

Phonological Changes in Tiv and English: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study examines phonological changes in Tiv and English through a comparative analysis, focusing on their causes, implications, and possible solutions. The background highlights the dynamic nature of phonology in both languages, with Tiv, a Benue-Congo language, undergoing significant shifts due to internal and external influences, while English exhibits well-documented phonological evolution. The problem arises from insufficient comparative studies on these changes, leading to gaps in understanding their linguistic and sociolinguistic impacts. The aim is to investigate, identify, compare, and analyse phonological changes in Tiv and English, exploring their causes and implications. Objectives include identifying phonological changes in Tiv, investigating factors driving these changes, assessing their effects, comparing them with English, and proposing solutions. The study adopts a qualitative approach, utilising descriptive and comparative analysis of primary and secondary linguistic data. The theoretical framework employed is generative phonology and historical linguistics propounded by Chomsky and Halle (1968). The findings reveal that phonological changes in Tiv result from language contact, education, and dialectal variation, affecting lexical and grammatical structures. A comparative analysis with English shows similarities in sound shifts but differences in causative factors. The study suggests standardised orthography and language education as solutions. Significantly, this research contributes to phonological theory, language preservation, and educational policy. Recommendations include promoting Tiv linguistic research, integrating indigenous languages into curricula, and fostering community awareness. The study concludes that phonological changes, while inevitable, require strategic interventions to maintain linguistic integrity.

Introduction

Phonological changes are a fundamental aspect of language evolution, affecting pronunciation, sound systems, and linguistic structures over time. The Tiv language, a major Benue-Congo language spoken predominantly in Benue State, Nigeria, has undergone significant phonological transformations due to internal linguistic developments and external influences. Similarly, English, a global language with a rich history, has experienced extensive phonological shifts from Old English to Modern English. A comparative study of phonological changes in Tiv and English provides valuable insights into the dynamics of sound systems across different linguistic backgrounds.

This research explores phonological studies in the Tiv language, examining documented sound changes and their linguistic implications. It investigates the causes of these changes, including language contact, sociolinguistic factors, and internal phonetic processes. Additionally, the study highlights the implications of phonological changes in Tiv, particularly in communication, language preservation, and orthographic consistency.

Statement of the Problem

Phonological studies play a crucial role in understanding the sound systems of languages and their structural differences. While English phonology has been extensively researched (Chomsky & Halle, 1968), Tiv a Benue-Congo language spoken predominantly in Nigeria has received limited scholarly attention (Bamgbose, 1990). This study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating and conducting a comparative analysis of the phonological systems of Tiv and English, focusing on their segmental and suprasegmentally features. The research identifies similarities and differences in phonemic inventories, syllable structures, and tonal patterns, contributing to both linguistic theory and language education.

Aim and Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the phonological changes and systems of Tiv and English language. The specific objectives include,

1. To examine the phonemic inventories of Tiv and English, identifying similarities and differences.
2. To analyse syllable structures and phonological processes (for example, assimilation, deletion) in both languages.
3. To investigate the role of tone in Tiv and stress in English as suprasegmental features.
4. To apply generative phonological theory in explaining the observed patterns.

Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive and comparative research design. The sampling method involved deliberate selection of words that showed phonological changes in Tiv language. Data was also collected from. Primary sources: Native Tiv speakers were interviewed to obtain natural speech samples. The secondary method includes journals, articles and relevant linguistics text books were used as secondary data. The researcher intuitively jotted down those words that show epenthesis, deletion, assimilation, and syllable substitution. After the classifications of epenthesis, deletion, and substituted words, they are presented on the tables and analysed. To facilitate a meaningful interpretations of the raw information obtained through the investigations.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Generative phonology theory, as proposed by Chomsky and Halle (1968), the theory provides a rule-based approach to phonological analysis. This framework posits that underlying representations (UR) are transformed into surface forms (SR) through ordered rules. The study will apply generative principles to derive Tiv and English phonological processes and compare rule interactions in both languages.

This comparative study will enhance the understanding of Tiv phonology while contributing to cross-linguistic phonological research. By applying generative theory, the research will provide insights into universal and language specific phonological phenomena.

Review of Related Literature

Phonological Changes in Tiv

The Tiv language, spoken primarily in Benue State, Nigeria, belongs to the Tivoid subgroup of the

Benue-Congo language family (Williamson and Blench, 2000;43). Like many African languages, Tiv has undergone phonological changes due to internal linguistic evolution and external influences such as contact with neighboring languages and English. Phonological changes in Tiv, including vowel and consonant shifts, and syllable structure alterations, supported.

1. Vowel System Modifications ;The Tiv language originally had a nine-vowel system, comprising four front vowels (/i, ɪ, e, ε/), three central vowels (/ , a, i/), and two back vowels (/u, o/) (Abraham, 1940;12). However, recent studies indicate a reduction in vowel distinctions, particularly the merging of /ɪ:/ and /i:/ in some dialects (Aondohemba, 2013). This merger may be attributed to language contact and the influence of English, which has a simpler vowel system.

Additionally, vowel harmony, a prominent feature in Tiv, has weakened in certain contexts. Tiv originally operated on an advanced tongue root (ATR) harmony system, where vowels within a word harmonised for ATR

features (Arnott, 1964;16). However, loanwords and code-switching have disrupted this harmony in modern Tiv (Ikkyo, 2018;9).

2. Consonant Shifts and Innovations. The consonant inventory of Tiv has also experienced changes. Historically, Tiv had a series of labialised and palatalised consonants, such as /kp^w/ and /gb^w/ (Bamgbose, 1967). Some of these sounds have been simplified in contemporary speech, particularly among younger speakers, leading to the loss of labialisation in certain environments (Torkula, 2006;23).

Another notable change is the substitution of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ with the voiceless palatal fricative /ʃ/ in some lexical items, possibly due to influence from neighboring Jukunoid languages (Iordaan, 2010).

4. Syllable Structure Simplification . The canonical syllable structure in Tiv is (C)V(V), allowing for open syllables and vowel sequences (Arnott, 1964). However, under the influence of English, which permits complex codas, some Tiv speakers have introduced closed syllables (CVC) in borrowed words, such as ‘bók’ (“book”) (Aondohemba, 2013). This represents a shift from the traditional syllable constraints of Tiv.

The phonological system of the Tiv language has undergone significant changes but internal linguistic developments and external influences. Vowel mergers, consonant simplifications, tonal variations, and syllable structure modifications reflect the dynamic nature of Tiv phonology.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Causes of Phonological Changes in Tiv and English Language

Phonological change refers to the evolution in the sound systems of languages over time. Both Tiv (a Benue-Congo language spoken in Nigeria) and English have undergone significant phonological changes due to various linguistic and extra linguistic factors. This section explores the causes of phonological changes in Tiv and English, highlighting internal (language-internal) and external (contact-induced) influences.

Internal Causes of Phonological Change

1. Phonetic Erosion and Assimilation. Phonetic erosion occurs when sounds weaken or disappear due to rapid speech. In English, the Great Vowel Shift (15th–18th centuries) altered long vowel pronunciations (for example, Middle English [mi:s] became Modern English [maɪs] "mice") (Jespersen, 1909). Similarly, Tiv has experienced consonant weakening, such as the lenition of intervocalic stops (Abraham, 1940).

2. Analogy and Regularisation. Analogical changes occur when irregular forms align with more common patterns. In English, the plural of "cow" shifted from "kine" to "cows" by analogy with regular -s plurals (Bybee, 2001;34).

3. Simplification of Phonemic Inventory. Languages may simplify complex sound systems. Old English had more fricatives, which merged over time [for example, /θ/ and /ð/ distinctions reduced in some dialects] (Lass, 1984). Tiv has also seen mergers, such as the collapse of certain nasalised vowels in rapid speech (Armstrong, 1983).

External Causes of Phonological Change

1. Language Contact and Borrowing. Contact with other languages introduces new sounds. English borrowed "genre" from French, introducing /ʒ/ (Hock and Joseph, 1996;7). Tiv, influenced by neighboring

languages like Hausa, adopted loanwords with new consonants, such as /h/ (Chombo, 2005). The contact English and Tiv people had resulted in extensive borrowing of English loanwords. The process of obtaining new word from another language is called borrowing. Loan-words come with new phonemes that the recipient language may not have. It is obvious that Tiv language does not have voiceless inter-dental fricative so it is easier for words that have th /θ/ to be written as voiceless alveolar stop /t/. For instance, the following words with /θ/ are pronounced /t/ below,

English Word	Transcription	Loan-Word	Transcription	New phoneme
Esther	/esəθ/	Eseta	/esetæ/	/t/
Ethiopia	/I:θIəpIə/	Itiopia	/etIəpIæ/	/t/
Methuselah	/məθj:zələ/	Metusela	/metoselæ/	/t/
Nazareth	/næzəθ/	Nasareti	/næsæreti/	/t/
Nathaniel	/nəθæniəl/	Nataniel	/nætæniəl/	/t/
Ruth	/ru:θ/	Rutu	/rutu/	/t/
Seth	/seθ/	Setu	/setu/	/t/
Timothy	/timəθ/	Timoteu	/timoteu/	/t/

Copied from IghianBibilo I zwaTiv. Published 1964.

Generally, languages have to change so as to accommodate /n/ phonemes that are alien to the receiving language. It is imperative to reiterate that sound changes in Tiv language are occasioned by articulatory simplification, phonography or spelling pronunciation, analogy and language contact.

2. Sociolinguistic Factors (Prestige and Stigma). Social attitudes affect pronunciation. The loss of postvocalic /r/ in British English (Received Pronunciation) was a prestige-driven change (Labov, 1994). In Tiv, urban dialects often replace rural pronunciations due to urbanisation (Iorhemen, 2010). The table below give a clear example of the above assertion thus:

Deletion of Vowels (Monophthongs)

Monophthong deletion deletes only one vowel. In the MT, the vowel letters that were pronounced are not even written in the contemporary standard orthography. The non-inclusion of vowels in certain words has resulted in the monophthong deletion. This kind of deletion is captured in the table below,

Old Tiv	Modern Tiv	Deleted vowels	Gloss
Ikyarikyase	Ikyarkyase	I	Trembling
Ityôikyaa	Ityôkyaa	I	Reason
Ujjuan	Ujuan	I	Joints
Uwegh	Wegh	U	Hand

Personal observation and interview with Akumevihiave.

The above table has shown that sounds /i/ is susceptible to deletion. For instance, ikyarikyase, ityôikyaa, ujjuan and uwegh have four, four, three and two syllables respectively in the OT but with the deletion of i and u in the MT as shown in the above four words – ikyarkyase, ityokyya, ujuan and weggh – now have three, three, two and one syllables each.

Vowel Epenthesis and Lengthening in Modern Tiv

The primary role of vowel epenthesis or insertion is the conversion or lengthening of short vowels to long vowels. This lengthening involves the addition of similar vowels to the existing ones. The addition of vowels does not change the meanings and the syllables of the existing words. It only affects the duration of articulation such words. Graphological changes have equally affected the realisation of the sounds. Native speakers of Tiv may articulate bang or baang (scarlet) and côhin and côhiin (little) by lengthening their pronunciations. However, based on the orthographies of the OT and MT, the shortening and lengthening processes are contrasted below.

Vowel Lengthening in MT

Old Tiv	Modern Tiv	Vowel Lengthening	Gloss
bang	Bang	/æ/ & /a:/	Scarlet/red
bong	boong	/ɒ/ & /o:/	To open wide
Cohin	cohiin	/ɪ/ & /o:/	Little
dang	daang	/æ/ & /a:/	Bad
dong	doong	/ɔ/ & /ɔ:/	Tightly
Fingfing	fingfiing	/ɪ/ & /ɪ:/	Dizzily
Gagh	gaagh	/æ/ & /a:/	Fast
Gbev	gbeev	/e/ & /e:/	Stumbling block
Gbong	gboong	/ɒ/ & /o:/	Loud shouting
Imagh	imaagh	/æ/ & /a:/	Building
Iniaav	iniaav	/æ/ & /a:/	Sacrifices
Kweng	kweeng	/e/ & /e:/	Bottomless
Mbautyav	mbautyaav	/æ/ & /a:/	Soldiers
Nagh	naagh	/æ/ & /a:/	Sacrifice
Tsung	tsuung	/ʊ/ & /u:/	Craving/greatly
Ving	viing	/ɪ/ & /ɪ:/	Quietness
wang	waang	/æ/ & /a:/	Pure/immaculate

Face to face conversation with Samuel Amaa.

The above table has shown that most words use single vowels which resulted in short vowels whereas the MT spelling doubled similar vowels which cause the above words to be longer in duration. For instance, bang – bang, dang – daang, gagh – gaagh, imagh – imaagh, iniav – iniaav, mbautyav – mbautyaav, nagh – naaghand wang – waangchanged short a /æ/ to long aa /a:/ andgbev – gbeev, kweng – kweengconverted e /e/ to ee /eɪ/. Furthermore, côhin – côhiin, fingfing – fiingfiing and ving – viing change short i /ɪ/ to long ii /i:/; bong – boong and gbong – gboong converted short o /ɒ/ to long oo /o:/. Lastly, dông – dôông changed short ô /ɔ/ to long ôô /ɔ:/.

Consonant Insertions in Modern Tiv

There is overkill of palatal insertion /j/ in the MT words. In the OT orthography, most of the words that are now written with palatal epenthesis were not. The revised edition of the Icighan Bibilo (The Holy Bible) contains such changes. The insertion of voiced palatal consonant ‘smoothens’ the pronunciation of words that bear them. Examples as shown below,

Old Tiv	Modern Tiv	Epenthetic Sound	Gloss
Adiguve	adigyuve	y	harp
Bughpupu	byughpupu	y	violent splashing
Ifan	Ifyan	y	curse
Iferor	Ifyeror	y	evil person
Igo	Igyo	y	Pig
Igungu	Igyungu	y	Hill
Ihom	Ihyom	y	enmity
Ikaior	ikyaior	y	the young
Ikav	Ikyav	y	goods
Ikese	Ikyese	y	basket
Ikom	Ikyom	y	corpse
Ikon	Ikyon	y	Tree
Ikondo	ikyondo	y	cloth
Ikonough	ikyonogh	y	chair
Ikovikov	ikyovikyov	y	generations
Ikuaikua	ikyuaikyua	y	near
Maihomov	mbahyomov	y	enemies
Una	Wuna	y	granary

Conversation with AorTersoor.

The above table shows that palatal insertion does not come at the beginning of words and

at the end of words. Palatal epenthesis constitutes medial consonant clusters such as by /bj/, fy /fj/, gy /gj/ and ky /kj/. Lastly, there was now in una (barn or granary) in the OT spelling but there is an insertion of w in the MT. the insertion of bilabial approximant /w/ provides onset to wuna.

Substitution of Vowels in the MT

An in-depth reading of the old and revised versions of the Icighan Bible and other classical literature in Tiv reveals that the original letters of some words have been replaced with other spellings. Vowel substitution in MT is graphically presented in the table below,

Old Tiv	Modern Tiv	Vowel Epenthesis	Gloss
Eseter	Eseta	/e/ & /æ/	Esther
Kaara	Keela	/a:/ & /e:/; /r/ & /l/	there
Igbenda	Igbinda	/e/ & /l/	Ways or roads
Lea	Lia	/e/ & /l/	Leah
Popeler	Popela	/e/ & /æ/	Poplar
Rebobiam	Rehoboam	/l/ & /v/	Rehoboam
Yerobiam	Yeroboam	/l/ & /v/	Jeroboam
Utakerada	Ityakeda	/u/ & /l/	Books

Copied from icighan bible I zwaTiv, published 2017.

This substitution of letters could be as a result of approximating the pronunciation of words with their spelling as in Eseter and Eseta, Lea and Lia, popeler and popela. An average Tiv person will prefer the latter pronunciation – Eseta, Lia and popela – to the former that ended in er and ea.

For example, in the OT, i vowel substituted vowel o Rehobiam and Yerobiam respectively. However, in the MT letter o replaced the former letter i as in Rehoboam and Yeroboam. Lastly, the plural form of a book in the OT was utakerada but in the MT i is ityakeda – thus letter I substituted letter u.

Changes in Syllable Structures

Aor (2021:44) states that the various ways in which sound changes may affect the overall phonological structure of languages. He maintains that the phonological systems change, once the distribution of consonants or vowels and contexts where they are contrastive becomes affected. A close study of diachronic and synchronic sound change in Tiv indicated that syllables in some words were longer than the MT spellings. Shortening of syllables in the MT is shown in the table below:

Old Tiv	Modern Tiv	Deleted Syllables	Gloss
diamondi	diamond	di	diamond
Mbaromanu	Mbaroma	nu	Romans
takerada	takeda	ra	book

The above table indicated that in the OT translation, diamondi has four syllables while its MT translation (diamon) has two syllables. The last syllable of diamondi – di – is thus elided. Additionally, Mbaromanu has four syllables in the OT whereas its MT counterpart contains three syllables. Finally, takerada, a quadrasyllables, is changed to trisyllables by deleting re syllable. The effect of sound change is therefore the shortening of syllables.

3. Substrate Influence (For English in Colonial Contexts). English dialects in Nigeria and other colonies developed distinct phonologies due to native language influence. Nigerian English often substitutes /θ/ with /t/

(e.g., "think" as "tink") (Jowitt, 2019). Similarly, Tiv speakers learning English may impose Tiv syllable structures (Ugorji, 2015).

Finally, Phonological changes in Tiv and English result from internal processes (assimilation, analogy) and external factors (language contact, sociolinguistic trends). While English changes are well-documented due to its global spread, Tiv's phonological shifts reflect regional influences and urbanisation.

Comparative Investigation on Phonological Changes in Tiv and English Language

Phonological changes occur in all languages over time due to various factors such as language contact, sociolinguistic influences, and internal linguistic evolution. This paper presents a comparative investigation of phonological changes in Tiv (a Benue-Congo language spoken in Nigeria) and English (a Germanic language with global influence). By analysing sound shifts, assimilation processes, and other phonological phenomena, this study highlights similarities and differences between the two languages.

Phonological Changes in Tiv

Tiv has undergone several phonological changes, particularly in its consonant and vowel systems. One notable change is the loss of certain nasal sounds in specific environments. For example, the Proto-Benue-Congo nasal consonants have been reduced or elided in modern Tiv (Abraham, 1940). Additionally, vowel harmony plays a crucial role in Tiv phonology, where vowels within a word must agree in certain features (Armstrong, 1983).

Another key phonological process in Tiv is consonant weakening, where stops may become fricatives in intervocalic positions (Bamgbose, 1990). For instance, /b/ may shift to /β/ in rapid speech, demonstrating lenition a common phonological change in many African languages.

English has experienced significant phonological evolution, particularly from Old English to Modern English. The Great Vowel Shift (15th–18th centuries) dramatically altered English's vowel system, raising long vowels (e.g., /i:/ became /ai/) (Jespersen, 1909). Additionally, consonant cluster simplification (e.g., the silent /k/ in "knight") reflects historical phonological erosion (Labov, 1994).

Another notable change is rhoticity loss in some dialects (e.g., British Received Pronunciation), where post-vocalic /r/ is no longer pronounced (Wells, 1982). Conversely, American English retains rhoticity, illustrating dialectal divergence.

Comparative Analysis

1. **Vowel Shifts:** Tiv maintains a stable vowel harmony system, whereas English underwent the Great Vowel Shift. Both languages exhibit vowel reduction in unstressed syllables (e.g., Tiv's mid-vowel centralisation and English's schwa /ə/ insertion).
2. **Consonant Modifications:** Tiv shows lenition (weakening of consonants), while English exhibits both lenition (e.g., /t/ flapping in American English) and fortition (e.g., /tʃ/ in "nature"). Both languages experience elision (sound deletion), but English has more historical consonant drops (e.g., "knight" vs. Tiv's retained consonants).
3. **Influence of Language Contact:** English has borrowed extensively, leading to phonological adaptations (e.g., French-derived words with /ʒ/). Tiv has also incorporated loanwords from Hausa and English but retains native phonological constraints (Bamgbose, 1990).

Phonological changes in Tiv and English demonstrate both universal tendencies (e.g., lenition, vowel shifts) and language-specific developments. While English's changes are heavily influenced by historical migrations and borrowings, Tiv's phonological evolution remains more constrained by its native structural rules.

Implication of Phonological Changes on Tiv and English Language

Phonological changes are a natural part of language evolution, affecting pronunciation, sound patterns, and communication. Both Tiv (a Benue-Congo language spoken in Nigeria) and English have undergone phonological shifts with significant linguistic and sociolinguistic implications. This discussion explores the implications of these changes in both languages, considering aspects such as language comprehension, identity, education, and intergenerational communication. Some key implications include,

1. Lexical and Semantic Shifts. Sound changes can lead to word mergers or splits, altering meaning. For example, the loss of tonal distinctions in some Tiv dialects has caused homophony, where words previously distinguished by tone now sound identical (Chia, 2020).

This can create ambiguity in communication, particularly for older speakers who rely on traditional pronunciation.

2. Language Endangerment and Identity. Younger generations increasingly code-switch between Tiv, Hausa, and English, leading to phonological simplification (Ioratim and Uba, 2021).

The erosion of native sounds may weaken cultural identity, as pronunciation is closely tied to ethnic heritage.

3. Educational Challenges. Standardised Tiv orthography struggles to accommodate dialectal variations, complicating literacy efforts (Tarhule and Ugorji, 2018).

Teachers may face difficulties instructing students when pronunciation norms shift unpredictably.

Phonological Changes in English

English has undergone extensive phonological evolution, from Old English to modern global varieties. Key implications include,

1. Dialectal Variation and Mutual Intelligibility. The Great Vowel Shift (15th–18th centuries) drastically altered English pronunciation (Crystal, 2018). Today, differences between British, American, and Nigerian English phonology sometimes hinder comprehension (Kachru, 2020).

Non-native speakers may struggle with sound distinctions (e.g., /θ/ vs. /t/ in "think" vs. "tink" in Nigerian Pidgin).

2. Influence of Technology and Media. Global media promotes certain accents (for example,

American English), leading to phonological convergence among younger speakers (Jenkins, 2019).

Texting and social media encourage informal spelling that reflects pronunciation shifts (for example, "gonna" for "going to").

3. Language Teaching and Learning. EFL learners face challenges mastering English phonemes absent in their native languages (e.g., Tiv speakers distinguishing /r/ and /l/) (Adegbija, 2017).

Pronunciation teaching must adapt to evolving norms, such as the increasing glottalisation of /t/ in British English (Roach, 2018).

Possible Solutions to the Problem of Phonological Changes in Tiv and English Language

Phonological changes in languages, whether natural or contact-induced, can lead to communication barriers, language attrition, and identity loss (Adebayo, 2019). Both Tiv (a BenueCongo language spoken in Nigeria) and English (a global lingua franca) experience phonological shifts due to factors such as language contact, education, and socio-political influences (Chombo, 2020). This paper explores possible solutions to mitigate the adverse effects of phonological changes in Tiv and English.

Standardisation and Orthographic Development. One major solution to phonological instability in Tiv is the standardisation of its orthography. A standardised writing system helps preserve phonological consistency and reduces ambiguity (Ikyaan et al., 2018). For English, maintaining standardised pronunciation models (e.g., Received Pronunciation or General American) in educational settings can minimise excessive variations (Cruttenden, 2014).

Language Documentation and Revitalisation Programs. Since Tiv is an indigenous language facing phonological erosion due to English dominance, documentation efforts are essential. Recording native speakers and developing linguistic resources can help preserve its phonological integrity (UNESCO, 2003). Similarly, English dialects at risk of extinction (e.g., some rural British accents) can be preserved through digital archives (Crystal, 2019).

Bilingual Education and Phonological Awareness. Introducing bilingual education programs that emphasise both Tiv and English phonology can help speakers maintain their native sound systems while learning English (Baker, 2011). Phonological awareness training in schools can also help learners distinguish between the two languages' sound patterns (Yule, 2020).

Community Engagement and Advocacy. Community-based initiatives, such as Tiv cultural festivals and radio programs, can promote the correct use of Tiv phonology (Akoo, 2017). For English, promoting accent acceptance while discouraging stigmatisation of non-standard varieties can reduce forced phonological shifts (Lippi-Green, 2012).

Technological Solutions. Speech recognition and text-to-speech technologies tailored to Tiv can help reinforce correct pronunciation (Olasoji&Adegbola, 2021). For English, AI-driven pronunciation tutors (e.g., apps like ELSA Speak) can assist learners in mastering standard phonological forms (Rogerson-Revell, 2021).

Phonological changes in Tiv and English can be managed through standardisation, documentation, education, community efforts, and technology. Collaborative efforts between linguists, educators, and policymakers are crucial in implementing these solutions effectively.

Conclusion

The study of phonological changes in Tiv and English languages reveals significant insights into the dynamic nature of sound systems in both languages. Phonological studies in Tiv have demonstrated that the language has undergone various transformations over time, influenced by factors such as language contact, sociolinguistic shifts, and internal linguistic evolution. These changes, while natural in language development, have implications for communication, language preservation, and education, particularly among younger generations who may deviate from traditional Tiv pronunciation.

A comparative investigation between Tiv and English highlights that phonological changes occur in all languages, but their causes and effects differ based on historical, social, and structural contexts. While English

has experienced shifts such as the Great Vowel Shift and ongoing assimilation processes, Tiv's phonological changes are often driven by external influences like urbanisation and bilingualism.

To address the challenges posed by phonological changes in Tiv, possible solutions include the documentation of standard Tiv phonology, the promotion of Tiv language education in schools, and community-based initiatives to encourage consistent usage among native speakers. By understanding these changes and implementing corrective measures, the Tiv language can be preserved and transmitted effectively to future generations while maintaining its linguistic integrity alongside global languages like English.

In conclusion, phonological changes are inevitable, but with deliberate efforts, their impact on language identity and communication can be managed effectively in both Tiv and English.

Recommendations

Having investigated the phonological changes in Tiv language, the study comes up with the following recommendations;

Promote phonological documentation and research. Linguist and language scholars should conduct extensive research and recommendations of phonological changes in Tiv and English language. This will help preserve linguistic data and provide insights into the evolution of phonological processes such as syncope, apocope, and aphaeresis

Integrate phonological studies into Tiv Language Education. Educational institution should incorporate phonological studies into the curriculum of Tiv language programs. This will help students and educators understand the changes occurring in Tiv phonology and their implications for language preservation and literacy development.

Raise awareness on language evolution and its impact linguistic researchers and policymakers should create awareness of phonological changes in Tiv and English through seminars, workshops, and publications. This will help speakers recognise how phonological shifts influence pronunciation, meaning and language identity.

Encourage language standardisation and Orthographic Reforms. Since phonological changes impact spelling and pronunciation, there is a need for language standardisation efforts. This includes updating Tiv Orthography and aligning written forms with spoken variations to maintain linguistic consistency and ease of learning.

Analyse the influence of External factors on phonological changes Scholars should examine the impact of globalisation, multilingualism, and technological advancement on phonological shifts in Tiv and English. Understanding these influences will help in developing strategies for language preservation while embracing necessary linguistic adaptations.

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