

Original Article

# Nominalization in ÛHÀNMI

Afeez Rokeeb Tunde

*Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.*

afeez.r.1902004033@eksu.edu.ng

Received: 18 July 2025; Revised: 20 August 2025; Accepted: 05 September 2025; Published: 16 September 2025

**Abstract** - Previous studies have shown that nominalization is realized through different strategies. However, the strategies provided in various studies are not exhaustive in covering the construction of nominal expressions in languages of the world. This study investigates nominalization in Ûhànmì, an understudied Edoid language spoken in Ìṣùà-Àkókó of Òndó State. It presents a descriptive account of nominal derivatives in the language. The study explores the existing strategies and other plausible strategies for forming them, the morphological structure of words, and some linguistic characteristics of the nominal expressions. Data for this study were sourced from native speakers of the language. In this paper, it is established that Ûhànmì employs different strategies for forming nominal constructions. It avers that nominal constructions in the language are derived and expressed through prefixation, reduplication, compounding, interfixation, desententialization and clipping. These methods are found to be productive in the formation of nominal expressions in Ûhànmì. The Research is motivated by the gap in the literature, as there is no study on nominalization in the language. The study provides ample data and explanation that adds to our existing linguistic knowledge on nominalization.

**Keywords** - Linguistic, Morphological structure, Nominal, Nominalization, ùhànmì

## 1. Introduction

It cannot be denied that a considerable number of works have been done on the morphological structure of African languages, largely the set of languages spoken in Nigeria. However, the morphological make-up of Edoid languages remains underexplored. The notable works of Elugbe (1973, 1984, 1989), Amayo (1976), Elemelech (1976), Omowuyi (1986), Egbokhare (1990), Donwai (1992), Omozuwa (1997), Aziza (1997), Aziza (2008), Adeniyi (2010), Ekiugbo (2018), and Oladimeji (2010, 2013, 2021, 2022) are the studies available on Edoid languages. The referenced works on Edoid languages are largely available in the area of phonology. The few works on nominalization in Edoid languages that are relevant to the present study are Adeniyi (2010) and Ekiugbo (2018). Adeniyi (2010) examines tone and nominalization in Edo; Ekiugbo (2018) writes on lexical nominalization in Urhobo. The limited Research suggests that the nominalized constructions in Edoid languages have received little scholarly attention. It must be emphasized that the nominal morphology of the language under investigation has not been explored, hence the need for the present study. This Research is the first of such a pioneering attempt to study nominalization in the language.

Nominal expressions, to put it simply, are the linguistic constructions that have nominal properties. They are linguistic structures that are formed through the process of nominalization. Crystal (2008) simply defines nominalization as “the process of forming a noun from some other word class”. Deutchers (2009) defines it as “a process that derives a noun from a verb, that is, to reify a verbal predicate and present it as a nominal argument or modifier”. Nominalization can be classically defined as a derivational process because it changes the lexical category of a word to a different class. Chomsky (1970) noted that two main types of nominalization exist in natural languages; these include lexical and syntactic nominalization. Comrie (2007) writes on lexical



nominalization as a derivational process that creates nouns from lexical verbs and adjectives. The latter definition suggests that this type of derivational process produces forms that belong to the lexical category of nouns. According to Chomsky (1970), Syntactic nominalization refers to the type of nominalization process that creates nominal expressions that do not have lexical status. In this paper, an attempt is made to investigate the lexical nominalization in Ùhànmì. This study shows that lexical nominalization in the language is derived from input elements like verbs, nouns and clauses.

## 2. Literature Review

Cross-linguistically, all languages have distinct ways of forming nominal expressions. The different devices and methods employed for the purpose of nominalization are varied. These varied and distinct ways have contributed to the existing knowledge on language universals and language parameters and our understanding of the typological classification of languages. Having examined tone and nominalization in Edo, Adeniyi (2010) establishes that nouns in the Edo language are formed through nominalizing prefix, which can be any of the following oral vowels (ì, à, ò, ù, ọ̀, è), with a verb, optionally another verb, a noun and optionally another noun.

Earlier claims of Omozuwa (1997) and Aziza (1997) are that only the nominalizing prefix (ọ̀) can serve as nominalizing prefix to derive nominalized forms in the Edo language. Adeniyi (2010), however, refutes this claim and opines that the Edo language makes use of other oral vowels as a nominalizing prefix in the language. Some of the examples that reflect this claim are presented below:

- i.      ọ̀      #      tò      #      òxá      →      ọ̀tòxá  
           Nom. prefix    'tell'    'story'    'a storyteller'
- ii.      í      #      ghẹ́    #      ègbé    →      íghègbè  
           Nom. Prefix    to support' 'body' 'self-support; security'
- iii.      ò      #      só    #      árábà    →      òsòarábà  
           Nom. Prefix    'to tap'    'rubber'    'rubber tapper'
- iv.      è      #      tàlò    →      ètálò  
           Nom. Prefix    'to talk'    'the act of talking'
- v.      ù      #      wú      →      ùwú  
           Nom. Prefix    'die'    'death'
- vi.      à      #      bẹ̀mwẹ̀n    →      àbẹ̀mwẹ̀n  
           Nom. Prefix    'stammer'    'stammerer'

The nominalized constructions have the structure of nominal prefix + verb and noun, and nominal prefix plus a verb. The nominalized outputs are realized through the prefixation of oral vowels, alternatively as nominal prefixes in the language. The work of Adeniyi (2010) shows that not only can ((ọ̀)) perform a nominalizing function, but other oral vowels are also nominalizing prefixes in the language. In this regard, the present study agrees with his submission that prefixation is a productive nominalization strategy in the language, as this is also true of the language under focus.

Ekiugbo (2018) concentrates on a note on lexical nominalization in Urhobo, one of the languages that belong to the Edoid language phylum. His work, among other things, shows the strategies deployed in the derivation of lexical nominalization, as well as the semantics and the level of productivity of the different nominalizing strategies in the Urhobo language. He emphasizes that prefixation is a process of lexical nominalization in the language. He claims that Urhobo has seven nominalizing prefixes, which include (ì, à, ò, ù, ọ̀, è, ẹ). They are exemplified in the following excerpts:

i.	ghoḡho	'happy'	aghoḡho	'happiness'
ii.	ghwu	'die'	ughwu	'death'
iii.	vwerhe	'sleep'	ovwerhe	'sleep'
iv.	ban	'loose'	ẹban	'nakedness'
v.	re	'eat'	ore	'food'
vi.	vughe	'know'	evughe	'recognition'
vii.	churu	'rear'	uchuru	'livestock'
viii.	roro	'think'	iroro	'thought'

The items (ii-viii) are examples of simple verbs plus a prefix, except for item (i), an adjective word in Urhobo. The addition of prefixes to the adjective and verbs derives nouns in the language. It is worth noting that prefixes in the language can also be prefixed to verb + noun to derive nouns. The following extracts confirm this:

i.	si	+	oḡbe	osiḡbe
	'write'		'book'	'secretary'
ii.	ta	+	ota	otota
	'talk'		'word'	'spokesman'
iii.	yoro	+	igho	oyorigho
	'hold'		'money'	'treasurer'

As the items above, which reflect prefix + verb + noun, demonstrate, prefixes in the Urhobo language can also be attached to other structures, such as compound verbs, reduplicated forms of verb stems and adjectives. The following examples evince this:

#### Compound Verbs:

i.	si	+	koko	osikoko
	'draw'		'gather'	'gathering'

#### Prefix + Reduplicated forms of the verb stem:

i.	dje	'show'	'udjedje	'example'
ii.	gun	'judge'	igugu	'gossip'
iii.	ru	'do'	irueru	'activity'
iv.	ve	'promise'	iveve	'promise'

#### Prefix + Adjective:

i.	brabra	'bad'	obrabra	'evil'
ii.	djiro	'cold'	edjiro	'coldness'
iii.	gregron	'tall'	ugrengo	'tallness'
iv.	dan	'sharp'	edan	'sharpness'

Ekiugbo (2018) establishes that three semantic functions can be attributed to the nominalizing prefixes in the Urhobo language; these include agentive, abstractive and instrumental. He claims that the occurrence of the two nominalizing prefixes (o and ọ) is constrained by the vowel harmony rule in the language. The two oral vowels are selected based on features that are shared with other vowels in a linguistic construction. Ekiugbo (ibid) also identifies circumfixation as another nominalization strategy in the Urhobo language. He asserts that circumfixation is employed as a nominalizer in the language.

However, the process is less productive. He adds further that circumfixation in the language has two parts, one occurring at the beginning of a word and another at the end of it. See the extracts below:

- i. sun 'lead' usuo 'government'
- ii. din 'cover' udio 'cover'
- iii. ru 'do' iruo 'job'
- iv mu 'carry' emuo 'carrying/arrest (N)'

Rogers (2018) equally examines nominalization in Nkami, a less studied language belonging to Ghana's Kwa, Niger-Congo language. The scholar asserts that nouns, not only verbs, can serve as the base word for nominalization in the language. The scholar writes that two major types of nominalization exist in the language, namely action and participant. The study shows that participant nominals are derived through suffixation, while action nominals in the language are derived through prefixation, reduplication or compounding.

Eze and Isaac (2023) explore nominalization in Ogba. Ogba is an Igboid language spoken in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. Among others, the scholars show that verbs in the language can be changed to nominals through some morphological strategies, such as affixation (prefixation and suffixation), reduplication and compounding. Essuman (2024) also concentrates on nominalization process in Fante (AKAN). Fante is a dialect spoken in Akan. The dialect belongs to Akan, the largest ethnic group in Ghana. The scholar establishes that affixation and compounding are the dominant methods of morphological processes in the construction of nominals in the dialect. He concludes that these two methods are productive in achieving nominal derivation.

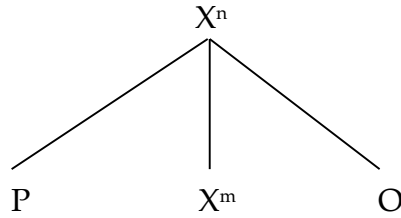
As scholarly as these works are, it is, however, important to point out that the data of Ekiugbo (2018) with respect to prefixes attached to compound verbs to derive nominal forms, as used to support his position, is not substantiated with enough data to convince the reader that the process is robust in the language. As a result, the claim that this type of nominal structure exists in the language is less than convincing. Although Adeniyi (2012) and Ekiugbo's (2018) works have shown that Research has been carried out on nominalization in Edoid languages, the scholars did not look at other possibilities of deriving nominal constructions in Edoid languages. This present study attempts to fill this gap that exists in the literature. The aim of this study is to explore existing processes and other nominalizing strategies in deriving nominal expressions in Ùhànmì with ample data. This attempt will add to the existing knowledge on the subject of nominalization.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

This study deploys headedness theory for the analysis. The offshoot of Headedness theory began with Williams's introduction of Right-hand Head Rule (RHR) in 1981. Scholars such as Williams 1981, Selkirk 1982, Owolabi 1995, Ogunkeye 2002, and others have established that morphologically complex words are predicated to have a head. Headedness is a phenomenon that assumes that between two or more items, one is in some sense ranked as more important than the other.

The notion of the theory is subsumed under the idea that complex or simplex structures have heads that determine the properties of the word. William (1981) proposed a Right-hand Head Rule for the English language. Selkirk (1982), however, argues that 'the Right-hand Head Rule (RHR) proposed by Williams (1981) is not effective to generalize the headedness of English word structure. She provides a revised version, which is represented in the diagram below:

Right-Hand Head Rule (Revised):



In the configuration above, the  $X^n$  serves as the overall compound word.  $X^m$  is the internal item that is proposed to be the head of the entire structure. P and O are other components or modifiers. The rule dictates that in any internal word structure like this, it is the rightmost category that is assumed to be the head, except that something present in P or O already has that same feature. This configuration dictates that it is not just by grammatical relation; the head can also be identified by its position. Despite this revision, Selkirk still contends that the proposed RHR is not general, as it must be emphasized that it is a part of the parameter set for the grammar of the English language.

However, Lieber (1980) observed the Leftheaded type in Vietnamese. The same type is equally noticed by Owolabi (1995a). He writes that the head of morphologically complex nouns in Yorùbá is the left-hand member. This means that languages are characterized by Right-hand Head Rule and Left-Hand Head Rule. Thus, based on the available data, it can be concluded that the head of the morphologically complex nouns in the language under investigation belongs to the left-hand member. See the items below:

Adjective		Noun		
a. vívì	+	òmq`	→	òmq`vívì
black		child		'black child'
b. nq̄sẹ̀	+	òmq`	→	òmq`nq̄sẹ̀
tall		child		'tall child'
c. gínrín	+	àbùà	→	àbùà gínrín
small		dog		'small dog'
d. okéméchi	+	qvì	→	qvì okéméchi
slim		man		'slim man'
e. viẹ̀vì	+	òmq`	→	òmq`viẹ̀vì
bad		child		'bad child'

A good observer would notice that the nouns that serve as the head of the items are situated at the left-side position in the final outputs. This suggests they precede the adjectives that qualify them. This morphological pattern corresponds to the left-hand member that is present in the Yorùbá language. It is important to mention that the left-hand member in Òhànmì contrasts with the right-hand member in English.

#### 4. Research Method

This Research employs a purposive sampling method. Data used for this Research was collected from four native speakers of the language. The speakers fall between the age range of 50 and 70. This is so because they speak the language competently than younger ones. Ìbàdàn 400-word wordlist was modified to reflect nominalization in the language. The data collected were recorded in short and long forms for accurate transcription.

## 5. Result and Discussion

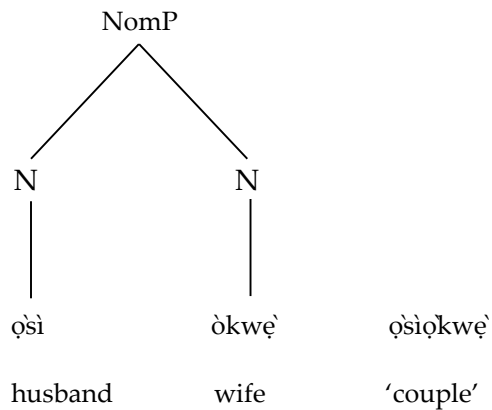
This section discusses the strategies employed in the construction of nominal derivatives in Ûhànmì. It is observed that the language employs compounding, interfixation, prefixation, reduplication, desententialization and clipping as nominalizing strategies in the language. Each of these strategies is discussed below:

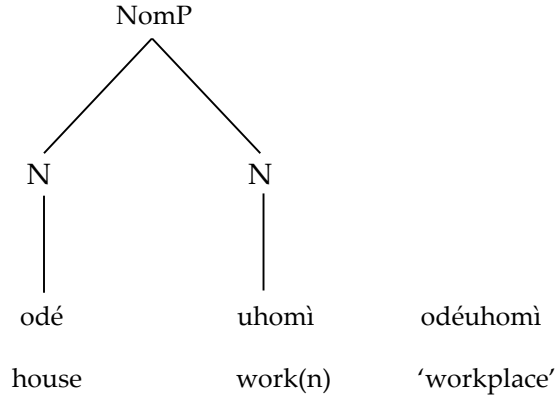
### 5.1. Compounding

Selkirk (1982) writes that ‘compounds in English are a type of word structure made up of two constituents, each belonging to one of the categories of noun, verb or preposition’. Fabb (2001) also defines it as ‘a word which consists of two or more words’. The language under analysis makes use of compounding to form nominal constructions. The following items in the language reflect this.

	Noun	Noun		Noun
i.	avá	ekọ	→	aváekọ
	place	bath (n)		‘bathroom’
ii.	avá	ekọ̀nọ̀mì	→	aváekọ̀nọ̀mì
	place	sickness		‘hospital’
iii.	akọ̀	echì	→	akọ̀echì
	day	market		‘market day’
iv.	edogúgwọ	echì	→	echìedogwúwọ
	night	market		‘night market’
v.	ẹ̀dusà	echì	→	echìedusà
	afternoon	market		‘afternoon market’
vi.	ọ̀mọ̀	ovìè	→	ọ̀mọ̀ovìè
	child	king		‘king’s child’
vii.	ọ̀sì	òkwẹ̀	→	ọ̀sìòkwẹ̀
	husband	wife		‘couple’
viii.	odé	uhomì	→	odéuhomì
	house	work(n)		‘workplace’

The items above have noun-noun structures. Two words with noun-noun structure in the language can be compounded to derive nominal constructions in Ûhànmì as reflected in items (i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, and viii). A few of the items above are illustrated in the configuration trees below.





## 5.2. Interfixation

Osuagwu, Nwozuzu, G.I., and Dike (2007) define interfixation as a process whereby an affix inserted in the middle of a reduplicated form serves as a morpheme linking element. It should be noted that interfixes do not have semantic meanings or content of their own. This means that the meaning is expressed when it is affixed between two root words to derive them as one word. In the language under analysis, we discover that interfixation is employed in the construction of nominal derivatives. Similar to Yorùbá, the language utilizes -ki- as an interfix sandwiched between two nouns of the same root. The following examples reflect this.

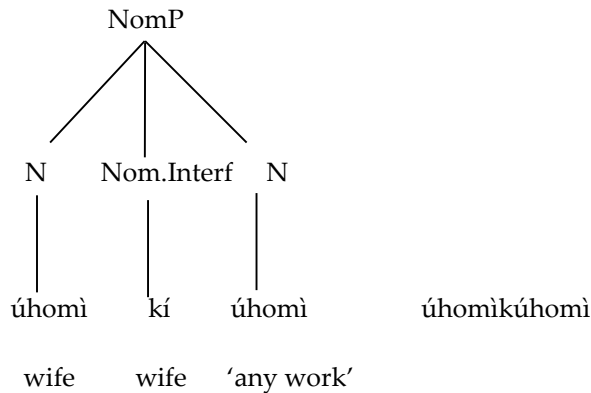
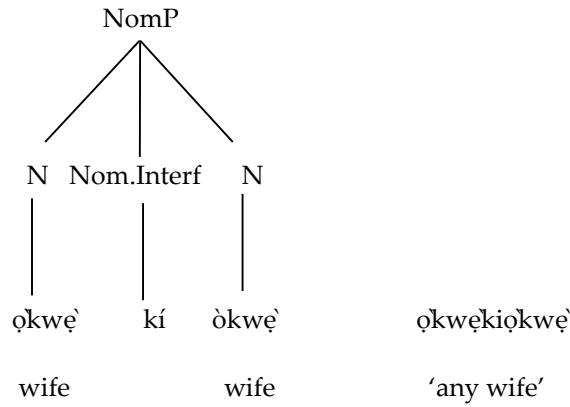
	Noun	Noun		Noun
i.	òkwẹ̀	-ki-	òkwẹ̀	òkwẹ̀kiòkwẹ̀
	wife	-interf-	wife	'any wife'
ii.	úhomì	-ki-	úhomì	úhomìkúhomì
	work	-interf-	work	'any work'
iii.	ozò	-ki-	ozò	ozòkózò
	water	-interf-	water	'any water'
iv.	ẹ̀da	-ki-	ẹ̀da	ẹ̀dakẹ̀da
	money	-interf-	money	'any money'
v.	ọ̀bọ̀	-ki-	ọ̀bọ̀	ọ̀bọ̀kọ̀bọ̀
	hand	-interf-	hand	'any hand'
vi.	ẹ̀zò	-ki-	ẹ̀zò	ẹ̀zòkẹ̀zò
	year	-interf-	year	'any year'
vii.	uchì	-ki-	uchì	ùchìkuchì
	month	-interf-	month	'any month'
viii.	ọ̀sẹ̀	-ki-	ọ̀sẹ̀	ọ̀sẹ̀kirọ̀sẹ̀
	week	-any-	week	'any week'

It is observed in the items above that two words of the same root are sandwiched by -ki- interfix to derive nominal derivatives in the outputs. The -ki- interfix functions as both an associative and a nominalizing marker to derive the nominal forms. It is important to note that this same interfix is employed in the Yorùbá language as the following items show:

	Noun	Noun		Noun
i.	ọ̀mọ̀	-ki-	ọ̀mọ̀	ọ̀mọ̀kọ̀mọ̀
	child	-interf-	child	'any child'
ii.	ilé	-ki-	ilé	ilékílé
	house	-interf-	house	'any house'

- |      |                           |   |                |
|------|---------------------------|---|----------------|
| iii. | aya-kí-aya                | → | ayakáya        |
|      | wife-interf-wife          |   | 'any wife'     |
| iv.  | isẹ́-kí-isẹ́              | → | isẹ́kísẹ́      |
|      | work-interf-work          |   | 'any wife'     |
| v.   | ìwà-kí-ìwà                | → | ìwàkúwà        |
|      | character-inter-character |   | any character' |
| vi.  | ijó-kí-ijó                | → | ijókíjó        |
|      | dance(n)-interf-dance(n)  |   | 'any dance'    |
| vii. | ìgbà-kí-ìgbà              | → | ìgbàkígbà      |
|      | time-interf-time          |   | 'any time'     |

As regards the submission of interfix -ki- in the items given in Ùhànmì and Yorùbá languages above, one question comes to mind as a linguist: which of the two languages possesses the -ki- interfix? One argument comes to mind in support of Yorùbá as the possessor of the marker. In this study, it is argued that the Ùhànmì language has been influenced to adopt the Yorùbá -ki- interfix. This argument is predicated on the fact that Ùhànmì language is spoken in the Yorùbá-speaking communities. The interfixation process in deriving nominal derivatives in the Ùhànmì language is analyzed with the configuration tree below:



### 5.3. Prefixation

Prefixation is a process whereby a prefix is affixed to a root word. Prefixes attached to a root word can perform inflectional and derivational functions. When prefixes are derivational, it means that they change the lexical category of the root words to which they are attached. Contrarily, when prefixes are inflectional, they inflect the root words while maintaining their lexical category. Nominal prefixes in Ùhànmì perform both inflectional and derivational functions. The nominalizing prefixes in the language also have semantic functions

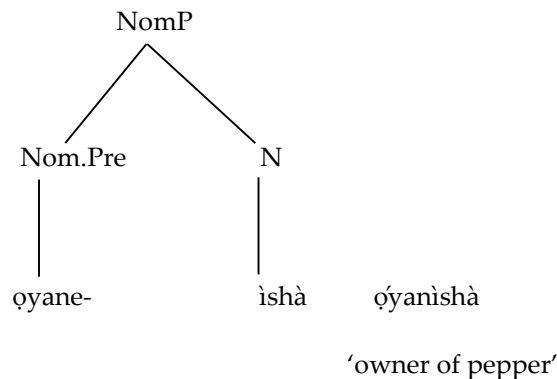


that include abstract, agentive, genitive and instrumental. The prefixes also derive gerunds in the language. They are reflected in the items below:

Genitive Construction:

- |      |              |                            |   |                   |
|------|--------------|----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| i.   | ọyane        | ọchè                       | → | ọyanọchè          |
|      | Nom.Pre      | yam                        |   | 'owner of yam'    |
| ii.  | ọyane        | ìshà                       | → | ọyanìshà          |
|      | Nom.Pre      | pepper                     |   | 'owner of pepper' |
| iii. | ọyane        | ẹ̀rì                       | → | ọyà̀nẹ̀rì         |
|      | Nom.Pre      | goat                       |   | 'owner of goat'   |
| iv.  | ọyane        | áígbè                      | → | ọyà́nàígbè        |
|      | Nom.Pre      | cloth                      |   | 'owner of cloth'  |
| v.   | ọyane        | ẹ̀bì                       | → | ọyà̀nẹ̀bì         |
|      | Nom.Pre-book | 'owner of book'            |   |                   |
| vi.  | ọyane        | ẹ̀vì                       | → | ọyà̀nẹ̀vì         |
|      | Nom.Pre      | palm oil owner of palm oil |   |                   |

From the items above, we can see that the nominal prefix in operation is 'ọyane'. The prefix is attached to the following nouns to derive genitive constructions. The prefix has a semantic property that is interpreted as possession when it is prefixed to the following noun items. It can also be observed that the deletion process affects the final vowel (e) of the nominal prefix, irrespective of the vowels that begin the following nouns to which it is attached. The genitive construction is illustrated in the tree diagram below:



### 5.3.1. Gerundive Noun Construction

Prefixes in the Ùhànmì language can also be attached to root verbs to derive gerundive noun constructions. A gerund is simply defined as a deverbal noun derived from verbs. This emphasizes that prefixes in the language can also be attached to verbs to derive nominal constructions. The following items confirm this:

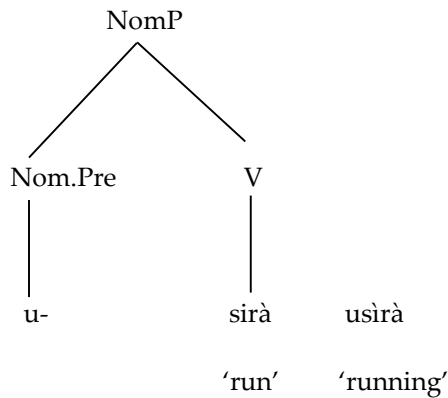
- |      | Verb | Gerundive Noun |
|------|------|----------------|
| i.   | dẹ   | edẹ            |
|      | buy  | buying         |
| ii.  | tà   | età            |
|      | jump | jumpinh        |
| iii. | sirà | usirà          |
|      | run  | running        |
| iv.  | sì   | ọ̀sì           |
|      | cut  | cutting        |

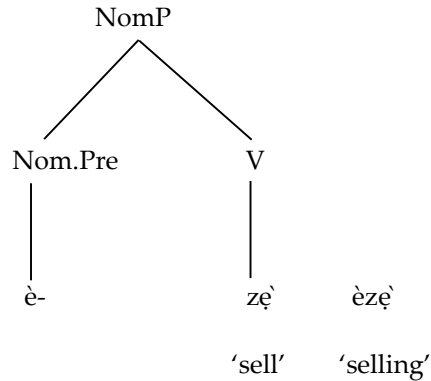
v. şàbò`	èşabò`
clap	clapping
vi. zè`	èzè`
sell	selling
vii. yàn	èyàn
drink	drinking

In the items presented above, we can see that some prefixes are attached to the initial position of the verbs to derive gerundive constructions. The prefixes attached to the verbs include (è, ò and u). It is worth noting that there is no straightforward pattern for determining the specific prefix to be attached to the verbs. However, based on the available data, we observe that the prefix (e) is productive in the language. More examples of it are provided below. The gerundive noun constructions are also analyzed with the configuration tree below.

i. níşè`	eníşè`
know	knowing
ii. dî	edî
do	doing
iii. rî	erî
eat	eating
iv. diè`	ediè`
cry	crying
v. kòṇò`	ekòṇò`
fight	fighting
vi. hùn	ehùn
hear	hearing
vii. dunà	èdunà
read	reading

The items above demonstrate that the nominal prefix (e) is robust as a nominalizing prefix in the language. Its reflex will be shown in more examples in the next sections. The gerundive noun constructions above are analyzed with the configuration trees below.





Prefixes in the language under analysis can also be attached to verbs to derive nouns. Observe the following items.

i.	gbòlo	egbólo
	love(v)	‘love (n)
ii.	rì	erì
	eat	food
iii.	gwà	ègwà
	die	death
iv.	jà	ẹjà
	laugh	laughter
v.	yàjiẹ̀	eyájiẹ̀
	stand	ascension
vi.	gwẹ̀	egwe
	call (v)	call (n)
vii.	chà	ẹchà
	walk(v)	walk (n)

From the items above, we observe that the nominal prefixes deployed in the derivation of the final constructions are (e, and ẹ). The nominal prefix (e) is used in items (i, ii, iii, v, vii), (ẹ) is used in items (iv and viii). It should be noted that the nominal prefix (e) is more productive in the examples. Prefixes can also be attached to a verb phrase to derive nominal constructions. When they are attached to a verb phrase, they perform an agentive function. The items below evince this.

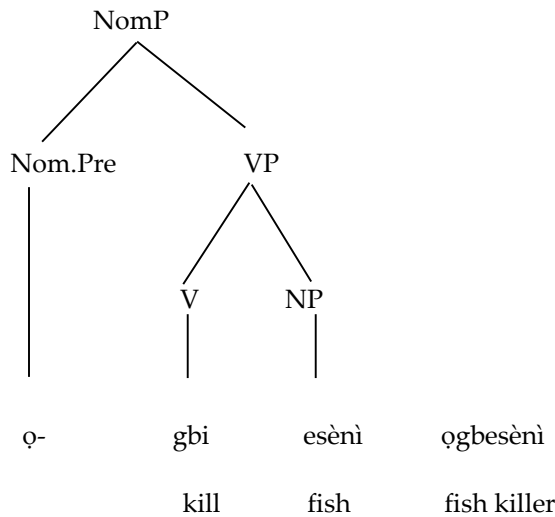
#### Agentive Construction:

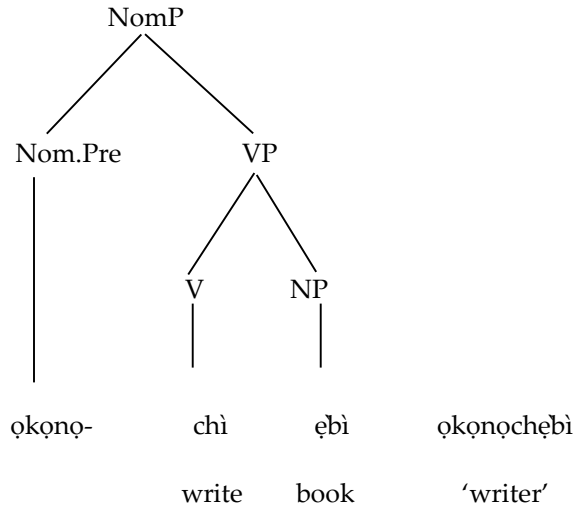
	Verb Phrase	Noun
i.	gbesèni	ọgbesèni
	kill fish	fish killer
ii.	zẹ́rodé	ọzẹ́rodé
	Check the house	sanitation officer
iii.	kwékwé	ọkwékwé
	rear animal	herdsmen
iv.	wẹ̀mọ̀	ọwẹ̀mọ̀
	cause trouble	trouble maker
v.	zubú	ọzubú
	swim river	swimmer

In the items presented above, it is observed that the structure consists of a verb phrase and a noun. The nominalizing prefix (o) is attached to the beginning of the verb phrases to derive agentive constructions. It is also observed in the language that the prefix (okono) is attached to a verb phrase to derive agentive nouns. See the examples below:

Verb	Noun	→	Noun
chì	ẹ̀bì	→	okonochebi
write	a book		'writer'
kòni	ẹ̀hùnù	→	okonohunù
fight	war		'warrior'
dì	ọ̀viẹ̀vì	→	okonodovievi
do	evil		'evil doer'
gbi	ẹ̀namì	→	okonogbenamì
kill	animal		'animal killer'
dàli	ẹ̀zọ́	→	okonodalẹ̀zọ́
judge	case		'judge(n)'

In the two presentations that reflect agentive construction and its derivation, it can be seen that the prefix (o) is employed in the first presentation. The language also utilizes (okono) as another nominalizing strategy to derive agentive structures. Similarly, the two nominalizing prefixes (o) and (okono) are attached to the verb phrase structures to derive the nominal constructions. They are analyzed with the configuration trees below.





### 5.3.2. Instrumental Noun

Prefixes in the Òhànmì language are also employed to derive instrumental nouns. The language utilizes prefixes (e) and (eváma) to derive instrumental nouns. Instrumental nouns show the means or instrument by which an action is done or carried out. Instrumental nouns in Òhànmì are derived through the prefixation of (e) and (eváma) to verbs and nouns. They are reflected in the following items.

Verb	Noun	
kwi	ẹdẹ	evámakwẹdẹ
washcloth	‘washing soap’	
kwi	akọ	evámakwakọ
wash	teeth	‘toothbrush’
kwi	áza	ekwáza
A cloth, ‘a tool for washing plates’		
gbùri	ẹjì	evámagbùrẹjì
rub	body	‘body cream’
kùrọ̀	ẹkì	evámakùrẹkì
build	house	‘building tool’
ti	uzò	etúzo
draw out	water	‘drawer/fetcher’
hin	ẹkì	evámahinẹkì
clean	house/floor	‘broom’
hìn	ọbọ̀	evámahinọbọ̀
clean	hand	‘handkerchief’
yìn.	uzò	evámayòzò
drink	water	‘cup’

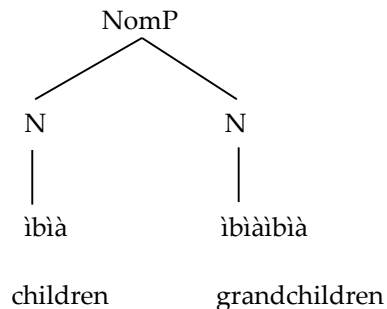
The examples above show that the language under analysis uses prefixes to derive instrumental nouns. From the above presentations, it can be concluded that prefixes in the Ûhànmì language have varied semantic functions: abstract, agentive, genitive, gerundive and instrumental. This means that the prefixes express a wide range of semantic meanings when they are attached to nouns, verbs and verb phrases. It must be noted that prefixation is the most productive nominalizing strategy in the language.

#### 5.4. Reduplication

Reduplication process is a morphological operation whereby the part of a root word or the complete form is reduplicated to derive another word. Marantz (1982) says that in the process of reduplication, a morpheme which (phonologically) "... is necessarily identical in whole or in part to the phonemic content of the base form" is affixed to the base form. McCarthy (1979) noted that reduplication usually involves a constituent such as a phoneme, a syllable, a metrical foot, or some other constituent of a morpheme. In essence, reduplication is generally divided into partial and full reduplication. This study observes full reduplication as a nominalizing strategy in Ûhànmì. It must be emphasized that this nominalizing strategy is less productive in the language. The following examples reflect this.

Noun	Noun
i. ìbià	ìbiàìbià
children	grandchildren
ii. avá	aváavá
father	grandfather
iii. òmòèvà.	òmòèvà òmòèvà
brother/	Brother's brother

A painstaking observation of the examples provided above shows that full reduplication is employed as a nominalizing strategy to derive nouns from nouns in the language. The reduplication involves copying the root nouns to derive the nominal constructions. The process is analyzed with the tree diagram below:



#### 5.5. Desententialization

Another nominalization strategy in use is desententialization. Awobuluyi (2001:64) also observes this phenomenon in the Yorùbá language. Desententialization is a morphological process of turning a sentence into a noun. This phenomenon is observed as a nominalizing strategy in the Ûhànmì language. Desententialization in the language is employed to turn a clause into a noun. The examples below reflect this.

Clause	Noun
i. ọfa re gede	ọfàrègèdè
A person who wears a belt	'police'
ii. ẹnà foli fò sesẹ̀	ẹnáfólifòsesẹ̀
A person who extinguishes fire, a firefighter'	
iii. ẹnà mu narẹ̀	ẹnámunarẹ̀
a person who sews cloth, 'tailor'	
iv. ẹnà gbo mokò	enágbomokò
A person who catches fish, 'fisherman'	
v. Ìmọ̀tò nọ́yà or agàgá nọ́yà	ìmọ̀tònọ́yà (agàgánọ́yà)
'a motor that flies'	'aeroplane'

In the items, it is observed that desententialization is employed in the derivation of the nouns, as evidenced above. This suggests that the sentences/clauses lose their status to become nouns in the language. It can also be inferred that the language makes use of this operation because the equivalent words for the nouns do not exist in the language. As a result, the language uses the description of their functions to name them, thus performing the role of nominals.

### 5.6. Clipping

Clipping is simply defined as a morphological operation whereby some part of a word or sentence is clipped or shortened to form a word. This type of morphological process does not affect the meaning of a word. It means that this derivation does not result in a loss of the meaning of the root word or sentence.

In the Òhànmì language, clipping as a morphological process is employed in deriving names from desententialized sentences. The sentences have been desententialized to derive names in the language. It must be noted that the clipping process does not affect the meaning of the base. Observe the examples below:

	Sentence		Names (Noun)
i.	Ọ̀ mẹ̀ semì 'Mine is good'	→	Sèmì 'Good'
ii.	Ọ̀ mẹ̀ semì 'Mine is good'	→	Ọ̀ mẹ̀ 'Mine'
iii.	Ọ̀ şàà dìnà mì 'God bless me'	→	Dìnà mì 'Bless me'
iv.	Ọ̀ şàà gala 'God knows how to judge'	→	Ọ̀ şà 'God's agent'

The items in the left position are sentences which have been desententialized in the language to derive names (nouns). It should be noted that the names have been clipped to derive nouns in the language. The meaning of the items after the clipping process has been applied is maintained.

This clipping phenomenon is similarly observed in the Yorùbá language in the following items.

i.	Babatúndé 'Father has arrived'	→	Túndé 'Arrival'
ii.	Ayọ̀mídé 'My joy has come'	→	Ayọ̀ 'Joy'
iii.	Adéwálé 'Crown has come home'	→	Adé 'Crown'
iv.	Adéwálé 'Crown has come home'	→	Wálé 'Come home'

The items above in Yorùbá show that the roots to which the clipping process is applied are sentences that have been desententialized to form names in the language. The derived names in the language also undergo a clipping process to produce the short forms of the derived names, which also serve as names. This Yoruba-clipping explanation is in correspondence with what we discuss in the Òhànmì language. The nominalization processes in the language under analysis are summarized in the table below:

Table 1. Nominalization process

S/N	Nominalization Process
1.	Compounding
2.	Interfixation
3.	Prefixation
4.	Reduplication
5.	Desententialization
6.	Clipping

## 6. Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to examine nominalization in Ùhànmì, an Edoid language spoken in Ìṣùà-Àkókó of Òṣṣó State, Nigeria. This Research demonstrates that, more than existing strategies in the literature, some languages also employ other morphological operations in the construction of nominal expressions. This study shows that Ùhànmì employs a wide range of nominalizing strategies in the construction of nominal expressions. This study reveals that the language employs six nominalizing strategies to express nominalization. The strategies include compounding, interfixation, prefixation, reduplication, desententialization, and clipping processes. It is noted in the course of analysis that the language compounds nouns to derive a nominal form. In the same vein, the language also makes use of the interfix -ki- to derive nominal structures. Prefixation is very productive in the language. It is shown that the process employs the following nominalizing prefixes (e, u, ẹ-, ọ-, ọkọnọ-, ọyanẹ, evama) to derive nominal constructions. The nominal prefixes are attached to different word categories; these include verbs, nouns, and verb phrases. Reduplication, desententialization and clipping are other nominalizing processes observed in the Ùhànmì language. However, reduplication is less productive as a nominalizing process in the language. The study serves as an avenue for other language researchers to explore other strategies in the construction of nominal expressions in other languages, especially Edoid languages. Finally, the study contributes to existing knowledge in the area of morphology.

## Reference

- [1] Harrison Adéníyí, "Tone and Nominalization in Edo," *California Linguistic Notes*, vol. XXXV, no. 1, 2010. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [2] Amayo, Moses Airen, "A Generative Phonology of Edo (Bini)," University of Ìbàdàn, Doctoral Thesis, 1976. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [3] Oladele Awobuluyi, "Morphology of the Yoruba Language," *Yoruba Studies: Language, Literature, and Culture*, pp. 47-70, 2001. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [4] Rose O. Aziza, "Ùrhòbòtone System," Doctoral Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1997. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [5] Noam Chomsky et al., *Remarks on Nominalization*, Linguistics Club, Indiana University, 1970. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [6] David Crystal, *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2011. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [7] Guy Deutscher, "Nominalization and the Origin of Subordination," *Linguistics & Semiotics*, pp. 199-214, 2009. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [8] Shirley O. Donwa, "The sound system of Isoko," Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Linguistics, University of Ìbàdàn, 1982. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [9] Egbokhare Francis Oisaghaede, A phonology of Emai, Ìbàdàn, Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, 1989. [Online]. Available: <https://zenodo.org/records/3626774>
- [10] Philip O. Ekiugbo, A Note on Lexical Nominalization in Urhobo, *Scholarship and Commitment: Essays in Honour of G.G. Darah*, pp. 473 – 478, 2018. [Online]. Available: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356789038\\_A\\_Note\\_on\\_Lexical\\_Nominalization\\_in\\_Urhobo](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356789038_A_Note_on_Lexical_Nominalization_in_Urhobo)
- [11] Baruch Elimelech, "A Tonal Grammar of Etsako," Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1976. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [12] Ben Ohi Elugbe, "Comparative Edoid phonology," Doctoral Thesis, University of Ìbàdàn, Ìbàdàn, 1973. [[Google Scholar](#)]



- [13] Ben Ohiomamhe Elugbe, "Morphology of the Gerunds in Degema and its Reconstruction Proto-Edo," *Studies in African Linguistics*, vol. 15. no. 1, pp. 77-89, 1984. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [14] Ben Ohiomamhe Elugbe, "Comparative Edoid: Phonology and Lexicon (Delta Series)," University of Port-Harcourt Press, 1989. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [15] Eucharia Anenechukwu Eze, and Chinedum Isaac, "Nominalization Processes in Ogbia," *Zien Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, vol. 16, pp. 41-48, 2023. [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [16] Nigel Fabb, "Compounding," *The Handbook of Morphology*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2017. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [17] Grant Essuman, "Nominalization Process in Fante (Akan)," *European Journal of Literature and Linguistics Studies*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 87-106, 2024. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [18] John J. McCarthy, "Formal Problems in Semitic Phonology and Morphology," 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Taylor & Francis Group, London, 1985. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [19] Ogunkeye Olufunmilayo, "A Lexicalist Approach to the Study of Aspects of Yorùbá Morphology," *Ph.D. Thesis*, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 2002. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [20] Olaide Oladimeji, and Opoola Bolanle T., "Noun Class System in Ikhin, an Edoid Language," *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, vol. 12, no. 5, pp. 777-785, 2021. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [21] Oladimeji, and Abduwaheed Olaide, "A Phonology of Ikhin, an Edoid Language in South-South, Nigeria," *Ph.D. Thesis*, University of Ibadan, 2010. [[CrossRef](#)][[Google Scholar](#)]
- [22] Olaide Oladimeji, "The Tone System of Ikhin" *Open Science Repository Language and Linguistics*, 2013. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [23] Oladimeji Olaide A, "Vowel Insertion in Ikhin, an Edoid Language" *LASU Journal of African Studies*, pp. 264-275, 2022. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [24] Thomas O. Omoruyi, "Pluralization Strategies in Edo" *Journal of West-African Languages*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2014. [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [25] Edosa Victor Omozuwa, "Vowel Elision and Tone in Edo CV+VCV (CV) Constructions" *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo, vol. 53, pp. 113-121. 1997. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [26] Opool Bolanle T, and Olaide Oladimeji, "Vowel Elision in Ikhin, an Edoid Language in South-South Nigeria" *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 352-361, 2021. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [27] Kola Owolabi, "More on Yoruba Prefixing Morphology," *Language in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Ayo Bamgbose*, pp. 92-112, 1995. [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [28] Rogers Krobea Asante, "Nominalization in Nkami," *Journal of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria*, vol 21, no 3, pp. 99-126, 2018. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [29] Elizabeth O. Selkirk, "Elizabeth O. Selkirk, The syntax of words. (Linguistic Inquiry Monographs 7.) Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1982. Pp. xii + 136," *Journal of Linguistics*, vol. 20, pp. 361-412, 1984. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]