

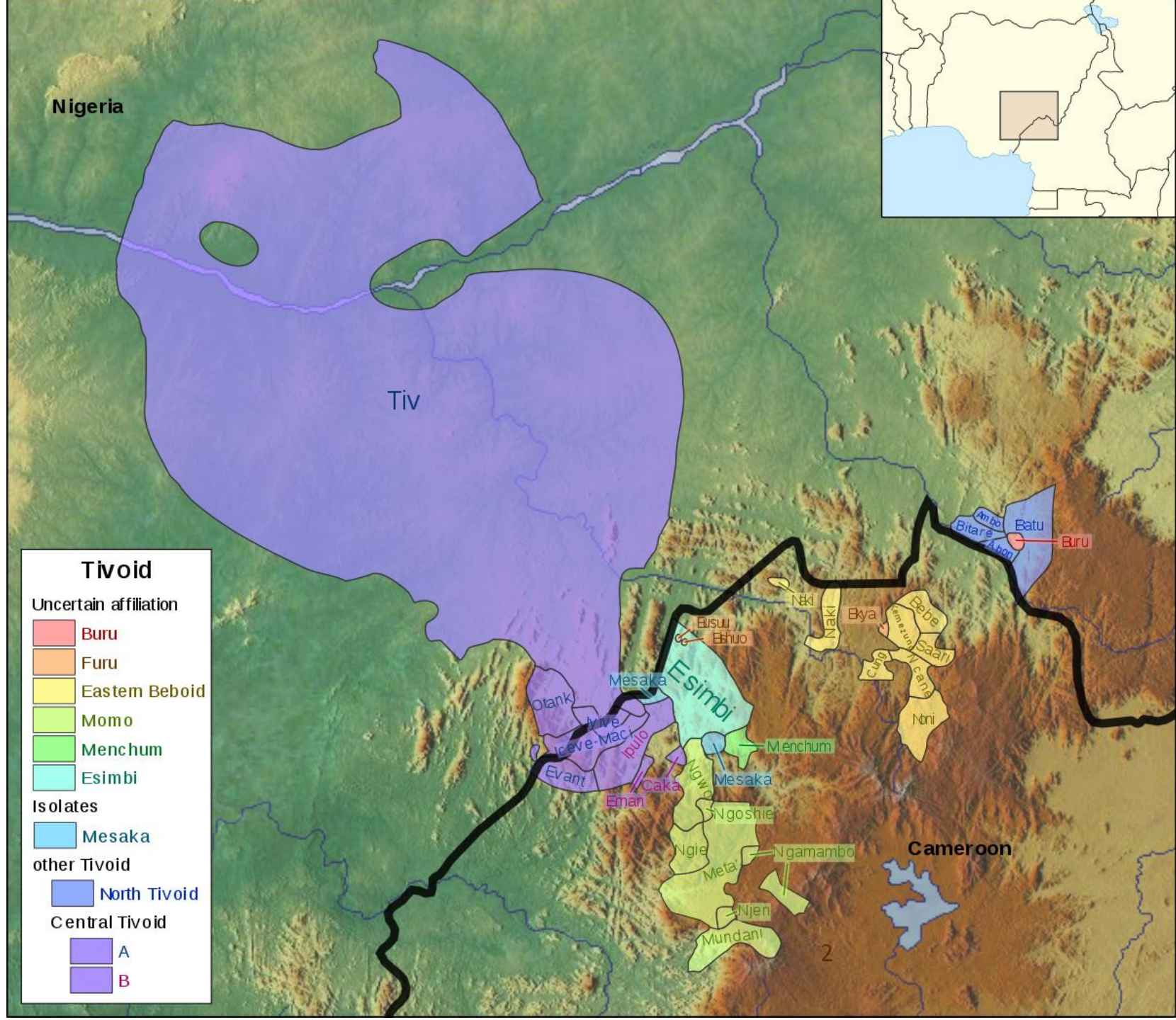
# The linguistic situation in Northern Tivoid

**Michael T. Angitso & Roland Kießling**  
**AT 26, Vienna 18.-20.06.2025**

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

# Tivoid languages

- Tiv and various under-described Tivoid languages in Cameroon/Nigeria: Ugare, Evand, Itang, Icheve
- Bantoid noun class system, various Tivoid complexities (e.g. circumfixation of adnominal class markers)
- Concurrent numeral classifier system
- Northern Tivoid: worlist collected by Robert Koops in 1970s, compiled by Roger Blench (Blench 2006, Blench 2016)





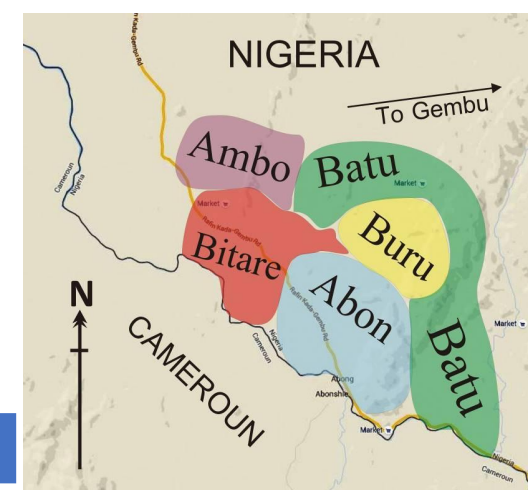
# Northern Tivoid



Autonym	Ethnologue 2025	ISO 639-3	number of speakers
Wumenou	Batu: Amanda-Afi	btu	< 500
Munguma	Batu: Angwe	btu	3
Bujigi	Batu: Kamino	btu	750
Badu	Buru	bqw	4
Njwande	Bitare (Asha, Yukutare)	brt	6.000
Mbwami	Abon (Abong, Abõ, Ba'ban)	abo	1.000
Ebe	Ambo (Timap)	amb	5

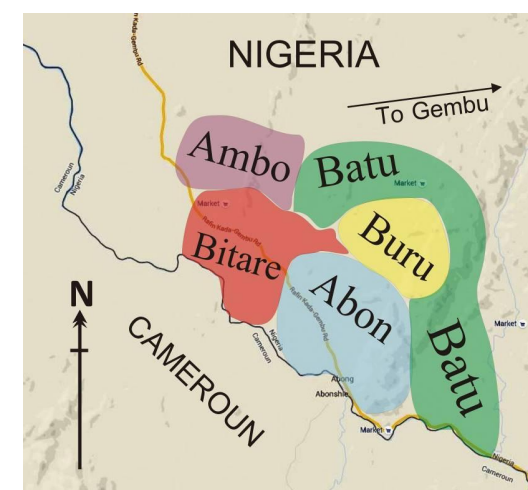
# Northern Tivoid: Lexical comparison

	Bu	Wu	Mb	Ba	Mu	Nj	Eb	Ti	It	Ic	Ev	Ug
Bu		88	40	38	43	39	35	31	30	29	24	27
Wu	88		39	36	39	37	37	29	29	29	25	28
Mb	40	39		67	59	52	42	45	43	38	35	39
Ba	38	36	67		57	50	42	38	35	31	32	34
Mu	43	39	59	57		47	36	42	39	38	36	39
Nj	39	37	52	50	47		56	38	36	36	34	39
Eb	35	37	42	42	36	56		34	33	29	25	32
Ti	31	29	45	38	42	38	34		86	70	66	53
It	30	29	43	35	39	36	33	86		71	66	52
Ic	29	29	38	31	38	36	29	70	71		61	43
Ev	24	25	35	32	36	34	25	66	66	61		46
Ug	27	28	39	34	39	39	32	53	52	43	46	



# Northern Tivoid: agreement classes (subject marker)

	Bujigi	Wumenou	Mbwami	Badu	Munguma	Njwande	Ebe
1	gó	gó	hò	wú	á	à	ò
2	bú	bú	bà	bó	bó	bá	bó
3	-	-	hò	yí	-	ó	ó
5	yí	dí	hì	yí	yí	é	é
6	hó	hó	hò	wó	hó	á	wá
6a	mú	mú	mù	mú	mú	mù	mù
7	tí	-	kì	gí	kí	kí	kì
8	bí	bí	bì	bí	bí	bí	bì
9	yó	gyó	hì	yì	yì	è	è
10	yí	-	hì	yí	yí	é	é
?9b/?5b	ní	ní	-	-	-	-	-
14	bú	bú	bù	bú	-	bú	bù
15	-	-	-	-	-	kú	-
19	fé	fé	fí	yí	fí	hì	fí



# Gender marking by circumfixation

## Evand (Central Tivoid): fully alliterative circumfixation

NP<sub>x</sub>-Root-NS<sub>x</sub>: *kí-tām-ék*    *kí-mǎ-k*                      *ví-tām-év*    *ví-àlō-v*  
7-fruit-7    7-one-7                                      8-fruit-8    8-two-8  
'one fruit'    'two fruits'

## Bujigi (Northern Tivoid): (partially alliterative) circumfixation

NP<sub>x</sub>-Root-NS<sub>x</sub>: *nìnà*                      *gò-fùnún*                                      *nínà-ù*                      *bù-và-ù*  
1.woman    1-one    2.woman-2    2-two-2  
'one woman'    'two women'

*fè-fúfó-γ*                      *fé-fúnūn*                                      *mù-fúfó-m*    *mù-tà-m*  
19-peper-19    19-one    6a-pepper-6a    6a-three-6a  
'one pepper'    'three peppers'

# NT distribution of agreement **suffixes** across syntactic targets



	Bujigi	Wumenou	Mbwami	Badu	Munguma	Njwande	Ebe
SM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
POSS	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
DEM	+	-	-	-	-	<b>19</b>	-
DEF	+	+	-	<b>D2</b>	-	+	+
ADJ	+	+	+	<b>(+)</b>	-	-	-
NUM	<b>PL</b>	<b>PL</b>	-	-	-	-	-

# NT distribution of agreement **suffixes** across noun classes

	Bujigi	Wumenou	Mbwami	Badu	Munguma	Njwande	Ebe
1	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
2	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
3	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	+	+	<b>n.a.</b>	+	+
4	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a</b>
5	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
6	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
6a	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
7	+	<b>n.a</b>	+	+	-	+	+
8	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
9	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
10	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
?5b/9b	+	+	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a</b>
14	+	+	+	+	<b>n.a</b>	+	+
15	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	<b>n.a</b>	+	<b>n.a</b>
19	+	+	+	+	-	+	+



# Northern Tivoid: Attestation of adnominal noun class **suffixes**



	Bujigi	Wumenou	Mbwami	Badu	Munguma	Njwande	Ebe
1	?	?	?	?	?	?	-
2	?	-(w)u	(-bu)	?	?	?	-
3	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-di, (-yi)	-	-	-	-	-
6	-´	?	-	-	-	-	-
6a	-m	-m	-mu	*-mu	-m(V)	*-m(V)	-
7	-(t)i	(-yi)	(-k)	-	-	-	-
8	-u	-u, (-´)	-bi	-	-	-	-
9	-`	-`	?	?	?	?	-
10	-´	(-´)	?	?	?	?	-
?11	-(V)n	-(V)n	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
14	(-u)	(?-´?)	(-bu)	-	n.a.	(-bu)	(-bu)
19	(-ɣ, -u)	-fu	-	-	(-x)	-	-

## Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-m** (6a)

BIRD: PB *\*-jùnì*; PGr *\*fà-nùn' / m-nùn'*; PBC *\*ì-nono / í-nono*

Bujigi	<i>è-nūnū / è-nūnū-m</i> (19/6a)
Wumenou	<i>núnū-fū / núnū-m</i> (19/6a)
Mbwami	<i>má-ńúmú / mú-ńúmú</i> (19/6a) < <i>*mú-ńún-mú</i>
Badu:	<i>mà-ńīmū / mù-ńīmū</i> (19/6a) < <i>*mú-ńīn-mū</i>
Munguma	<i>má-ńúmó / mó-ńúmó</i> (19/6a) < <i>*mó-ńún-mó</i>
Njwande	<i>kí-ńûn / bí-ńûn</i> (7/8)
<u>Ebe</u>	<u><i>fî-ńérê / mù-ńérê</i> (19/6a)</u>
CT: Evand	<i>í-ánùm-wē / mú-ànūn-úm</i> (5/6a)



Mbwami / Badu / Njwande: fossilization of class 6a NSx **\*-m**

## Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-m** (6a)

WATER: PGr *\*-mò'*, [kì', líb, díb]; PR *\*m-mòl'*; PBC *\*ma-izi*, *\*ma-ni*

Bujigi	<i>m̀-bígá-m</i> (6a)
Wumenou	<i>m̀-bígá-m</i> (6a)
Mbwami	<i>mú-ηgómó</i> (6a) < <i>*mú-ηgór(o)-mó</i>
Badu:	<i>mú-ηgór̄</i> (6a)
Munguma	<i>mú-ηgóm-óm</i> (6a) < < <i>*mú-ηgór(ɔ)-óm</i>
Njwande	<i>mó-ηgómó</i> (6a) < <i>*mó-ηgór(ɔ)-mó</i>
<u>Ebe</u>	<u><i>m̀-ηgór̄</i> (6a)</u>
CT: Tiv	<i>m̀-ηgér-è́m</i> (6a)
CT: Evand	<i>mó-m̀l-ūm</i> (6a)



Mbwami / Njwande: fossilization of class 6a NSx *\*-m̀*

# WATER: Reanalysis of NSx-*m* (6a) as part of the root

*\*mú-ŋgVrV-mó* > *m-ŋgér-ém* (Tiv)



Syncope: *\*mú-ŋgórV-mó* > *\*mú-ŋgór-mó*

Liquid deletion:

*\*mú-ŋgóɸ-mó* > *mú-ŋgó<sup>ó</sup>mó*  
[Mbwami, Njwande]

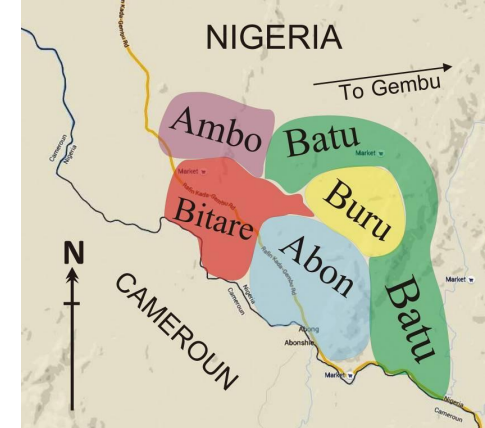
Nasal deletion:

*\*mú-ŋgór-mó* > *mú-ŋgór<sup>ó</sup>*  
[Badu, Ebe]

Re-suffixation of -*m*: *\*mú-ŋgómó* > *mú-ŋgó<sup>ó</sup>mó-m* [Munguma]



## Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-m** (6a)



PEPPER: NTiv \**fe-sísó-fV* / \**mù-sísó-m*

Bujigi	<i>fè-súfó-γ</i> / <i>mù-súfó-m</i> (19/6a)
Wumenou	<i>fè-sūsó-fū</i> / <i>mò-sūsó-m</i> (19/6a)
Mbwami	<i>mà-síḡēn</i> / <i>mù-síḡēn</i> (5/6)
Badu:	<i>ḡ-tḡḡḡḡēn</i> / <i>bà-ḡ-tḡḡḡḡēn</i> (1/2)
Munguma	<i>fè-súfó</i> / <i>mò-súfó-m</i> (19/6a)
Njwande	<i>è-yìyì</i> / <i>é-yíyì</i> (9/10)
<u>Ebe</u>	<i>mù-sḡsḡ</i> (6a)
CT: Tiv	<i>m-kè-m̄</i> (6a)

## Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-m** (6a)

STAR: PB *\*-yótà*, PGr *\*-sàŋ'*

Bujigi	<i>é-dō:</i> / <i>̀n-dō:-m</i> (19/6a)
Wumenou	<i>gyō:-fū</i> / <i>̀m-ŋgō:-m</i> (19/6a)
Mbwami	<i>é-θéθē</i> / <i>á-θéθē</i> (5/6)
Badu:	<i>váθō</i> / <i>vóθō</i> (19/6a)
Munguma	<i>̀n-dō:m</i> / <i>à-̀ndō:m</i> (1/6)
Njwande	<i>è-zùsū</i> / <i>é-zúsū</i> (9/10)
<u>Ebe</u>	<u>?? / ?? (xxx)</u>
CT: Tiv	<i>̀i-sàn</i> / <i>á-sán</i> (9/6)



# Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-(V)n** (11/5b/9b??)

BREAST (5b/6)	Bujigi
HEAD (5b/6)	<i>m̄-bā:n-àn</i> / <i>á-bân</i>
LEG (5b/6)	<i>m̄-vūn-ún</i> / <i>á-fún</i>
FIRESTONE (5b/6)	<i>m̄-bān-án</i> / <i>á-bán</i>
CHARCOAL	<i>hén-èn</i> / <i>á-hén</i>
GUINEA CORN	<i>hán-à</i> ~ <i>á-hân</i>
MAIZE	<i>n̄-dzīg-in</i> / <i>á-dzín</i>
SPEAR (5b/6)	<i>n̄-dzūg-àn</i> / <i>à-tfūg-àn</i>
CLAW	<i>n̄-gōg-ón</i> / <i>á-kón</i>
EGG (5b/6)	<i>ñ-gásá-n</i> / <i>á-kásã</i> (5b/6)
EYE (5b/6)	<i>n̄-dzū-n</i> / <i>á-tfī</i>
TONGUE (5b/6)	<i>n̄íḥ-n</i> / <i>á-n̄íḥ</i>
ROOT (5b/6)	<i>nēmē-n</i> / <i>á-nēmé</i>
SHAVING BLADE	<i>n̄-gán-in</i> / <i>à-káng-ī</i>
SEED	<i>n̄-gég-ēn</i> / <i>à-kén, àn̄-gég-ēn</i>
NOSE	[...]
	<i>dzíndī</i> ~ <i>dzíndī-ū</i> (7/8)

Wumenou
<i>m̄-bān-àn</i> / <i>á-bân</i>
<i>m-vwén-ēn</i> / <i>à-fwén</i>
<i>ñ-ngān</i> / <i>á-bán</i>
<i>hén-èn</i> / <i>á-hên</i>
<i>hán-àn</i> / <i>á-hân</i>
[...]
<i>n̄-gūg-ūn</i> / <i>à-kūn</i>
<i>n̄-gōg-ōn</i> / <i>à-kōn</i>
<i>n̄ásá-yí</i> / <i>n̄ásá-wú</i> (5/8)
<i>n̄-gū-n</i> / <i>á-kī</i>
<i>n̄íḥ-n</i> / <i>á-n̄íḥ</i>
<i>n̄-númān</i> / <i>á-númān</i>
<i>n̄-gág-ān</i> / <i>à-kán</i>
<i>n̄-gég-ēn</i> ~ <i>à-kén</i>
<i>n̄-dzāg-ān</i> / <i>à-sāṅ</i>
<i>n̄-gyōn-ōn</i> / <i>à-gyōl</i>



# Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-(V)n** (11/5b/9b??)

**BREAST:** PB *\*-béèdè* (5/6), PBC *\*li-lito / a-lito*

Bujigi            *m̄-bā:n-àn* / *á-bân* (5b/6)

Wumenou        *m̄-bān-àn* / *á-bân* (5b/6)

Mbwami         *é-bán* / *á-bán* (5/6)

Badu:            *è-bān* / *à-bān* (5/6)

Munguma        *é-bân* / *á-bân* (5/6)

Njwande         *é-bân* / *á-bân* (5/6)

Ebe             *è-bānê* / *à-bānê* (5/6)

CT: Ugare        *í-vyéndé* / *é-víndí* (5/6)



# Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-(V)n** (11/5b/9b??)

EYE: PB *\*-jícò* (5/6), PBC *\*li-lito / a-lito*

Bujigi	<i>jíṣī-n / á-jíṣī</i> (5b/6)	< <i>*n-jíṣī-n / *á-n-jíṣī</i>
Wumenou	<i>jíṣī-n / á-jíṣī</i> (5b/6)	< <i>*n-jíṣī-n / *á-n-jíṣī</i>
Mbwami	<i>é-jíṣí / á-jíṣí</i> (5/6)	< <i>*é-n-jíṣí / *á-n-jíṣí</i>
Badu:	<i>é-ṣī / á-ṣī</i> (5/6)	
Munguma	<i>é-ṣí / á-ṣí</i> (5/6)	
Njwande	<i>é-ṣí / á-ṣí</i> (5/6)	
<u>Ebe</u>	<i>è-ṣê / à-ṣê</i> (5/6)	
CT: Tiv	<i>í-ṣé ~ á-ṣé</i> (5/6)	



# Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-(V)n** (11/5b/9b??)



TONGUE: PB *\*-dími* (11/6), PBC *\*li-lemi / a-lemi*

Bujigi *nēmē-n / á-némé* (5b/6)

Wumenou *ñ-númān / á-númān* (5b/6)

Mbwami *è-nē / à-nē* (5/6)

Badu: *é-nēm / á-nēm* (5/6)

Munguma *è-nēm / á-ném* (5/6)

Njwande *é-ním / á-ním* (5/6)

Ebe *?? / ?? (xx/xx?)*

CT: Tiv *ú-nómbÿ / í-nómbÿ* (3/10)

Wumenou: fossilization of class 11/5b/9b NSx *\*-n*

# Northern Tivoid: adnominal noun class suffix **-(V)n** (11/5b/9b??)

TOOTH: PB *\*-jínò* (5/6), PBC *\*li-nino* ~ *li-nini* / *a-nino* ~ *a-nini*

Bujigi *jĩ:-n* / *á-jĩ:* (5b/6)

Wumenou *jĩ-n* / *á-jĩ* (5b/6)

Mbwami *é-jí* / *á-jí* (5/6)

Badu: *é-jī* / *á-jī* (5/6)

Munguma *é-jī* / *á-jī* (5/6)

Njwande *é-ŋgī* / *á-ŋgí* (5/6)

Ebe *?? / ??* (xx/xx)

CT: Tiv *í-jí-γ* / *á-jí* (7/6)



Bujigi / Wumenou: reanalysis of root final C as NSx **-n**

# Northern Tivoid: alternation of /g/ ~ /n/ in 11/5b/9b

GUINEA CORN

MAIZE

SPEAR (5b/6)

ROOT (5b/6)

SHAVING BLADE

SEED

NOSE

Bujigi

*ṅ-dzīg-ín / á-dzín*

*ṅ-dzūg-àn / à-tfūg-àn*

*ṅ-gōg-ón / á-kón*

*ṅ-gáṅ-īn / à-káng-ī*

*ṅ-gég-ēn / à-kén, àṅ-gég-ēn*

[...]

*dzíndī ~ dzíndī-ū (7/8)*

Wumenou

[...]

*ṅ-gūg-ūn / à-kūn*

*ṅ-gōg-ōn / à-kōn*

*ṅ-gág-ān / à-kán*

*ṅ-gég-ēn ~ à-kén*

*ṅ-dzāg-ān / à-sāṅ*

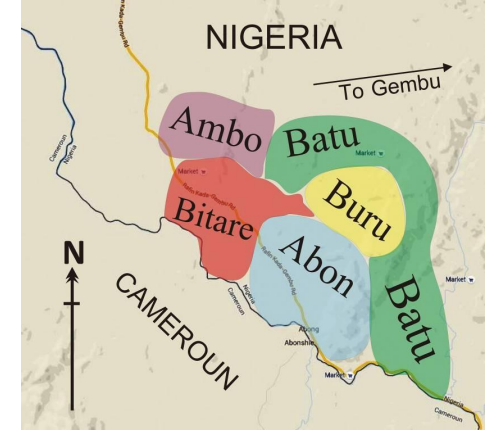
*ṅ-gyōn-ōn / à-gyōl*



## Northern Tivoid: alternation of /g/ ~ /n/ in 11/5b/9b

SPEAR: PB \*-gòŋgá (5/6), PBC \*li-kwoŋga / a-kwoŋga

Bujigi	<i>̀n-gōg-ón / á-kón</i> (5b/6)
Wumenou	<i>̀n-gōg-ōn / à-kōn</i> (5b/6)
Mbwami	<i>è-gōn / à-gōn</i> (5/6)
Badu:	<i>è-gōn / à-gōn</i> (5/6)
Munguma	<i>è-gōn / à-gōn</i> (5/6)
Njwande	<i>é-góŋgù / á-góŋgù</i> (5/6)
<u>Ebe</u>	<u><i>è-gòmō / á-gómô</i> (5/6)</u>
CT: Tiv	<i>í-wyāŋgē ~ á-wāŋgē</i> (5/6)



Bujigi / Wumenou nasal dissimilation: NC > C / \_ -Vn

*\*n-goŋg-Vn > \*n-goŋg-Vn > n-gog-on*

# Northern Tivoid: Tonal circumfixation in 9/10~8 and 9/6



**SNAKE:** PB *\*-jóká* (9/10), PBC *\*ĩ-noko / í-noko*

Bujigi *dzò: / dzó: (9/10)*

Wumenou *gyòhò / gyóhō (9/8 < \*10) < \*`-gyòhò-` / \*´-gyòhò-´*

Mbwami *è-yó / é-yó (9/10)*

Badu: *è-yō / é-yó (9/10)*

Munguma *è-yó / é-yó (9/10)*

Njwande *è-yó / é-yó (9/10)*

Ebe *è-gèrè / à-gērê (9/6)*

CT: Tiv *ì-yō / í-yō (9/10)*

# Northern Tivoid: Tonal circumfixation in 9/10~8 and 9/6

THORN: PB *\*-jígùà* (3/4 ~5/6), PBC *\*ú-zibo* / *ti-zibo*

Bujigi

*dzì:* / *á-dzĩ:* (9/6) < *\*-dzĩ:-`* / *\*'-dzĩ:-´*

Wumenou

*gyò:* / *gyô:* (9/8 < \*10) < *\*-gyò:-`* / *\*'-gyò:-´*

Mbwami

*é-fáfà* / *á-fáfà* (9/6)

Badu:

*é-θá* / *á-θá* (5/6)

Munguma

*sámhá* / *sámhá-ú* (7/8)

Njwande

*ò-yákì* / *à-yákì* (3/6)

Ebe

*ò-yágê* / *à-yágê* (3/6)

CT: Evand

*ì-fān* / *á-sán* (9/6)



Bu/ Wu SG: merger of circumfixational *\*L- -L* pattern with root L

Bu / Wu PL: reflexes of class 8~10 and 6 circumfixes *\*H- -H*

*\*H-L-H* > *\*H-HL-H* > *\*H-H-↓H* > H-HM

# Conclusion:

## Traces of adnominal gender suffixes in Northern Tivoid

	*NT	Bujigi	Wum.	Mbw.	Badu	Mung.	Njw.	Ebe	*PGr
1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	-	*ù-
2	?	?	-(w)u	(-bu)	?	?	?	-	*bá-
3	?	n.a.	n.a.	-	-	-	-	-	*ú-
5	*-di	-	-di, (-yi)	-	-	-	-	-	*í-
6	-´	-´	?	-	-	-	-	-	*á-
6a	*-m(V)	-m	-m	-mu	*-mu	-m(V)	*-m(V)	-	*mè-
7	*-ki	-(t)i	(-yi)	(-k)	-	-	-	-	*kí-
8	*-u / -bi	-u	-u, (-´)	-bi	-	-	-	-	*bí-
9	*-`	-`	-`	?	?	?	?	-	*Ñ-, Ø-
10	*-´	-´	(-´)	?	?	?	?	-	*´-
?11	*-(V)n	-(V)n	-(V)n	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
14	*-(b)u	(-u)	(?–´?)	(-bu)	-	n.a.	(-bu)	(-bu)	-
19	-fi	(-y, -u)	-fu	-	-	(-x)	-	-	*fá-

# Reconstructing an eroding adnominal gender suffix system

**Degradation of individual gender suffix systems:**

- (a) cline of reduction by desegmentalisation**
- (b) loan words commonly integrated by NPx only, no NSx**
- (c) traces of non-cognate fossilized NSx**

**How to recognize fossilized NSx in cross-Tivoid comparison:**

- (a) different patterns of incongruent circumfixation**
- (b) non-cognate terminal consonants**
- (c) tonal alternations in number paradigm**

**Thank you very much for your attention!**

**NuClaBA project (“Numeral classifiers of the Benue-Congo languages of Africa”)**  
Angitso & Kießling