

Associative constructions of Tivoid languages (Nigeria/Cameroon)

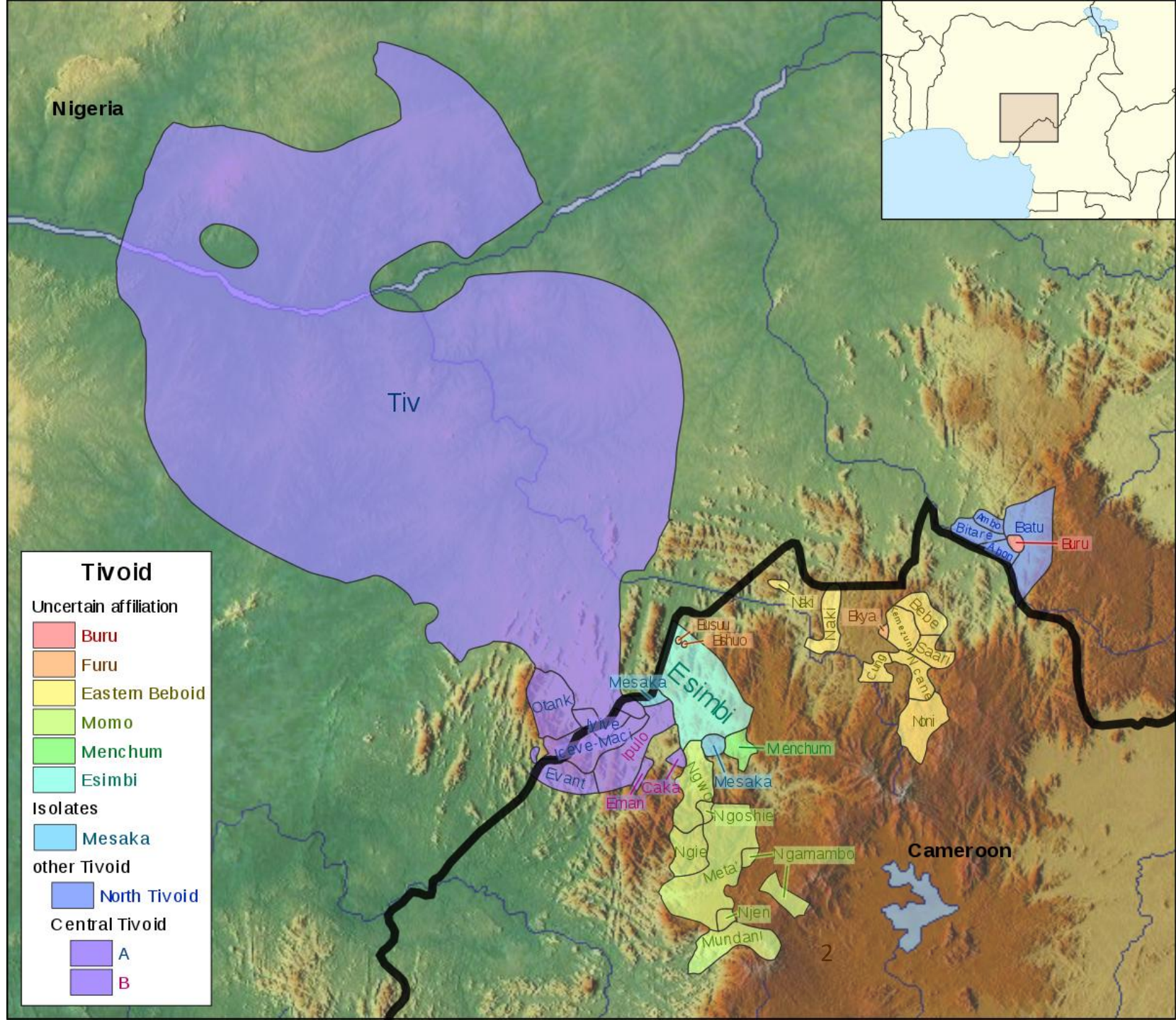
Michael T. Angitso & Roland Kießling

27 ICHL , Santiago de Chile 18. - 22.08.2025

NuClaBA project (“Numeral classifiers of the Benue-Congo languages of Africa”)

Tiv and Tivoid

- Tiv and the distribution of related Tivoid languages in Nigeria / Cameroon
- 6 million speakers (Eberhard, etal, 2025)
- Bantoid gender system, various Tivoid complexities (e.g. circumfixation of adnominal class markers)



Tiv noun class system

	NAx	Pronominal proclitics	enclitic	example
		AM, REL		
1	ø-, à-, m̀-, w-, -m, (w)án-, òr- [...]	ù =	= ´	<i>k < w > āsē</i> ‘woman’, <i>òr</i> ‘person’
1a	ø- -pé, ø- -pè	pè =		<i>mà-pè</i> ‘(some)place’
2	m̀bà- -v´, m̀bā- -v´, ú- -v´ [...]	m̀bā =	= v´	<i>kásé-v</i> ‘women’
2a	ì- -`, í- -´			<i>ì-òr</i> ‘people’
3	ú- -	ú =	= ´	<i>ú-kôn</i> ‘tree’
5	í- -´	í =	= ´	<i>íy-wēn</i> ‘stone’
6	á- -´	á =	= ´	<i>á-wēn</i> ‘stones’
6a	m̀- -m̀	m̀má =	= m´	<i>m̀-kōn-ùmí</i> ‘chairs’
7	í- -y´	kī =	= y´	<i>í-kyōn-ũy</i> ‘chair’
8	í- -v´	m̀bí =	= v´	<i>í-yǎ-v</i> ‘bellies’
9	ì- (-`)	ì =	= ´	<i>ì-nàm</i> ‘animal’
10	í- -´	í =	= ´	<i>í-nām</i> ‘animals’
14	ú- -v´	m̀bú =	= v´	<i>ú-táhá-v</i> ‘power’
14a	í- -v´			<i>í-yǎ-v</i> ‘belly’
14b	ú- -y´			<i>ú-tú-y</i> ‘night’
15	ú- -y´	kū =	= y´	<i>ú-wé-y</i> ‘hand’

Table 1: Tiv noun class system: noun affixes and concords

Associative constructions

1a Possession

<i>í-kyón-űy</i>	<i>kí</i>	<i>tòr</i>
7-chair-7	7.AM	1.king
'chair of a lking'		

b Part-whole

<i>í-tyám-éy</i>	<i>kí</i>	<i>ù-kōn</i>
7-fruit-7	7.AM	3-tree
'fruit of a tree'		

Noun-noun semantic variation

- Twelve types of semantic relationship between nouns:
 - Possession
 - Part - whole
 - Product - material
 - Container - content
 - Animate - place
 - Item - purpose
 - Place - use
 - Time - use
 - Property assignment (attribute-attributed)
 - (inter)personal Relationship
 - Classification (classifier-classified)
 - Taxonomy (subordinate-superordinate)

Product - material

2a *í-kyón-ǔy* *kí* *ù-kōn*
7-chair-7 7.AM 3-wood
'chair of wood' = 'wooden chair'

b *tsūà* *ù* *ǐ-yò*
1.pot 1.AM 7-iron
'pot of iron' = 'iron pot'

Container - content

3a *ĩ-fēy* *ĩ* *ĩ-tyò*
 9-keg 9.A M 9-palm_wine
 ‘keg of palm wine’

b *í-kpyé* *í* *bíà*
 5-bottle:5 5.A M 1.beer
 ‘bottle of beer’

Animate - place

- 4a *k < w > āsē* *kwāndè*
 1.woman < 1 > kwande
 ‘woman of kwande’ = ‘woman from kwande’
- b *ĩ-nàm* *ù-tōhō*
 9-animal 3-bush
 ‘animal of bush’ = ‘wild animal’
- c *ĩ-kyōn* *m̃-ŋgě*
 10-tree:10 6a-water
 ‘trees of water’ = ‘aquatic trees’

Item - purpose

5a	<i>ĩ-fēy</i> 9-keg 'keg of palm wine'	<i>ĩ</i> 9.A M	<i>ĩ-tyò</i> 9-palm_wine
b	<i>ĩ-kyōndō</i> 9-cloth 'cloth of farm'	<i>ĩ</i> 9.A M	<i>ù-sūlē</i> 3-farm

Place of use

- 6a *à-tè* *ĩ-dzĩ*
1-traditional_palor 5-judgement
‘traditional palor of judgement’ = ‘law court’
- b *ú-témbé* *kàsūwā*
3-courtyard:31.market
‘courtyard of market’ = ‘marketplace/square’

Time of use

7a *ĩ-yāṅgē* *ĩ* *àdūà*
9-day 9.AM 1.church_service
‘day of church service’ = ‘sunday’

b *ĩ-ſièn* *ĩ* *m-dzùṅgū*
9-time 9.AM 1-sorrow
‘time of sorrow’ = ‘lent’

Property assignment (attribute - attributed)

- 8a *tìḁn* *k < w > āsē*
1.vertical_partition 1.woman < 1 >
'short of woman' = 'short woman'
- b *á-tsávē:* *ù-ḁn*
6-worthless:6 2-child
'worthless of children' = 'worthless children'

(inter)personal Relationship

9a *ŋg̃* *ù = k < w > āsē*
1.mother 1.AM = 1.woman < 1 >
‘mother of a woman’

b **ĩ-ĩlò:** **ĩ = tòr**
9-fiancée **9.A M = 1.king**
‘fiancée of a king’

Classification (classifier - classified)

10a *ĩ-fàṅgè* *ĩ* *à-bā:tsā:* *myǎ:m*
 9-seed:9 9.AM 6-letter 9.one
 ‘one letter’ = ‘one seed of letter’

b *î-kyā* *î* *ákpùkpá* *î-tyār*
 10-leaf:10 10.AM 1.pudding 10-three
 ‘three puddings’ = ‘three leaves of pudding’

Taxonomy

11a *à-gbùm* *ù = ĩ-kȳ:*
1-water _ snail 1.AM = 9-snail
'water snail of snail' = 'water snail (type)'

b *ĩ-gbyōl* *ĩ = ĩ-ywèn*
9-gravel:9 9.AM = 5-stone
'gravel of stone' = 'gravel (type)'

Associative construction types

Four different types of associative constructions:

- Type I = AGR associative maker forms
- Type II = AGR^L associative maker forms
- Type III = AGR-CON associative maker forms
- Type IV = zero associative maker forms

Associative Construction types - details

Class	AGR (Type I)	AGR ^L (Type II)	AGR-CON (Type III)	Null (Type IV)
1	$\grave{u} =$			$\emptyset$
2	$\grave{m}b\bar{a} =$	$\grave{m}b\grave{a} =$		
3	$\acute{u} =$			
5	$\acute{i} =$			
6	$\acute{a} =$		$\acute{a}-\grave{a} =$	
6a	$\grave{m}m\bar{a} =$	$\grave{m}m\grave{a} =$		
7	$k\acute{i} =$	$k\grave{i} =$		
8	$\grave{m}b\bar{i} =$	$\grave{m}b\grave{i} =$		
9	$\grave{i} =$			
10	$\acute{i} =$			
14	$\grave{m}b\bar{u} =$	$\grave{m}b\grave{u} =$		
15	$k\acute{u} =$	$k\acute{u} =$		

Associative construction type illustration:

12a	Type I: <i>î-kyón-ũy</i> 7-chair-7 'chair of a king'	<i>kí</i> 7.A M	<i>tòr</i> 1.king
b	Type II: <i>î-kyón-ũy</i> 7-chair-7 'chair of a God'	<i>kì</i> 7.A M	<i>ā̀ndù</i> 1.god
c	Type III: <i>á-kōndū</i> 6-cloth:6 'cloths of a king'	<i>á-ā</i> 6-A M	<i>tòr</i> 1.king
d	Type IV: <i>kásé-ν</i> 2:woman-2 'women of Gboko' = 'women from Gboko'	<i>gbô:kò</i> 1.gboko	

Mapping of semantic functions on associative construction types

Associative construction Type	Mapped semantic interpretation
I	Actual possession, part – whole, product – material, classification, place – use, time – use
II	constructive possession, taxonomy, container –content, Item - purpose, (inter)personal relations
III	? possession
IV	Property assignment, animate – place

Table 2: Mapping of the semantic functions on the associative construction types

Personal relationship (Type II) vs. Property assignment (Type IV)

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	Personal relationship (type II)	Property assignment (type IV)
$\emptyset = \sim \dot{u} =$	$n\bar{o}m$ 1.husband:1 1.AM = 9-pig 'husband of a pig'	$n\bar{o}m$ 1.husband:1 9-pig 'husband of pig' = 'male pig'
$\emptyset = \sim \dot{u} =$	$ng\bar{5}$ 1.mother 1.AM = 9-pig 'mother of a pig'	$ng\bar{5}$ 1.mother pig 'mother of a pig' = 'female pig'

Personal relationship (Type II) vs. animate – place (Type IV)

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Personal relationship (type II)	animate – place (type IV)
$k < w > \bar{a} s \bar{e}$ 1.woman < 1 > $\dot{u} = kw\acute{a}nd\grave{e}$ 1.AM = kwande ‘woman of kwande’ = ‘wife of kwande’	$k < w > \bar{a} s \bar{e}$ $kw\acute{a}nd\grave{e}$ 1.woman < 1 > kwande ‘woman from kwande’ LIT: ‘woman of kwande’
$\grave{o}r$ $\dot{u} = kw\bar{a}nd\grave{e}$ 1.person 1.AM = kwande ‘man of kwande’, e.g. a supporter	$\grave{o}r$ $kw\bar{a}nd\grave{e}$ 1.person kwande ‘man from kwande’ LIT: ‘man of kwande’

Part– whole (Type I) vs. Taxonomy (Type II)

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Part - Whole	Taxonomy
<i>í-tyám-éy</i> 7-fruit-7 ‘fruit of a tree’ <i>kí = ū-kōn</i> 7.AM = 3-tree	<i>í-tyám-éy</i> 7-fruit-7 ‘fruit of mango’ <i>kì = mánɡò</i> 7.AM = 1.mango
<i>*í-tyám-éy</i> 7-fruit-7 ‘fruit of a tree’ <i>kĩ = ū-kōn</i> 7.AM = 3-tree	<i>*í-tyám-éy</i> 7-fruit-7 ‘fruit of mango’ <i>kĩ = mánɡò</i> 7.AM = 1.mango

- **Actual possession vs. constructive possession**

16a Actual possession

î-kyón-ǔy

7-chair-7

‘chair of a Myom’

kí

7.A M

myōm

myom

b Constructive possession

î-kyón-ǔy

7-chair-7

‘chair of a Myom’

kì

7.A M

myōm

myom

Alienable vs. inalienable possessions

Alienable (type I) vs. inalienable possession (type I + enclitic)

17a Inalienable possession

î-kyón-ǔy

7-chair-7

‘chair of a king’ = ‘throne’

kí

7.AM

tòr = ǔy

1.king = 7.CL

b Alienable possession

î-kyón-ǔy

7-chair-7

‘chair of a king’ (= just any chair belonging to the king)

kí

7.AM

tòr

1.king

Metaphorical extension entailed by alienability contrast

18a Body part (inalienable)

<i>m̃</i>	<i>néngè</i>	<i>ā̃</i>	<u><i>á-fē</i></u>	<u><i>á-ā</i></u>	<u><i>tòr = '</i></u>
1SG	see	with	<u>6-eye:6</u>	<u>6-AM</u>	<u>1.king = CL</u>

‘I saw the eyes of a king’ = ‘royal eyes’

b Public office (metaphorical extension) (alienable)

<i>m̃</i>	<i>néngè</i>	<i>ā̃</i>	<u><i>á-fē</i></u>	<u><i>á-ā</i></u>	<u><i>tòr</i></u>
1SG	see	with	<u>6-eye:6</u>	<u>6-AM</u>	<u>1.king</u>

‘I saw a ceremonial representative of a king’

Productivity of the alienability contrast

19a Alienable:

sí *vā* *ā̃* *òr* *ù* *ĩ-třĩvĩ̃*
1PL come with 1.person 1.AM 5-honour
'we came with a person of honour' (alienable)

b Inalienable:

sí *vā* *ā̃* *òr* *ù* *ĩ-třĩvĩr = ĭ̃γ*
1PL come with 1.person 1.AM 5-honour = 7.CL
'we came with an honourable person' (usually, in reference to the king)

Alienability contrast depends on cultural conditions

20a Alienable possession

í-kyón-űy

7-chair-7

‘chair of a chief’

kì

7.AM

dzākī

1.chief

*b Inalienable possession

í-kyón-űy

7-chair-7

‘chair of a chief’ = ‘throne’

kí

7.AM

dzākĩ = y

1.chief = 7.CL

Conclusion

- High degree of different semantic interpretations
- Mapping of semantic interpretation to morphosyntactic types of associative constructions.
- Semantic subtypes/shades of possession: actual (Type I) and constructive (Type II) possession. Type III ???
- Marked subtypes of possession: alienable vs. inalienable
 - Subject to:
 - Metaphoric extension
 - Cultural principles

Many bags of thanks und ein Bündel Dank

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