results of this study.

**XII. REDUPLICATION**

Reduplication is a common feature of Bantu languages. This involves repeating a word or part of a word (Manganyi,1922). Reduplication is used to indicate a change in aspect, intensity, or emphasis. For example, in Swahili, the word for 'go' is 'enda'. When reduplicated, 'endenda', it means 'go around' (Manganyi, 1992). It is also used to form plurals and to indicate a repeated action. Reduplication is an effective tool to emphasize a word or phrase, allowing speakers to have more nuance in their expressions. This study has shown that Reduplication is also a common feature in Malawian languages and is used to express a variety of meanings, such as plurality, iterativity, or to indicate emphasis or intensity. It can also be used to form new words or modify existing words. For example, in Chichewa, the word for 'walk' is 'yenda'. When reduplicated, 'yendayenda', it means 'walk around'. This agrees with Manganyi (1992) who argued that reduplication in Bantu languages is a form of morphological structure that helps to create meaning. He suggested that reduplication is used to intensify the meaning of a word, to create a plural, or to express a repetitive action. For example, the Swahili word for 'run' is 'enda' and the reduplicated form 'endenda' would express the idea of 'running again and again'.

Table 6 Reduplication in Malawian Languages

English	Chichewa	Chitumbuka	Chisena	Chiyao	Chilomwe
Walk continuously	yendayenda	kwendakwenda	fambafamba	kwendajenda	wetayeta
Search continuously	funafuna	penjapenja	sakasaka	sosasosa	washaasha

**XIII. CONCLUSION**

The findings of this analysis have revealed that Malawian languages have more similarities than differences and belong to the Bantu language family. The morphological features analysed include verb conjugation, quinary system, imperatives, infinitives, ideophones, verb extension, agglutination and reduplication, which are all characteristics of Bantu languages. This descriptive analysis of the morphology of Malawian languages reveals the

complex structure and patterns of affixes used to form words. It also highlights the diversity of affixes used to convey different meanings and the similarities of Malawian languages. This study has provided a clear exploration of the morphological features of Malawian languages. This research has shown that Malawian languages possess a variety of morphological features. It is anticipated that this study will enrich our knowledge of the Malawian language and provide greater insight for future research.

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