

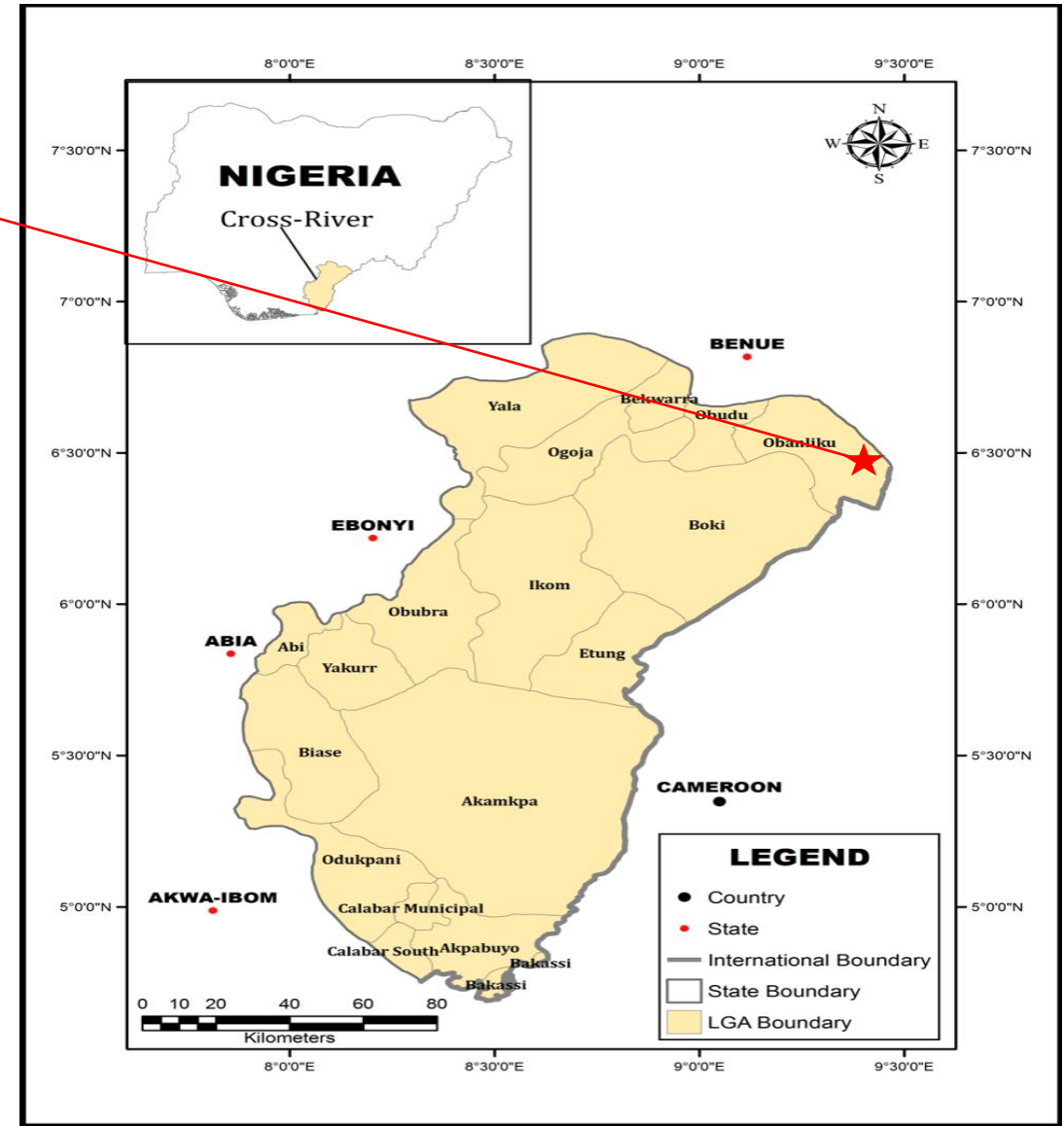
# The noun class system of Itang (Tivoid, Nigeria)



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# Itang: its speakers and locale

- under-described Tivoid; Nigeria
- 24,000 speakers = stable (Eberhard & al. 2023)
- Locale: Otanga, Obanliku LGA of Cross-River State
- At least two dialects: Kundeve and Besenge
- Pre-occupation: Christians, agriculturalist



Map of Cross River State showing the 18 Local Government Areas (modified). Source: Angba, Baines and Butler (2020).

# Previous studies on Itang

- No dedicated linguistic study of Itang
- Available linguistic information: Wordlists
  - Audio (Te Abo, 2010), Rück (2011)
  - Written (Blench, 2016)
- Recording of Christian evangelism (Joshua project, 2023)
  - Transcription required.

# The Itang noun classes

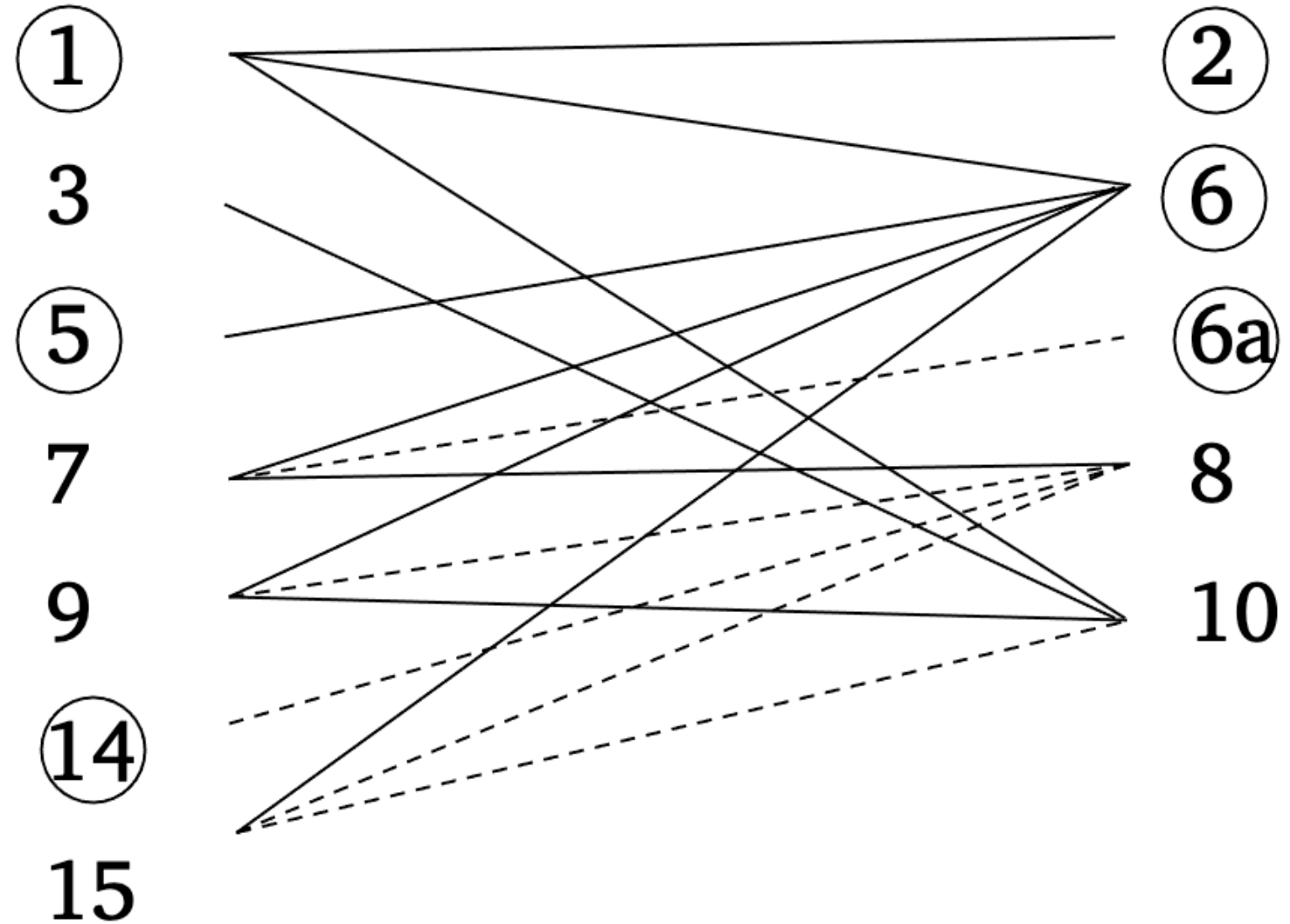
|    | NP <sub>x</sub> - -NS <sub>x</sub> | SM      | AL      | AUX   | DEM   | REL       | DET | ADJ,<br>(IN)DEF | POSS     | NUM | example                             |
|----|------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------|-------|-----------|-----|-----------------|----------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | - - , ù-, [...]                    | à- -    | ù- -    | ḡgū-  | ù- -  | ù-ḡgù- -  | ø-  | ù- -ø           | ùw- -    | ù-  | ḡl ‘person’<br>w-ān ‘child’         |
| 2  | ìy-, á- -v ,<br>[...]              | vá- -v  | á- -v   | m̄bā- | à- -  | à-mbā- -  | v-  | và- -v          | àv- -v   | á-  | ìy-ḡl ‘people’                      |
| 2a | m̄- -m                             |         |         |       |       |           | m-  | m̄- -m          |          |     | m̄y-ē-m ‘children’                  |
| 3  | ú- -                               | ú- -    | ú- -    | ḡgū-  | ú- -  | ú-ḡgū- -  | ø-  | ú- -ø           | úw- -    | ú-  | ú-túm ‘gun’                         |
| 5  | í- -                               | ì- -    | í- -    | ḡgī-  | í- -  | í-ḡgī- -  | ø-  | í- -ø           | íy- -    | í-  | í-tf̄r ‘intestine’                  |
| 6  | á- (-), á- -á                      | á- -    | á- -    | ḡgā-  | á- -  | á-ḡgā- -  | ø-  | á- -ø           | á- -     | á-  | á-sā ‘beads’                        |
| 6a | m̄- -m̄                            | m̄- -m̄ | m̄- -m̄ | m̄bū- | m̄- - | m̄-mbū- - | m-  | m̄- -m          | m̄v- -m̄ | m̄- | m̄-dz̄ilīnī-m<br>‘sandflies’        |
| 7  | í- -y                              | í- -y   | í- -y   | kī-   | í- -  | í-kí- -   | y-  | í- -y           | ík- -y   | í-  | í-yò-y ‘yam’                        |
| 8  | í- -v                              | ví- -v  | ví- -v  | m̄bī- | í- -  | í-mbí- -  | v-  | í- -v           | ív- -v   | í-  | í-f̄r-à-v ‘ginger’<br>í-yò-v ‘yams’ |
| 9  | ì- -                               | ì- -    | ì- -    | ḡgī-  | ì- -  | ì-ḡgì- -  | ø-  | ì- -ø           | ìy- -    | ì-  | ì-nām ‘meat’<br>ì-f̄à ‘bead’        |
| 10 | í- -                               | í- -    | í- -    | ḡgī-  | í- -  | í-ḡgī- -  | ø-  | í- -ø           | íy- -    | í-  | í-túm ‘guns’                        |
| 14 | í- -v                              | vú- -v  | vú- -v  | m̄bū- | ú- -  | ú-mbū- -  | v-  | ù- -v           | úv- -v   | ú-  | ú-yà-v ‘stomach’                    |
| 15 | ú- (-y)                            | ú- -y   | ú- -y   | kū-   | ú- -  | ù-kú-     | y-  | ú- -y           | ùk- -y   | ú-  | ú-tō-y ‘ear’                        |

# The Itang noun classes

- the noun class system has a solid Bantu etymology
- exhibits Tivoid specific complexities,
  - e.g. agreement marking via the concurrent use of noun class prefixes (NPx) and noun class suffixes (NSx)
  - complex agreement marker forms, e.g. homorganic nasal plus consonant plus vowel (NCV)
  - The suffixes are either exclusively tonal consist of a consonant plus (floating) tone
- the familiar Bantoid pattern of low tone for classes 1, 9 and 6a vs. high tone for the rest is preserved in all classes but classes 1, 2, and 6a

# The Itang gender system

- 15 noun class pairings
- 10 major, 5 minor pairings
- All twelve noun classes also occur as single class genders
- Classes 1, 2, 5, 6, 6a and 14 are major single genders



# The concordial system

- 5 prefix sets and 2 suffix sets
- suffix sets might have a common origin, i.e. one suffix set manipulated in different contexts
- suffixes does not seem as innovation, rather archaic markers on their way out. Evidence: class-dependent tone and null suffixes
- morphophonological and morphotonological processes of assimilation and fusion resulting in the amalgamation of gender markers and (lexical) roots.

|    | SmPx | AuxPx | PossPx | AMPx,<br>NumPx,<br>DemPx,<br>RelPx | AdjPx,<br>(in)defPx | SmSx,<br>PossSx,<br>AMSx,<br>DemSx | AdjSx,<br>(in)defSx<br>< DetPx |
|----|------|-------|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1  | à-   | ḡgù-  | ùw-    | ù-                                 | ù-                  | -`                                 | -∅(-)                          |
| 2  | vá-  | m̃bā- | àv-    | á-                                 | và-                 | -(v)´                              | -v(-)                          |
| 2a |      |       |        |                                    | m̃-                 |                                    | -m(-)                          |
| 3  | ú-   | ḡgū-  | úw-    | ú-                                 | ú-                  | -´                                 | ∅                              |
| 5  | ì-   | ḡgī-  | íy-    | í-                                 | í-                  | -´                                 | ∅                              |
| 6  | á-   | ḡgā-  | á-     | á-                                 | á-                  | -´                                 | ∅                              |
| 6a | m̃-  | m̃bū- | m̃v-   | m̃-                                | m̃-                 | -(m)´                              | -m(-)                          |
| 7  | í-   | ˠkí-  | ík-    | í-                                 | í-                  | -(γ)´                              | -γ(-)                          |
| 8  | ví-  | m̃bī- | ív-    | í-                                 | ví-                 | -(v)´                              | -v(-)                          |
| 9  | ì-   | ḡgì-  | ìy-    | ì-                                 | ì-                  | -`                                 | ∅                              |
| 10 | í-   | ḡgī-  | íy-    | í-                                 | í-                  | -´                                 | ∅                              |
| 14 | vú-  | m̃bū- | úv     | ú-                                 | vù-                 | -(v)´                              | -v(-)                          |
| 15 | ú-   | ˠkú-  | ùk-    | ú-                                 | ú-                  | -(γ)´                              | -γ(-)                          |

# Subject (pronominal) marker

| cl. | Px- -Sx | Full/free subject markers                                            | Reduced/bound subject markers                                    |
|-----|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | à- -`   | <b>à</b> -nà vā, ‘s/he came’, e.g., òl ‘person’                      | <b>à</b> = vā, ‘s/he came’, e.g., òl ‘person’                    |
| 2   | vá- -v´ | <b>vá</b> -nǎ-v vā, ‘they came’, e.g. ìy-òl ‘people’                 | <b>vá</b> = vā, ‘they came’, e.g. ìy-òl ‘people’                 |
| 3   | ú- -´   | <b>ú</b> -nǎ vā, ‘it came’, e.g. ú-dzú ‘fire’                        | <b>ú</b> = vā ‘it came’, e.g. ú-dzú ‘fire’                       |
| 5   | ì- -`   | <b>ì</b> -nà gbà, ‘it fell’ e.g. í-tsór ‘intestine’                  | <b>ì</b> = gbà, ‘it fell’ e.g. í-tsór ‘intestine’                |
| 6   | á- -´   | <b>á</b> -nǎ hàz, ‘they poured’, e.g. á-dzùr ‘spittle’               | <b>á</b> = hàz, ‘they poured’, e.g. á-dzùr ‘spittle’             |
| 6a  | m- -m´  | <b>m</b> -nǎ-m vā ‘they came’ m-kùlé-m ‘oil’                         | <b>m</b> = vā ‘they came’ m-kùlé-m ‘oil’                         |
| 7   | í- -y´  | <b>í</b> -nǎ-y gbà ‘it fell’, e.g. í-yò-y ‘yam’                      | <b>í</b> = gbà ‘it fell’, e.g. í-yò-y ‘yam’                      |
| 8   | ví- -v´ | <b>ví</b> -nǎ-v vā ‘they came’, e.g. í-yò-v ‘yam’                    | <b>ví</b> = vā ‘they came’, e.g. í-yò-v ‘yam’                    |
| 9   | ì- -`   | <b>ì</b> -nà gbà ‘it fell’ ì-nàm ‘animal’                            | <b>ì</b> = gbà ‘it fell’ ì-nàm ‘animal’                          |
| 10  | í- -´   | <b>í</b> -nǎ vā ‘they came’, e.g. í-dzú ‘fires’                      | <b>í</b> = vā ‘they came’, e.g. í-dzú ‘fires’                    |
| 14  | vú- -v´ | <b>vú</b> -nǎ-v mènɗ ‘it has germinated’, e.g., ú-sǎ-v ‘huckleberry’ | <b>vú</b> = mènɗ ‘it has germinated’, e.g., ú-sǎ-v ‘huckleberry’ |
| 15  | ú- -y´  | <b>ú</b> -nǎ-y vā ‘it came’ ú-vòl ‘lake’                             | <b>ú</b> = vā ‘it came’ ú-vòl ‘lake’                             |

# Associative linker (selection)

| cl. | Full associative construction      |                                                                       | Reduced associative construction |                                              | Zero-marked associative construction     |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|     | AP <sub>x</sub> - -AS <sub>x</sub> | N1 AP <sub>x</sub> <sub>N1</sub> -AL-AS <sub>x</sub> <sub>N1</sub> N2 | AP <sub>x</sub> =                | N1 AP <sub>x</sub> <sub>N1</sub> = N2        | N1 N2                                    |
| 1   | ù- -`                              | ù-nòm ù-nà ù-kás<br>'husband of a woman'                              | ù =                              | ù-nòm ù = ù-kás<br>'husband of a woman'      | ù-nòm ù-kás<br>'husband of a woman'      |
| 2   | á- -v´                             | á-nóm-óv á-nă-v ù-kwás<br>'husbands of a woman'                       | á =                              | á-nóm-óv á = ù-kwás<br>'husbands of a woman' | á-nóm-óv ù-kwás<br>'husbands of a woman' |
| 3   | ú- -´                              | ú-dzú ú-nă ù-kwás<br>'fire of a woman'                                | ú =                              | ú-dzú ú = ù-kwás<br>'fire of a woman'        | ú-dzú ù-kwás<br>'fire of a woman'        |
| 5   | í- -´                              | í-tfór í-nă ù-kwás<br>'intestine of a woman'                          | í =                              | í-tfór í = ù-kwás<br>'intestine of a woman'  | í-tfór ù-kwás<br>'intestine of a woman'  |
| 6   | á- -´                              | á-gbànd á-nă ù-kwās<br>'drums of a woman'                             | á =                              | á-gbànd á = ù-kwās<br>'drums of a woman'     | á-gbànd ù-kwās<br>'drums of a woman'     |
| 6a  | ń- -ń                              | ń-kúlé-ń ń-nà-ń ù-kwás<br>'oil of a woman'                            | ń =                              | ń-kúlé-ń ń = ù-kwás<br>'oil of a woman'      | ń-kúlé-ń ù-kwás<br>'oil of a woman'      |
| 7   | í- -y´                             | í-tó-y í-nă-y ù-kwás<br>'head of a woman'                             | í =                              | í-tó-y í = ù-kwás<br>'head of a woman'       | í-tó-y ù-kwás<br>'head of a woman'       |
| 8   | í- -v´                             | í-tó-v í-nă-v ù-kwás<br>'heads of a woman'                            | í =                              | í-tó-v í = ù-kwás<br>'heads of a woman'      | í-tó-v ù-kwás<br>'heads of a woman'      |

# The determiner-like enclitic

Head nouns in relative and associative constructions triggers a determiner-like element that encliticizes to the modifying element.

Structural function: headedness index

1a. Relative construction

*á-kás-év*                      *à-mbū-n*

2-woman-2                      2-2-REL

‘women that cry’

*vá* = *vàng-īn* = *ǎv*

2.SM = cry-PTCP = 2.ENC

b. Associative construction

*m̄-dzìlīn-īm*                      *m̄-nà-m̄*

6a-sandfly-6a                      6a-AL-6a

‘sandflies of a king’

*ū-tòl* = *ǎm*

1-king = 6a.ENC

c. Associative construction

*í-ná*                                      *í-nǎ*

5-land:5                                      5-AL:5

‘land of a king’

*ū-tòl* = *ǎ*

1-king = ENC

# The determiner-like enclitic

| Enclitic forms  | Examples (N1 of N2)                                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 = ' <i>v</i>  | <i>k &lt; w &gt; ās ù-nà ù-tòl = ǒ</i> 'wife of a king'       |
| 2 = <i>v</i> '  | <i>á-kás-év á-nǎ-v ū-tòl = ǒv</i> 'wives of a king'           |
| 3 = ' <i>v</i>  | <i>ú-dzú ú-nǎ ū-tòl = ǒ</i> 'fire of a king'                  |
| 5 = ' <i>v</i>  | <i>í-ná í-nǎ ū-tòl = ǒ</i> 'land of a king'                   |
| 6 = ' <i>v</i>  | <i>á-kám á-nǎ ū-tòl = ǒ</i> 'bricks of a king'                |
| 6a = <i>m</i> ' | <i>m̄-dzìlìn-ìm m̄-nā-m̄ ū-tòl = ǒm</i> 'sandflies of a king' |
| 7 = <i>y</i> '  | <i>í-tám-íy í-nǎ-y ū-tòl = ǒy</i> 'fruit of a king'           |
| 8 = <i>v</i> '  | <i>í-tó-v í-nǎ-v ū-tòl = ǒv</i> 'heads of a king'             |
| 9 = ' <i>v</i>  | <i>ì-nàm ū-tòl = ǒ</i> 'meat of a king'                       |
| 10 = ' <i>v</i> | <i>í-fénd ū-tòl = ǒ</i> 'ants of a king'                      |
| 14 = <i>v</i> ' | <i>ú-sǎ-v ù-tòl = ǒv</i> 'huckleberry of a king'              |
| 15 = <i>y</i> ' | <i>ú-vó-y ū-tòl = ǒy</i> 'hand of a king'                     |

# Adjectives

- Very few pure adjectives in Itang

- No tone or tonal agreement suffixes. Origin from enclitic?

|    | AdjPx- -AdjSx | examples                                  |
|----|---------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1  | ù-            | <i>w-ān ù-tān</i> 'big child'             |
| 2  | và- -v        | <i>ìy-òl vā-tān-èv</i> 'big people'       |
| 2a | m̄- -m        | <i>m̄y-ē-m m̄-tān-īm</i> 'big children'   |
| 3  | ú-            | <i>ú-dzú ú-tān</i> 'big fire'             |
| 5  | í-            | <i>í-ŋgòn í-tān</i> 'big stone'           |
| 6  | á-            | <i>á-dzǒv á-tān</i> 'big goblins'         |
| 6a | m̄- -m        | <i>m̄-kūlé-m̄ m̄-niàn-īm</i> 'red oil'    |
| 7  | í- -γ         | <i>í-kòñ-ùγ ī-tān-īγ</i> 'big chair'      |
| 8  | ví- -v        | <i>í-kòñ-ùv vī-tān-ìv</i> 'big chair'     |
| 9  | ì-            | <i>ì-dzòv ì-tān</i> 'big goblin'          |
| 10 | í-            | <i>í-dzú í-tān</i> 'big fires'            |
| 14 | vù- -v        | <i>ú-sǒ-v vù-tān-ìv</i> 'big huckleberry' |
| 15 | ú- -γ         | <i>ú-tó-γ ù-tān-īγ</i> 'big ear'          |

# Auxiliary (Present continuous)

- Auxiliary agreement formular:

SM + AuxPx + AuxR

- SM obligatorily precede AuxPx

- Here, SM tone is obligatorily low across noun classes

|    | SM = | AuxPx | examples                                             |
|----|------|-------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | à =  | ṛgù-  | ù-bāl à = ṛgù-ī hā:-n ‘salt is pouring’              |
| 2  | và = | m̃bá- | á-nōm-úv ṽà = m̃bā-í vā:-n ‘husbands are coming’    |
| 3  | ù =  | ṛgú-  | ú-dzú ù = ṛgū-í vā:-n ‘fire is coming’               |
| 5  | ì =  | ṛgī-  | í-ṛgòn ì = ṛgī-í gbà:-n ‘a stone is falling’         |
| 6  | à =  | ṛgá-  | á-dzùr à = ṛgá-í hā:-n ‘spittle is pouring’          |
| 6a | m̃ = | m̃bú- | m̃-kúlé-m̃ m̃ = m̃bū-ì hā:-n ‘oil is coming’         |
| 7  | ì =  | `kī-  | í-tám-íy ì = kī-ì gbà:-n ‘a fruit is falling’        |
| 8  | vì = | m̃bī- | í-kòn-ùv ṽì = m̃bī-ì gbà:-n ‘chairs are falling’    |
| 9  | ì =  | ṛgì-  | ìy-ìvè ì = ṛgī-ì gbàn ‘a wild mango is falling’      |
| 10 | ì =  | ṛgī-  | ú-dzú ì = ṛgī-í vā:-n ‘fires are coming’             |
| 14 | vù = | m̃bú- | ú-sǎ-v vù = m̃bū-ī m̃ènd-ìn ‘huckleberry is growing’ |
| 15 | ù =  | `kú-  | ú-tó-y ù = kū-ì gbà:-n an ear is falling             |

# Demonstratives (non-identificational)

|    |        | DEM1                                     | DEM2                                      |
|----|--------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1  | ù- -`  | <i>nōm ù-nē</i> ‘this husband’           | <i>nōm ù-mō</i> ‘that husband’            |
| 2  | à- -`  | <i>á-nōm-ùv à-mbā-n</i> ‘these husbands’ | <i>á-nōm-ùv à-mbū-mō</i> ‘those husbands’ |
| 3  | ú- -´  | <i>ú-dzú ú-né</i> ‘this fire’            | <i>ú-dzú ú-mó</i> ‘that fire’             |
| 5  | í- -´  | <i>í-kòl í-né</i> ‘this farm’            | <i>í-kòl í-mó</i> ‘that farm’             |
| 6  | á- -´  | <i>á-dzǎv á-né</i> ‘these goblins’       | <i>á-dzǎv á-mó</i> ‘these goblins’        |
| 6a | ím- -´ | <i>ím-kúlé-ím ím-né</i> ‘these oil’      | <i>ím-kúlé-ím ím-mó</i> ‘those oil’       |
| 7  | í- -´  | <i>í-kòn-ùγ í-né</i> ‘this chair’        | <i>í-kòn-ùγ í-mó</i> ‘that chair’         |
| 8  | í- -´  | <i>í-kòn-ùv í-né</i> ‘these chairs’      | <i>í-kòn-ùv í-mó</i> ‘those chairs’       |
| 9  | ì- -`  | <i>ì-dzǎv ì-nē</i> ‘this goblin’         | <i>ì-dzǎv ì-mō</i> ‘that goblin’          |
| 10 | í- -´  | <i>í-dzú í-né</i> ‘these fires’          | <i>í-dzú í-mó</i> ‘those fires’           |
| 14 | í- -´  | <i>ú-sǎ-v ú-né</i> ‘this huckleberry’    | <i>ú-sǎ-v ú-mó</i> ‘that huckleberry’     |
| 15 | ú- -´  | <i>ú-vò-γ ú-né</i> ‘this lake’           | <i>ú-vò-γ ú-mó</i> ‘that lake’            |

# Demonstratives (non-identificational)

|    | DEM1                                                                              | DEM2                                                                   |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <i>ḡgù-</i> <i>ù-nōm ù-ḡgù-n</i><br>‘this husband’ (LIT: husband is this)         | <i>ù-nōm ù-ḡgù-m̃</i><br>‘that husband’ (LIT: husband is that )        |
| 2  | <i>m̃bá-</i> <i>á-nōm-ùv á-mbā-n</i><br>‘these husbands’ (LIT: husband are these) | <i>á-nōm-ùv á-mbū-m̃</i><br>‘those husbands’ (LIT: husbands are those) |
| 3  | <i>ḡgú-</i> <i>ú-dzú ú-ḡgū-n</i><br>‘this fire’ (LIT: fire is this )              | <i>ú-dzú ú-ḡgū-m̃</i><br>‘that fire’ (LIT: fire is that )              |
| 5  | <i>ḡgī-</i> <i>í-ḡgòn í-ḡgī-n</i><br>‘this stone’ (LIT: stone is this )           | <i>í-ḡgòn í-ḡgū-m̃</i><br>‘that stone’ (LIT: stone is that)            |
| 6  | <i>ḡgá-</i> <i>á-dzǎv á-ḡgā-n</i><br>‘these goblins’ (LIT: goblins are these)     | <i>á-dzǎv á-ḡgú-m̃</i><br>‘these goblins’ (LIT: goblins are those)     |
| 6a | <i>m̃bú-</i> <i>m̃-kúlé-m̃ m̃-mbū-n</i><br>‘these oil’ (LIT: oil is this )        | <i>m̃-kúlé-m̃ m̃-mbū-m̃</i><br>‘those oil’ (LIT: oil is that)          |
| 7  | <i>‘kī-</i> <i>í-yò-γ í-kí-n</i><br>‘this yam’ (LIT: yam is this)                 | <i>í-yò-γ í-kú-m̃</i><br>‘that yam’ (LIT: yam is that)                 |
| 8  | <i>m̃bī-</i> <i>í-yò-v í-mbí-n</i><br>‘these yams’ (LIT: yams are these)          | <i>í-yò-v í-mbú-m̃</i><br>‘those yams’ (LIT: yams are those)           |
| 9  | <i>ḡgì-</i> <i>ì-dzǎv ì-ḡgì-n</i><br>‘this goblin’ (LIT: goblin is this )         | <i>ì-dzǎv ì-ḡgù-m̃</i><br>‘that goblin’ (LIT: goblin is that)          |

# Possessive pronouns

Possessive suffixes include (floating) tone

- VC prefixes analysis:

- Classes 1, 3, 5, 9 and 10 VC prefixes < agreement vowel prefixes plus corresponding labial or palatal glides
- Classes 2, 7, 8, 14 and 15 VC prefixes < morphological metathesis, i.e., ‘when a morphological category is exclusively realised via methathesis’ (Edwards, 2020: 26)

|    |          | examples                                              |
|----|----------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | ùw- -`   | m̀-ηgādzemb <b>ùw</b> -òù ‘your cricket’              |
| 2  | àv- -v´  | ù-m̀-ηgādzemb <b>àv</b> -ōú- <b>v</b> ‘your crickets’ |
| 3  | úw- -´   | ú-dzú <b>úw</b> -óú ‘your fire’                       |
| 5  | íy- -´   | í-tʃɔr <b>íy</b> -óú ‘your intestine’                 |
| 6  | á- -´    | á-dzɔv <b>á</b> -óú ‘your goblins’                    |
| 6a | m̀v- -m´ | m̀-kúlé-m̀ <b>m̀v</b> -ōū- <b>m</b> ‘your oil’        |
| 7  | ík- -y´  | í-yò-y <b>ík</b> -óú- <b>y</b> ‘your yam’             |
| 8  | ív- -v´  | í-yò-v <b>ív</b> -óú- <b>v</b> ‘your yams’            |
| 9  | ìy- -`   | ì-dzɔ̀v <b>ìy</b> -òù ‘your goblin’                   |
| 10 | íy- -´   | í-dzú <b>íy</b> -óú ‘your fires’                      |
| 14 | úv- -v´  | ú-sɔ́-v <b>úv</b> -óú- <b>v</b> ‘your huckleberry’    |
| 15 | ùk- -y´  | ú-vòl <b>úk</b> -óú- <b>y</b> ‘your lake’             |

# Noun forms

Two sets of noun forms: A-forms vs. B-forms (variability exponence)

2a.    *í-yò-ɣ*            *í-nǎ-ɣ*            k < w > ás  
      7-yam-7            7-AL-7            1.woman < 1 >  
      ‘yam of a woman’

b.        k < w > ás            ù-nà            *ĩ-yǒ*  
      1.woman < 1 > 1-AL:1    7-yam:ENC  
      ‘woman of yam’ = ‘female yam seller’

B-forms features:

- Context dependence: N2s in N1 of N2 associative constructions and complements of prepositions
- suffixless
- low tone prefixes
- class-dependence, i.e. in all classes but classes 1 and 9

|    | A-forms                                                                           | B-forms                                                                      | examples (in A-forms)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | ù-<br>ṁḁ- -<br>-<br>w-<br>- <w> (-y)<br>ṁ-<br>á- -<br>à- -<br>í-<br>ì- -<br>mà- - | ù-<br>ṁḁ- -<br>-<br>w-<br>- <w><br>ṁ-<br>á- -<br>à- -<br>í-<br>ì- -<br>mà- - | ù-pāv ‘broken piece’, ù-yī thief<br>mḁ-ṅgādzèmb ‘cricket’<br>nōm ‘husband’<br>w-ān child<br>k <w> ās woman, k <w> à-y ‘thing’<br>ṁ-ṅgō mother<br>á-sōrō mushroom of a type<br>à-tòṅgō ‘agile frog’<br>í-fām ‘frog’<br>ì-gòhò ‘plucking stick’<br>mà-kùn ‘peace’ |
| 2  | ù- -(v)<br>(v)á- -v<br>(v)à- -v<br>ìy- -<br>m̃y- -m<br>(v)á-                      | ù-<br>(v)à-<br>(v)à-<br>ìy-<br>m̃y-<br>(v)à-                                 | ù-mḁ-ṅgādzèmb ‘crickets’, ù-ṅgō ‘mothers’, ù-kpàtīmà-v ‘cats’<br>á-nōm-úv ‘husbands’, á-kás-év ‘women’<br>(v)à-yī-v ‘thieves’<br>ìy-òl ‘people’<br>m̃y-ē-m ‘children’<br>á-nómbùsò ‘males’, vá-í-fām ‘frogs’                                                    |
| 3  | ú- -                                                                              | ù-                                                                           | ú-tál ‘world’, ú-òs ‘broom’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 5  | í- -                                                                              | ì-                                                                           | í-kómún ‘locust’, í-ṅgòn ‘stones’                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 6  | á- (-)                                                                            | à-                                                                           | á-dzǒv ‘goblins’, á-tòn ‘halves’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 6a | m̃- -ṁ, m(á)- -m                                                                  | m̃-                                                                          | m̃-kúlé-m̃ ‘oil’, m̃-dzìlīnī-m ‘sandflies’, má-sòl-ùm ‘drinks’                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7  | í- -y                                                                             | ì-                                                                           | í-dzìlīnī-y ‘sandfly’, í-yò-y ‘yam’                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 8  | í- -y                                                                             | ì-                                                                           | í-fúrà-v ‘ginger’, í-yò-v ‘yams’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 9  | ì- -                                                                              | ì- -                                                                         | ì-dzòv ‘goblin’, ì-dzòl ‘water, well’                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 10 | í- -                                                                              | ì-                                                                           | í-túm ‘guns’, íy-òs ‘brooms’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 14 | ú- -v                                                                             | ù-                                                                           | ú-sǒ-v ‘huckleberry’, ú-yà-v ‘stomach’                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 15 | ú- -y                                                                             | ù-                                                                           | ú-vòl-ūy ‘leg’, ú-vò-y ‘hand/arm’                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

# Singular-plural correlations of noun prefixes (A-forms)

| SG                                                 | PL                  | Examples                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><i>mò-</i></p> <p>Ø</p>                         | <p><i>ù-</i></p>    | <p><i>mò-ŋgādzèmb ~ ù-mò-ŋgādzèmb</i> ‘cricket/s’, <i>òn-ŋgō ~ ù-ŋgō</i> ‘mother/s’, <i>tĩl ~ ù-tĩl</i> ‘father/s’, <i>tébùr ~ ù-tébùr</i> ‘table/s’</p>                                                                               |
| <p><i>òn-</i></p> <p><i>ù-</i></p> <p><i>-</i></p> | <p><i>ìy-</i></p>   | <p><i>òl ~ ìy-òl</i> ‘person’</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <p><i>à-</i></p> <p><i>- &lt;w&gt;</i></p>         | <p><i>v(á)-</i></p> | <p><i>ù-yĩ ~ vá-yĩ</i> ‘thief/s’, <i>k &lt;w&gt; ās ~ vá-kás-év</i> ‘woman/s’, <i>nòm ~ vá-nóm-ón</i> ‘husband/s’, <i>à-bù ~ v-à-bù</i> ‘barn/s’, <i>í-fàm ~ v-í-fàm</i> ‘frog/s’, <i>á-sòrō ~ v-á-sòrō</i> ‘mushroom of a type/s’</p> |
| <p><i>á-</i></p> <p><i>w-</i></p>                  | <p><i>á-</i></p>    | <p><i>ú-vòl-ūy ~ á-vòl</i> ‘leg/s’, <i>ì-dzòv ~ á-dzòv</i> ‘goblin/s’, <i>k &lt;w&gt; àr-y ~ á-kàr</i> ‘thing/s’</p>                                                                                                                   |
| <p><i>ì-</i></p>                                   | <p><i>m(y)-</i></p> | <p><i>w-ān ~ m̃y-ē-m</i> ‘child/ren’</p>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p><i>ú-</i></p> <p><i>í-</i></p>                  | <p><i>í-</i></p>    | <p><i>ì-nàm ~ í-nàm</i> ‘animal/s’, <i>ú-òs ~ íy-òs</i> ‘broom/s’, <i>ú-yà-v ~ í-yà-v</i> ‘stomach/s’, <i>í-yò-y ~ í-yò-v</i> ‘yam/s’</p>                                                                                              |

# Singular-plural correlations of noun suffixes

| SG    | PL    | Examples                                                                                                                                              |
|-------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| -γ(́) | -v(́) | <i>í-yò-γ ~ í-yò-v</i> ‘yam/s’, <i>ú-yà-v ~ í-yà-v</i> ‘stomach/s’, <i>nôm ~ vá-nóm-ón</i> ‘husband/s’, <i>k &lt; w &gt; ās ~ vá-kás-év</i> ‘woman/s’ |
| -v(́) | -m(́) | <i>í-dzìlīnĩ-γ ~ m-dzìlīnĩ-m</i> ‘sandfly’                                                                                                            |
| ∅     | ∅     | <i>í-fàm ~ v-í-fàm</i> ‘frog/s’                                                                                                                       |
| -`    | -`    | <i>à-tòṅgō ~ v-à-tòṅgō</i> ‘Agile frog/s’                                                                                                             |
| -´    | -´    | <i>k &lt; w &gt; àr-γ ~ á-kǎr</i> ‘thing/s’, <i>í-kómún ~ á-kómún</i> ‘locust/s’                                                                      |

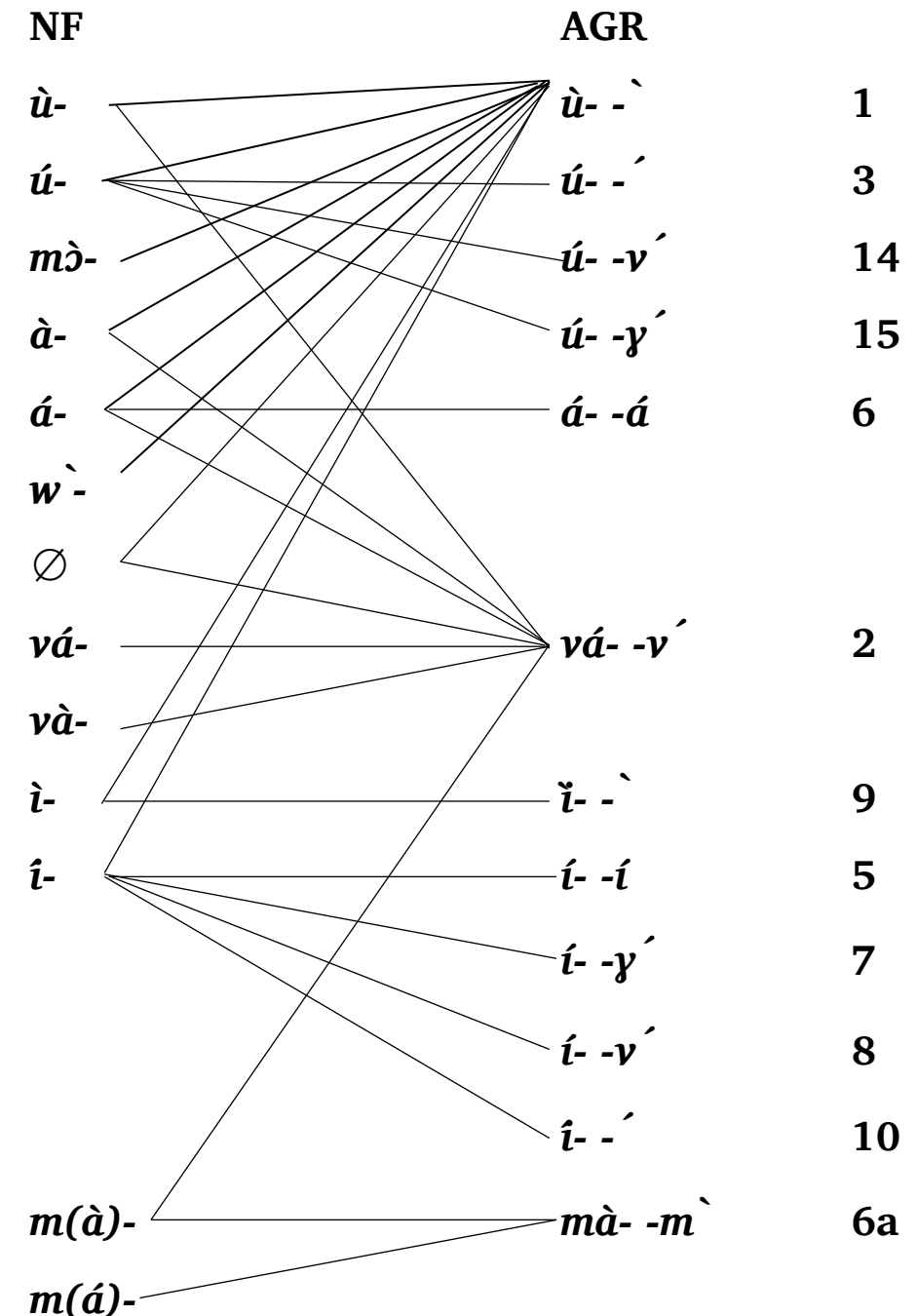
# Singular-plural correlations of noun prefixes (B-forms)

| SG                                 | PL           | Examples                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>mò-</i><br><i>∅</i>             | <i>ù-</i>    | <i>mò-ŋgādzèmb</i> ~ <i>ù-mò-ŋgādzèmb</i> ‘cricket/s’, <i>ṇ-ŋgō</i> ~ <i>ù-ŋgō</i> ‘mother/s’, <i>tĩl</i> ~ <i>ù-tĩl</i> ‘father/s’, <i>tébù:</i> ~ <i>ù-tébù:</i> ‘table/s’                                                                                               |
| <i>ṇ-</i><br><i>ù-</i><br><i>-</i> | <i>ìy-</i>   | <i>òl</i> ~ <i>ìy-òl</i> ‘person’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>à-</i><br><i>-</i> <w>          | <i>v(à)-</i> | <i>ù-yī</i> ~ <i>vá-yī</i> ‘thief/s’, <i>k</i> <w> <i>ās</i> ~ <i>vá-kás-év</i> ‘woman/s’, <i>nōm</i> ~ <i>vá-nóm-ón</i> ‘husband/s’, <i>à-bù</i> ~ <i>v-à-bù</i> ‘barn/s’, <i>í-fàm</i> ~ <i>v-í-fàm</i> ‘frog/s’, <i>á-sòrō</i> ~ <i>v-á-sòrō</i> ‘mushroom of a type/s’ |
| <i>á-</i><br><i>w-</i>             | <i>à-</i>    | <i>ú-vòl-ūy</i> ~ <i>á-vòl</i> ‘leg/s’, <i>ì-dzòv</i> ~ <i>á-dzòv</i> ‘goblin/s’, <i>k</i> <w> <i>à:γ</i> ~ <i>á-kà:</i> ‘thing/s’                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>ì-</i>                          | <i>m(y)-</i> | <i>w-ān</i> ~ <i>m̃y-ē-m</i> ‘child/ren’                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                    | <i>ĩ-</i>    | <i>ì-ṇàm</i> ~ <i>í-ṇàm</i> ‘animal/s’, <i>ú-òs</i> ~ <i>íy-òs</i> ‘broom/s’, <i>ú-yà-v</i> ~ <i>í-yà-v</i> ‘stomach/s’, <i>í-yò-γ</i> ~ <i>í-yò-v</i> ‘yam/s’                                                                                                             |

## Mapping of noun forms on agreement classes (A-forms)

high variability of noun forms  
assigned to agreement classes 1 and 2:

- loanword integration in gender 1/2
- interpretation of morphophonological features, e.g. glides, as noun forms
- Loss of initial (weakened) consonants in some noun forms, e.g. *vá-*, *và-* > *á-*, *à-*
- transnumeral nouns



# Conclusion

- full fledged noun class system of Benue-Congo type
- noun class indexation by circumfixation in noun forms and agreement markers
- morphophonological and morphotonological processes of assimilation and fusion resulting in the amalgamation of gender markers and (lexical) roots.
- Role of noun class indexing enclitic
- Importance of tone in morphological analysis: disentangling grammemes from lexical roots
- concurrent to an incipient numeral classifier system



**Thank you for your attention**