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## Possessive constructions in Tongugbe, an Ewe dialect

Promise Dodzi Kpoglu

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*UNIVERSITÉ DE LILLE*

CONSTRUCTIONS POSSESSIVES EN TONGUGBE,  
UN DIALECTE DE L'ÉWÉ

POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE,  
AN EWE DIALECT

***Promise DODZI KPOGLU***

Soutenue le 28 Février 2019

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**POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE,  
AN EWE DIALECT**



**Possessive constructions in Tongugbe,  
an Ewe dialect**

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van  
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in 1989

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To my family, especially my late father Christian Corwu Kpoglu.





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## LIST OF SYMBOLS

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*	Infelicitous construction
?	Odd construction
.	Morpheme break
~	Reduplication
-	Unifying elements into one gloss
=	Construction is the same
/	Separate alternate free translations



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
ABST	Abstract
ACC	Accusative
ADJ	Adjective
ALL	Allative
ALTR	Altrilocal
ANIM	Animate
APPL	Applicative affix
ART	Article
AUX	Auxilliary
BP	Body-part term
CLF	Classifier
CLIT	Clitic
CM	Class Marker
COMPL	Complementizer
CON	Conjunction
CONT	Continous
COP	Copula
DAT	Dative
DEF	Definite
DEM	Demonstrative
DIM	Diminutive
DIST	Distal demonstrative
EV	Eventive
EXCL	Exclamative
F	Feminine
FOC	Focus
GEN	Genitive
HAB	Habitual
ICV	Inherent Complement (Object) Verb
IMP	Imperative
IND	Independent
INDF	Indefinite
INT	Intensifier
INV	Inverse

IT	Itive
KIN	Kinship term
LIG	Ligature
LOC	Locative
LOG	Logophoric
M	Masculine
MOD	Modal
NEG	Negative
NOM	Nominative
NOMI	Nominal
NON-R	Non-relational noun
OBJ	Object
OBLI	Oblique
PART	Particle
PD	Possessee
PER	Pertensive
PL	Plural
POSS	Possessive connective
POSTP	Postposition
POT	Potential
PR	Possessor
PREP	Preposition
PRF	Perfective
PRO	Pronoun
PRO.PD	Possessee pronoun
PRO.PR	Possessor suffix
PROG	Progressive
PROSP	Prospective
PROX	Proximal demonstrative
PRS	Present tense
PST	Past tense
Q	Question
RED	Reduplicative
REL	Relativizer
REP	Repetitive
SG	Singular
SM	Subject Marker
SOCIO-C	Socio-cultural relational term



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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SPAT	Spatial relation term
SUB	Sub-categorizer
SUBJ	Subjunctive
SUFFIX	Suffix
SUJ	Subject
TOP	Topic
VENT	Ventive

The conventions used are largely in conformity with the “Leipzig Glossing Rules: Conventions for interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses”



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*Enyè Nūgbéví* 'I, son of Nugbe'  
Promise Dodzi Kpoglu

### 1. Subject of this research

This thesis presents a study of the different types of possessive constructions in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe (written as Tongugbe in English); and explores their relationship with locative and existential constructions. It is the outcome of research based on data collected over a six-month period.

As will be shown in chapter (2), possession has been extensively studied in a typological perspective (Seiler 1981, Chappell & McGregor 1989, Velazquez-Castillo 1996, Heine 1997, Croft 2003, Stassen 2009, Creissels 2006, Haspelmath 2008, Aikhenvald 2012 etc.); and three fundamental types have been distinguished: the attributive possessive (or adnominal) construction, the predicative possessive construction and the external possessor construction. These three types can also be identified in the Ewe language. The following examples illustrate the three kinds of possessive construction in the Aɲlo dialect of the Ewe language.

Adnominal or attributive

1. **Kofi fé vú**  
Kofi POSS vehicle  
'Kofi's car'

Predicative

2. **vu lè Kofi sí**  
vehicle be.at Kofi hand  
'Kofi has a car'

External

3. **Kofi gbà ɲkú**  
Kofi destroy eye  
'Lit. Kofi damaged his eye'  
'(Kofi is blind)'

In Ewe, these different possessive construction types do not only exhibit various relationships among each other, but also are in relationships with other construction types. For instance the most common form of the predicative possessive construction involves the

## 2 POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE

same predicate that is present in locative and existential constructions. Also, constituent order in predicative possessive constructions is similar to constituent order in locative and existential constructions. Witness the word order in the following examples (again, the examples are from the Aɲɔ dialect of the Ewe language):

### Possessive

4. **bólu** **le** **Kofi** **sí**  
ball be.at Kofi hand  
'Kofi has a ball'

### Locative

5. **bólu-á** **le** **kplɔ-á** **dzi**  
ball-ART.DEF be.at table-ART.DEF top  
'The ball is on the table'

### Existential

6. *bóluá líí*  
**bólu-á** **le-é**  
ball-ART.DEF be.at-PRO.3SG  
'The ball exists'

These similarities between predicative possessive, locative and existential constructions have been observed in earlier studies on the Ewe language. Indeed, Ameka (1991), in his groundbreaking thesis, aiming at accounting for the range of constructions encoding possession in Ewe, highlights the structural and semantic similarity that characterizes the three construction types. He continues the line of research initiated by Benveniste (1966) and Akuatsey (1989), who have sought to characterize the use of the predicate that is involved in the three types of construction. Finally, Heine (1997) observes that the predicative possessive construction of the language results from a grammaticalization process taking as its source the locative construction, and thus, he also acknowledges the link between the three types of constructions.

However, as elaborate as these studies are, they take as primary data the standardized version of the Ewe language, and take less into

account the variation that exists within the language (at the exception of Ameka 1991). Consequently, they are deprived of the possibility of analyzing the finer morphosyntactic distinctions characterizing the possessive constructions in the dialects in comparison with the standardized data, and accounting for the more subtle distinctions in the meanings expressed by these constructions.

In this study, I concentrate on one dialect of the language, Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ, and bring its ‘flavor’ into the picture. I demonstrate that, possessive constructions of this dialect exhibit much more variability in comparison with the standard language, both from a morpho-syntactic viewpoint and from a semantic viewpoint. I go beyond the predicative possessive construction, and show that, at all levels (*i.e.* attributive, predicative and external possessor), Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ has some very distinct morpho-syntactic and semantic properties. Also, it shall be shown that at two levels: the use of the locative predicate, and the occurrence of a dative-oblique in clause-final position, clausal possessive constructions (predicative possessive constructions and external possessor constructions) exhibit interesting relations with locative and existential constructions. However, I shall argue that although clausal possessive constructions, locative constructions and the existential construction of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ share certain morpho-syntactic and semantic properties, they differ from each other in different ways; and should thus, from a synchronic viewpoint, be considered as distinct constructions.

The objectives of this study are therefore twofold: description of linguistic structures and analysis of the relationships between various linguistic structures. A third objective is however to be noted: pointing out the differences that exist between Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ and other dialects of the Ewe language. This third objective is motivated by the fact that Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ, to my knowledge, has not been the subject of a comprehensive linguistic description although the dialect manifests various phonetic, syntactic and semantic specificities in comparison to other dialects of the Ewe language. Hence, before the description of the structures that encode possession, I provide a sketch grammar of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ.

Nevertheless, in the framework of this PhD thesis, it is impossible to present an exhaustive and detailed grammatical description of Tɔ̀ŋúgbè. Therefore, this sketch grammar shall predominantly bear on those aspects that distinguish the dialect with respect to the standard language and will select specifically the properties that are relevant to the subsequent chapters. In sum, the sketch grammar is the first major attempt to describe the distinctive properties of Tɔ̀ŋúgbè and will moreover serve as a background to the work undertaken in subsequent chapters.

### 1.1. Theoretical assumptions

This study will adopt the “basic linguistic theory” (Dixon 1997, Dixon 2010a) as its theoretical framework. Basic linguistic theory is the most widely employed framework in studies in language typology and for grammar writing. Adopting a basic linguistic approach to language description presumes that the formal and semantic aspects of language that are under study are presented in detail with special emphasis on the role context plays in shaping the meaning of linguistic expressions (Dryer 2006:128). It also involves the use of terminology and abbreviations that are accessible to audience of different theoretical orientations. Therefore, terminology that is employed in this work relies heavily on traditional grammar and borrowings from other theoretical approaches; especially, typological linguistics and the structuralist tradition (especially in the area of phonology and morphology). In addition, some concepts of early generative grammar and notions from functional approaches to linguistic analysis are also relied upon.

This latter fact, *i.e.* the reliance on notions adapted from functional approaches to linguistic analysis, shall be very prominent in this work. Indeed, in describing the linguistic structures, I take as basic “constructions” in the sense that the term takes in Construction Grammar theory. Constructions as used here therefore refer to conventionalized learned form-function pairings (Goldberg 2013). Every linguistic form is thus associated with a meaning. Constructions are assumed to range from atomic units, *i. e.* morphemes, to more elaborate structures (Goldberg 1995). Simple morphological units such as **nature** as well as more complex structures constructed in



morphology (*e.g.* unnatural) or in syntax (phrases, clause etc.) such as **the Xer, the Yer** are all considered constructions. These constructions can be highly substantive, *i.e.* instantiated by concrete lexical items (*e.g.* kick the bucket), semi-schematic *i.e.* composed of slots in which a variety of lexical items can be found (*e.g.* **Xer, the Yer** (the bigger, the better)), or highly schematic *i.e.* the slots do not involve concrete lexical items (*e.g.* the ditransitive construction associated with the meaning of ‘transfer’, exemplified by the French clause **il lui a glissé un billet sous la porte** ‘he slipped a note under the door for him’)

Also, in order to understand the motivations for the forms, I shall take advantage of the explanatory power offered by the basic assumptions of functional notions such as grammaticalization, iconicity and egocentricity. I assume grammaticalization to include different types of language change in which form and meaning pairings evolve from a lexical meaning towards a grammatical meaning or from a less grammatical meaning to a more grammatical meaning (Meillet 1912; Kurylowicz 1965; Lehmann 1985; Traugott 2011). Iconicity is taken to involve the bi-unique diagrammatic correspondence between linguistic forms and the meanings that they evoke (Haiman 1980), as opposed to the structural concept of arbitrariness. Finally, I take egocentricity to mean the indication of the participation of speech act participants (first and second person) in discourse (Dahl 1997). These notions shall be at the heart of the explanations I offer for not only the configurations of the constructions that are described, but also the meanings and conceptual relations evoked by the different constructions.

## 1.2. Data and methodology

This work is carried out on the basis of data principally obtained from fieldwork. Data were obtained partially by elicitation and partially through narrations. Data collection was carried out over a six-month period at Mepe, a Tɔ̀nùgbe speaking community, located in the North Tongu district of the Volta region. The material that was used in elicitation included the circle of dirt story that was developed by Eisenbeiss & al (1999), the topological relation pictures developed by the Max Planck institute and two other materials that I developed.

The first material that I developed (*i.e.* the arrow material) consists of a series of pictures and arrows. The arrows point to parts of the pictures. The respondents were then asked where the arrow pointed to. The second material that I developed was a ‘deaf play’<sup>1</sup>. In this material, I wrote a little play which was acted out by the drama club of the St. Kizito Secondary Technical School in Mepe. The play was acted without speech. I then filmed the play<sup>2</sup>. The film was then played to respondents and they were tasked with narrating what they had seen. Finally, pictures of some of the items in the play were shown to respondents and they were asked to describe the relationship between the items they saw and the man in the play. In addition to this, folktale narrations were also recorded.

The data obtained<sup>3</sup> were in the form of audio and video recordings. I therefore transcribed them using the ELAN software. After segmentation and transcription, I transferred the files from ELAN into FLEX software. I annotated the data in FLEX, and then observed the regularity in the linguistic structures. For phonetic and tonal analysis, I segmented morphemes using the Audacity software. I then analyzed the segmented form with the PRAAT software. Thus, the claims made in this study are results of critical observation using the aforementioned softwares.

The data that were obtained from the use of the arrow material is named ARR in the database. The data that were obtained from the narration of the deaf play is named NAR in the database. Data that were produced when the images from the deaf play were shown to the respondents has been named ATR in the database. Data that were obtained using the circle of dirt has been named EXT in the database.

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<sup>1</sup> The written play can be found at <https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xxr-4sug>

<sup>2</sup> Due to privacy reasons, I am unable to upload the film and the pictures

<sup>3</sup> I have had permission from respondents that the data can be used for academic purposes. Consequently, the transcribed and annotated data, in ELAN and FLEX formats can be assessed from <https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xxr-4sug>. Due to reasons of privacy, video recordings are not uploaded; and data that involve mention of personal information (*i.e.* the Sto\_Azi dataset) of respondents have also not been uploaded.

Finally, the narration data (folktales and historical narrations) have been named STO in the database (See Annex for two samples of the transcribed data).

Data from folktale narrations served in part to draw up the sketch grammar. The data obtained from the use of the circle of dirt material are used to describe external possessor constructions. The data obtained as a result of the deaf play, and the arrow materials are used in the description of attributive possessive constructions. Finally, data obtained as a result of the elicitation done with the topological relation pictures developed by the Max Planck Institute are used to describe the locative and, to a lesser extent, the existential construction. Data for the predicative possessive constructions are drawn from the different above-mentioned sources.

In addition to this, I made use of social media in order to test the grammaticality of many structures. The grammaticality test involved constructions that I generated myself, and for which I needed confirmation or information. More concretely, I created a closed group called Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ on Facebook<sup>4</sup>. I then selected speakers who met a minimum criterion of having Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ as native dialect. I proposed constructions, and demanded they confirm or infirm the grammaticality of the constructions. This methodology had its disadvantages and advantages. As Modan (2016) rightly observes, I was limited to a sub-category of Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀ speakers *i.e.* speakers that were young, urban and connected; and some speakers, being educated, were unaware of the influence of standard Ewe on the positions they adopted *vis-à-vis* the constructions I submitted. On the technical level, consultants accessed the page mainly via mobile phone connections. Given that they had no Ewe keyboard installed (there is the Kasahoro keyboard on Google App store for free), they typed their propositions using the English QWERTY keyboard.

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<sup>4</sup> The group and the discussions we had can be assessed at (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/573169486353869/>)

### 1.3. Fieldwork location

As mentioned earlier, data were collected from Mepe. Mepe is a Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe speaking community mainly located on the western side of the lower basin of the Volta River in the North Tongu district of the Volta region in Ghana. Several reasons motivated this choice.

In the first place, this community is representative of the ethnic heterogeneity of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe speaking people. From information I gathered on the field, the majority of Mepes are historically related to the general Ewe ethnic group. However, the five clans of Mepe (Adzigo, Gbanv́ie, Sev́ie, Dzagbaku and Akɔ̀v́ie) trace their origins to different sources. The Adzigo clan, the Gbanv́ie clan and the Sev́ie clan trace their history to one of the major migratory groups of the Ewe people. Mepes of the Dzagbaku clan, the Akɔ̀v́ie clan and those that are born out of mixed marriages between Mepe indigenes and partners from other ethnic groups trace their history to Ga-Adagme, Akan or any other major ethnic group in Ghana. Thus, Mepe alone epitomizes the general fabric of the Tɔ̀nɔ̀ people.

Apart from this ethnic representativeness, the Mepe area is also representative of the linguistic diversity that is displayed in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe (Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe varies considerably from one traditional community to another). The different clans of Mepe live in specific neighborhoods or villages of the Mepe Township; and minimal lexical and phonetic variation is noticed in the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe spoken by each clan. The Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe spoken in Akɔ̀v́ie displays some variation in relation to the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe spoken in Adzigo; the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe in Degɔ̀me (an Akɔ̀v́ie village) varies from the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe spoken in Lukúńú (a Gbanv́ie community village). Witness some of the lexical variations that can occur between speakers from the Mepe villages of Degɔ̀me and Lukúńú:

<u>Degɔ̀me</u>	<u>Lukúńú</u>	<u>English</u>
srɔ̀nyí/ nyìnɔ̀éyóví	nyìnɔ̀éyóví	‘nephew’
kpólú/ agbā	agbā	‘bowl’
kòdzóé/ agblènú	agblènú	‘hoe’
v̀̀klì/ zānūv́é	zānūv́é	‘driver ants’

The third and final reason that informed the choice of Mepe for data elicitation concerns my familiarity with the area and its environs. I have Sokpoé and Mepe origins, but I lived a greater part of my life in Mepe. I therefore know Mepe better than any other Tɔ̀húgbe speaking community. This allowed me easy access to respondents during the fieldwork.

#### **1.4. Outline and presentation**

The work is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 contains the sketch grammar of the dialect. In this chapter, I offer a description of the phonetics, the morphology and the syntax of Tɔ̀húgbe. On the phonetic level, I describe the sounds, tones and most common phonological processes that occur in Tɔ̀húgbe. Concerning the morphology of Tɔ̀húgbe, I present the morphological processes that operate within the dialect *i.e.* reduplication, compounding and suffixation. With respect to syntax, I survey the various categories that fill the slots of the noun phrase structure and the verb phrase structure. Finally, I survey the adpositions and the strategies that are available for focusing constituents of the clause.

Chapter 2 serves as a transition chapter between the sketch grammar of Tɔ̀húgbe and the study of the possessive constructions of the dialect. The chapter offers the definition of possession that is retained in this work. It also presents a survey of the range of possessive constructions in typology and their relationship with existential and locative constructions. The final part of this chapter presents the analytical approaches that have been adopted in accounting for this latter relationship, and the analytical approach adopted in this work.

Chapter 3 offers a description of attributive possessive constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe. It details the two types of attributive possessive constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe: constructions that are processed in syntax and constructions that are processed at the syntax/morphology interface (or simply in morphology). The chapter also attempts to examine the motivations that underlie the formal configurations of the different constructions. Functional concepts such as iconicity and egocentricity are at the centre of the explanations offered. The chapter ends with an attempt to situate the constructions noted for Tɔ̀húgbe

within the framework of general Ewe grammar and typological studies.

Chapter 4 describes the predicative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe. It identifies two main construction types: copular possessive constructions and locative possessive constructions. The chapter attempts to also capture the meanings expressed by each of these construction types. It also tries to distinguish these constructions from other constructions that are structurally similar to them. Finally, the chapter ends with a study of the predicative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe in relation to the predicative possessive constructions of other Ewe dialects

Chapter 5 studies the external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe. The chapter first of all describes the structural types of external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe. It then continues to present the meanings that are expressed by each of the structural types of external possessor constructions. It also examines the conceptual relationships that are inherent in the meanings expressed by the different structural types of external possessor constructions and discusses the implications of the findings for Ewe comparative syntax.

The final chapter is devoted to the relationship between clausal possessive constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe (*i. e.* predicative possessive constructions and external possessor constructions) and the relationship they exhibit with locative and existential constructions. I first of all detail the existential construction in Tɔ̀húgbe. I then continue to present the locative constructions. Finally, I examine the relationship between possessive constructions, the existential construction and the different locative constructions in Tɔ̀húgbe.

## TŌŬÚGBE SKETCH GRAMMAR

**1. The language of the shorelines**

Tŏŭgbe, written as *Tongugbe* in English, literarily means ‘the language of the shorelines’. It is one of the many dialects of the Ewe language. It is spoken by the Tŏŭs ‘those who live by the river’ *i.e.* the riverines.

**1.1. Tŏŭ: the geographical area**

Tŏŭ ‘by the river’ refers to the lower basin of the Volta River. It refers to the area eastward of the Volta River, after Akuse in the eastern region of Ghana, downstream to the coastal grooves below Sogakope in the south Tongu district of Ghana. Principally lying on the banks of the Volta River, the area can be extended eastwards as far as Dabala. However, in this study, the most eastern community considered is Sogakope.

The Tŏŭ area is divided into two major parts by the Volta River: the western side of the river that has the main towns of communities such as Battor, Mepe, some parts of Mafi, Vume, Tefle, Sokpoe; and the eastern side where the main towns of several communities such as Sogakope, Mafi, Volo, and Bakpa are located.

*Map 1: The Tŏŭgbe speaking area* (<http://verbafricana.org/ewe/c-ewe-language.htm#ewemap>)



The vegetation of the Tɔ̀ŋú area is a mix of mangrove, particularly by the banks of the river, and savannah vegetation that runs through much of the communities situated to the east of the river, *e.g.* Mafi, and the overbanks of communities situated on the western side of the river, *i.e.* Mepe, Battor etc.

Map 2: some major Tɔ̀ŋúgbe speaking towns (Google Maps)



Traditionally, the people live from fishing on the Volta River; but they also cultivate the lands around the river for agricultural purposes. Recently, sand winning (especially in Battor), tourism and hospitality (Sogakope) and large scale farming (Aveyime, Mafi and Agave areas) have been introduced by private developers as well as state owned institutions who seek to develop the economic potential of the area.

### 1.2. The people

The Tɔ̀ŋús belong mainly to the larger Ewe ethnic group and thus share the culture of the Ewe people. Most Tɔ̀ŋús, similar to other Ewe groups, trace their origin back to Ketu, which is situated today in the republic of Benin. From Ketu, they moved to Notsie in present day Republic of Togo. Tradition has it that, due to the brutality during the reign of a king, King Agorkorli, they moved and eventually settled in their present locations. The movement of the Ewes from Notsie took place in three successive waves (Amenumey 1997): the first group



founded major towns such as Hohoe, Peki, Alavanyo in the northern parts of the Ewe speaking area; the second group founded towns such as Ho, Akovia, Takla in the middle belt of the Ewe speaking area; and the third group founded southern settlements such as Aɲlɔga, Keta, Atiteti on the coast. The core of most Tɔɲú communities is formed by people who were part of the third group of migrants from Notsie (Amenumey 1997).

However, not all Tɔɲús share their ancestry with other Ewes groups. Some Tɔɲús in traditional communities like Mepe, Battor, Mafi, Vume etc. trace their ancestry back to Asante, Denkyira, Akwamu, Ada, and Ningo (Amenumey 1997: 17). Once they arrived in Tɔɲú land, they integrated into their host communities. Thus, present day Tɔɲú is a group of heterogeneous people who, although identified as Ewes, still display traits of other cultures, especially Akan cultures. Indeed, some people in Vume, Battor, and Mepe still have names with Akan origins.

The Tɔɲú people are grouped in thirteen traditional communities (also called traditional states): Agave, Sokpoe, Tefle, Vume, Fieve, Bakpa, Mafi, Mepe, Battor, Volo, Doffor, Togome and Fodzoku (Amenumey 1997). On the basis of information gathered from my fieldwork, it can be noted that the Tɔɲú community is divided into clans (**etɔ̃**). The clan is further subdivided into gates (**afɛmɛ̀**) and the gate is subdivided into extended families (**fɔ̃mɛ̀**). Extended families are composed of several nuclear families (**xɔ̃núgoé**), also called **evɛ̀wó** in Mepe.

Each traditional state is administered by a paramount chief (**fiɛ̀gã**) and each clan also elects its chief (**etɔ̃fié**). Gates and extended families also elect a head (**afɛ̀tátɔ̃** and **fɔ̃mɛ̀tátɔ̃** respectively). Heads of gates and extended families are normally chosen among the oldest males of the gate or family. Presently however, Tɔɲú communities are grouped into three main administrative districts: South Tongu, Central Tongu and North Tongu.

### 1.3. The Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe dialect

Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe<sup>5</sup> is spoken by the Tɔ̀ɔ̀ people and is a dialect of the Ewe language. The Ewe language is a Niger-Congo language (Greenberg 1963) of the Kwa group that is a member of the larger unit of closely related languages called Gbe (Capo 1991: 1). As a member of the larger Gbe languages, Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe represents the most south-western dialect of the Ewe cluster. The dialect is spoken by some forty thousand Tɔ̀ɔ̀s spread across the Tɔ̀ɔ̀ area (estimate from Ghana's 2010 housing and population census)<sup>6</sup>. Speakers of Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe understand other dialects of the larger Ewe language and, to various degrees, other Gbe languages, and speakers of other dialects of the Ewe language (and other Gbe languages) likewise understand the dialect (equally to various degrees).

The Ewe language has been the subject of substantial research in linguistics (Westermann 1930; Benveniste 1966; Ameka 1991; Duthie 1996; Rongier 2004 etc.). However, there has been little analysis of dialectal variation in Ewe. Hence, Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe has been an 'unidentified western dialect' (Clements 1974) or has been considered part of the coastal dialects of the Ewe language (Ansre 2000). Throughout this work, it shall be considered that Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe is linguistically neither a coastal dialect nor an inland dialect, although it shares features with both.

Some studies (Westermann 1930, Capo 1991) make nevertheless sporadic references to some of the dialect's specific properties. Westermann (1930: 193-4) offers a first attempt of the description of the definite article of the dialect; Capo (1991:16) involves a Tɔ̀ɔ̀ speaker from Battor in his study of the phonetics and phonology of the Gbe cluster; and Kpodo (2017) offers a description of the third person

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<sup>5</sup> In this study, I do not presume that Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe includes Agavégbé, the Ewe variety spoken by communities to the east of Sogakope. Although Agavégbé is generally considered a 'kind of' Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe, the observations made in this study exclude Agavégbé. Agavégbé seems to have some distinct properties that will have to be thoroughly investigated.

<sup>6</sup> This estimate does not take into account the large number of Tɔ̀ɔ̀ migrants upstream of the Volta river and in urban centres of Ghana.

object pronoun of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ<sup>7</sup>. Although their scope is limited, these studies represent the first real attempts at describing the largely distinctive properties of the dialect.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a sketch grammar of the dialect. The chapter offers a survey of the phonetics, morphology and syntax of the dialect. It intends to highlight the features that distinguish the dialect from the other dialects of the Ewe language. This description should also serve as a background for the comprehension of the work I undertake in the subsequent chapters.

## 2. Phonetics

This section gives a brief overview of the various segmental and suprasegmental elements of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ. It offers an inventory of the vowel phones, the consonant phones and observable tonal realisations. It also presents a survey of some of the phonological processes that occur within and outside the syllable. I use the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet (revised 2015) in this chapter.

### 2.1. Phones of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ

#### 2.1.1. Vowels

The vowel sounds of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ are not different from the vowels present in other dialects of the Ewe language. The table below offers an overview of the vowel sounds of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ:

*Table 1: Vowel phones of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ*

	Oral			Nasal		
	Front	Center	Back	Front	Center	Back
<b>Closed</b>	i		u	ĩ		ũ
<b>Mid-closed</b>	e		o			
		ə			ẽ	
<b>Mid-open</b>	ɛ		ɔ	ẽ		õ
<b>Open</b>		a			ã	

<sup>7</sup> Kpodo (2017) describes the vowel height harmony in the third person object pronoun of Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ and rightly observes that the phenomenon in Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ parallels the case of inland dialects, instead of the expected parallel with the coastal dialects. Despite this observation, he follows ‘tradition’, and groups Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ together with coastal dialects.

Some of these vowel sounds are less common in the dialect as compared to the others. The less common oral vowels are [e] and [ɛ]. The sound [e] can be argued to have merged with the schwa. The sound [ɛ] on the other hand occurs rarely in basic nouns. Both of these vowels *i.e.* [e] and [ɛ], therefore occur only in few basic nouns such as the ones listed in example (1).

1. **əḍē**                      **ablē**                      **əsē**  
       ‘waterpot’                ‘pepper’                ‘conversation’

Apart from [ã] and [ɔ̃], all other nasal vowels also rarely occur in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe. Most often, they are the result of a phonological process. The nasal vowel [õ], for instance, is realized as a result of the elision of the nasal velar [ŋ] in the example below.

2. *ḍə̀vĩ má bõ m̄ dzù*  
**ḍə̀vĩ**    **má**    **bõ**    **m̄**                      **dzù**  
 child    DEM    rather    PRO.1SG    insult  
 ‘I insulted that child instead’

### 2.1.2. Consonants

The consonant sounds of Tɔ̀ŋúgbe are also not different from the consonant sounds present in other dialects of the Ewe language. The table below lists the consonant sounds of Tɔ̀ŋúgbe.

*Table 2: Consonant phones of Tɔ̀ŋúgbe*

	Bilabi al	Labio- dental	Dent al	Alveo lar	Palat al	Vel ar	Labio- velar
Plosive	p b		t d	ɖ		k g	kp gb
Nasal	m			n	ɲ	ŋ	
Fricative	ɸ β	f v		s z		x h	
Affricate				ts dz	tʃ dʒ		
Lateral				l			
Approx.					j	ɣ	w
Trill				r			

- /d/ is voiced. During production of /d/, the blade of the tongue is in contact with both the alveolar ridge and the upper teeth.

- /d/ is voiced. During production of /d/, the tip of the tongue is on the alveolar ridge.

The standard Ewe alphabet (SEA) largely corresponds to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols used in the tables above. Apart from the schwa which is written in SEA as [e], there are no differences between IPA vowels and SEA vowels. There is however some divergence with respect to the consonants. I therefore present the consonants of the standard Ewe orthography (SEA) and their counterparts in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). I use bold characters for the consonants of the standard Ewe orthography that are different from the consonants of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

*Table 3: Standard Ewe alphabet and IPA correspondences*

IPA	SEA	IPA	SEA	IPA	SEA
p	p	b	b	t	t
d	d	ɖ	ɖ	k	k
g	g	<b>kp</b>	<b>kp</b>	<b>gb</b>	<b>gb</b>
m	m	n	n	<b>ɲ</b>	<b>ny</b>
ŋ	ŋ	r	r	l	l
<b>ɸ</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>v</b>	f	f
v	v	s	s	z	z
x	x	h	h	<b>j</b>	<b>y</b>
ʎ	ʎ	w	w	<b>tʃ</b>	<b>ts</b>
				<b>dʒ</b>	<b>dz</b>

For reasons of representation, I continue to use the IPA symbols in the phonetics section. I change to SEA symbols in the section on morphology.

## 2.2. Tones

Ewe is a tonal language (Odden 1995). Therefore, tones are a very important part of Tɔ̀ŋɔ̀gbɛ. Each syllable is underlain by a tone *i.e.* the tone bearing unit (TBU) is the syllable. As tones have a distinctive function, every syllable has a tone. The various examples that are cited in the subsequent chapters therefore have various tonal markings<sup>8</sup>. Tɔ̀ŋɔ̀gbɛ has three level tones *i.e.* a high tone, a low tone

<sup>8</sup> I do not mark short mid tones in the examples cited.

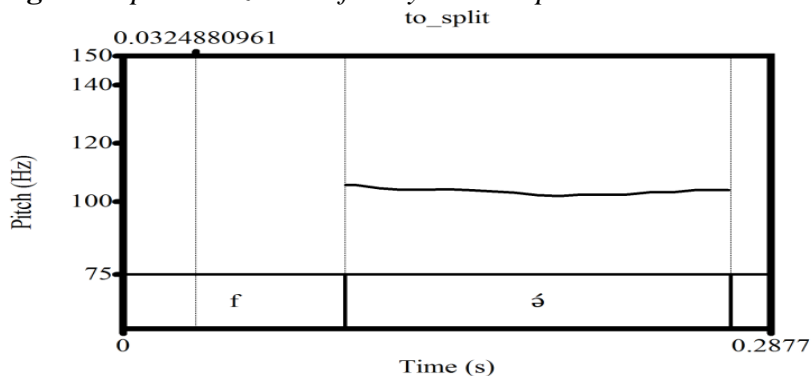
and a mid tone; as well as one contour tone *i.e.* a rising tone. The rising contour tone can be argued to be a combination of a low tone and the high tone on the second part of a semi-long vowel (cf. Ansre 1961).

Some observations must be made in respect of factors that are relevant in the realization of tones in Tɔ̀nùgbe and the Ewe language in general. In the first place, level tones occur in words of any syntactic category (noun, verbs, adpositions etc.), whereas the contour tone, except in sandhi processes (cf. Clements 1978), occurs only in nouns. Secondly, the mid tone is typically long in root nouns and short elsewhere. I concentrate on the long-mid tone of root nouns. Also, depressor consonants (voiced obstruents, *i.e.* plosives, fricatives and affricates) play various roles. In other Ewe dialects, these consonants, in prevocalic positions, tend to lower the pitch level of tones; in Tɔ̀nùgbe the effects of depressor consonants is relatively minimal in the tonal realizations of isolated nouns, but very significant in the tonal realizations of words of other syntactic categories, for example verbs. See Kpoglu & Patin (2018) for a useful discussion of the role of depressor consonants in the realization of tones in Tɔ̀nùgbe.

### 2.2.1. The level tones

The high tone is a tonal realization with a high pitch level. Hence, the nuclei of syllables realized with a high tone have their pitch levels high. Figure 1 below illustrates the pitch level of the high tonal realization on the nucleus of **fé** ‘to split’.

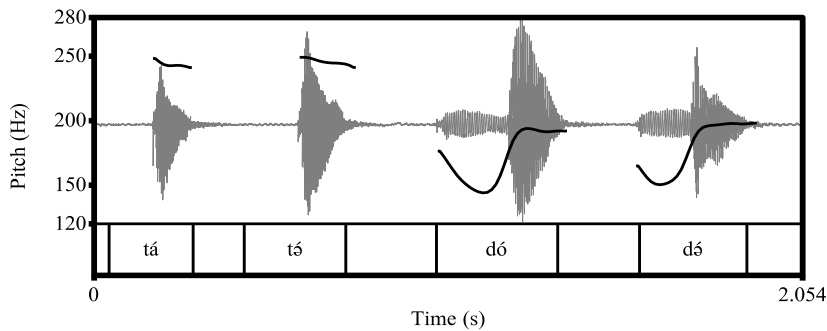
**Fig.1**-Sample realization of **fé** by a male speaker



In verbs, depressor consonants lower the pitch level. Figure 2 compares the realizations of verbs that involve the voiceless stop [t] (a), with the verbs that involve the voiced stop [d] (b).

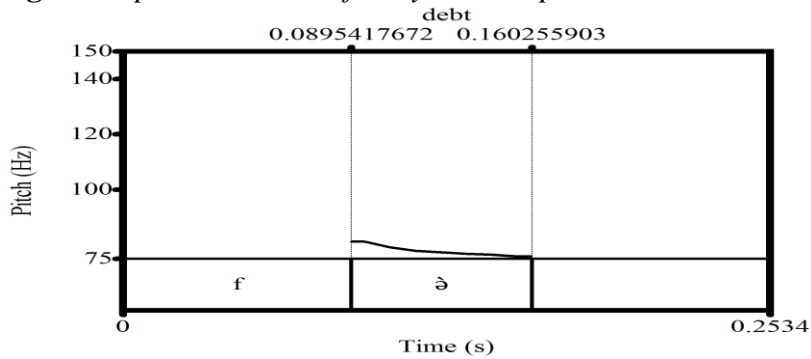
3. a    **tá**    ‘draw’            b.    **dó**    ‘lock’  
       **tá**    ‘press’                **dó**    ‘load’

**Fig. 2-** *Sample realizations of tá, tǎ, dó and dǎ by a male speaker*



The low tone on the other hand is realized with a pitch that is very close to the lowest pitch range. The figure below illustrates the pitch level of the low tonal realization on the nucleus of **fè** ‘debt’.

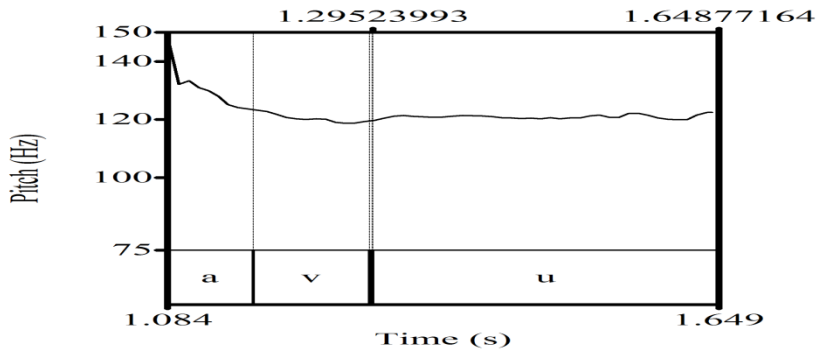
**Fig.3-** *sample realization of fè by a male speaker*



The last level tone, the long mid tone (and in this case, I concentrate on root nouns), typically occurs as a long stretch of mid tone (with a pitch level that is just higher than the pitch level of low tones of root

nouns). The diagram below represents the long mid tone on the noun **avū** ‘dog’.

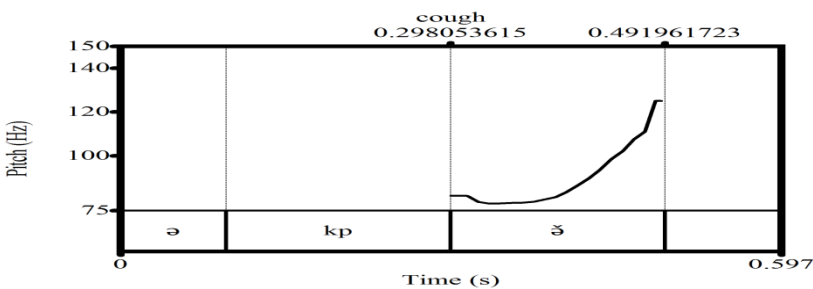
*Fig. 4-Sample realization of avū by a male speaker*



**2.2.2. The contour tone**

The contour tone in Tɔ̀ɔ̀gbe is a rising tone. Apart from in sandhi processes, it occurs on nouns that have semi-long vowels. Hence, vowels in syllables on which the rising tone occurs are longer than vowels on which level tones occur (apart from the long mid tone). The tone involves a pitch that rises from its point of departure. The pitch starts from a point close to the level of the the low tone pitch, then rises through until the end. The diagram below represents the rising tone on the noun **əkpǎ** ‘cough’.

*Fig.5-Sample realization of əkpǎ by a male speaker*



In this work, I use the following markings for tones. The high tone is marked as [´]; the low tone is marked as [˘]; the long mid tone as [ˉ]



and the rising tone is marked as [ ˇ ]. Whenever there is an occurrence of a (short) mid tone<sup>9</sup> (on verbs and on the initial vowels of nouns for instance), I do not mark it.

### 2.3. Phonological processes

Different phonological processes take place within and outside the syllable in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. Due to the pervasiveness of these processes, some morphemes can be difficult to recognize. In order to facilitate the identification of the morphemes, when phonological processes are very important in the constructions presented, I adopt a four-level gloss: the first level presents the construction as it is realized (with all the phonological processes present); the second level presents the construction free of phonological processes; the third level presents an interlinear morphemic gloss; and the final level presents the free translation in English. Below, I present some of the commonest phonological processes that are attested in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe.

#### 2.3.1. Elision

Elision involves the omission of certain vowel and consonant sounds, and even of whole syllables, in particular contexts. Vowel elision involves the elimination of certain vowel sounds, in the presence of other vowels. In example (4), the vowel of **lɔ̀** is elided in contact with the vowel **a** of **asĩ** ‘hand’.

4. *nàñěá lé kùkúó lá sĩ*  
**nàñě-á**            **lɔ̀**    **kùkú-á**        **lɔ̀**        **asĩ**  
 mother-ART.DEF    hold    hat-ART.DEF    at        hand  
 ‘Her mother is holding the hat’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 26.1)

Vowel elision is very rampant in the presence of vowels that are often referred to as *noun prefixes* in Ewe linguistics (cf. Stahlke 1971: 173). Given that these vowels *i.e.* the noun prefixes, although not instances of prototypical prefixes, in some respects, function similarly as prototypical morphological prefixes, I refer to them as *residue*<sup>10</sup> *noun prefixes*.

<sup>9</sup> The short mid tone is shorter in duration as compared to the long mid tone.

<sup>10</sup> I refer to the prefixes as such due to the fact that they can be argued to be residues of an archaic system of nominal prefixing.

Tɔ̀ɣ̀gbe has two residue noun prefixes: **ə** and **a**. The residue noun prefix **ə** is elided in the presence of other vowels while other vowels are elided in the presence of the residue noun prefix **a**. In example (5) for instance, the final vowel [o] of the possessive connective **wó** is elided in contact with the residue prefix **a** in **awù** ‘dress’.

5. *wá wùó*  
**wó**      **awù-á**  
 POSS      dress-ART.DEF  
 ‘Her dress’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 25.1)

Consonant elision, on the other hand, mainly concerns sonorants. The sonorants that are involved in elision are: the approximants [w], [j], the lateral [l] and the trill [r]. Consonant elision can occur in syntax or during morphological processes (for consonant elision in morphological processes, see section 3.1.1. of this chapter). For instance, in (6), the [w] of the second person singular pronoun **wò** is elided and the vowel attached to the preceding form **ná**.

6. *amìé dó ɣ̀gò náò*  
**amè-á**              **dó**      **ɣ̀gò**      **ná-wò**  
 person-ART.DEF    ICV      front    DAT-PRO.2SG  
 ‘The person is in front of you’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1151.1)

### 2.3.2. Coalescence

A second pervasive phonological process in Tɔ̀ɣ̀gbe is coalescence. Coalescence refers to the merger of two or more distinct sounds that results in a third sound. In example (7), for instance, the third person singular pronoun **á** fuses with the **ə** of the locative predicate to form the mid-closed front vowel [e].

7. *mí vá lé*  
**mí**      **vá**      **lè-á**  
 PRO.1PL    VENT    be.at-PRO.3SG  
 ‘We existed’ (Flex\_Sto: Maw 10.1)

Coalescence concerns mainly vowels. However, a vowel and consonant coalescence also exists in Tɔ̀ɣ̀gbe. Indeed, the bilabial

nasal [m] can coalesce with the central vowel [a] to form the nasalized close back vowel [ũ]. The example below illustrates this phenomenon.

8. *əwò yé gblǎ́é nǎ́*  
**əwò**      **yé**      **gblǎ́-é**      **nǎ́-ǎ́**  
 PRO.2SG    FOC    tell-PRO.3SG    DAT-PRO.1SG  
 ‘You, tell me’ (Flex\_Nar: afi 1.2)

There are three very common types of coalescence in Tɔ̀nǔ̀gbe, listed below as (a), (b) and (c). Example (8) above illustrates an instance of (a); the examples (9) and (10) below illustrate respectively the case of (b) and (c).

- a.      [a] + [m]       $\longrightarrow$       [ũ]  
 b.      [a] + [e]       $\longrightarrow$       [ɛ]  
 c.      [ə] + [o]       $\longrightarrow$       [ɔ]

9. *wó fò abìē né*  
**wó**      **fò**      **abì-á**      **nǎ́-é**  
 PRO.3PL    beat    wound-ART.DEF    DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘They treated the wound for it’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 21.1)

10. *kó gbǎ́ǎ́ eβù wó kù*  
**ké-wó**      **gbǎ́-á**      **eβù**      **wó**      **kù**  
 when-PRO.3PL    come-HAB    vehicle    PRO.3PL    drive  
 ‘They came in a canoe’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 190.1)

### 2.3.3. Assimilation

Assimilation is an important phonological process in Tɔ̀nǔ̀gbe. In this process a sound becomes more like a nearby sound. I shall illustrate the process with two grammatical items: the negative marker and the habitual marker.

The negative marker in Tɔ̀nǔ̀gbe as well as in other dialects of the Ewe language is a discontinuous particle **mə...ò**. The first part **mə** immediately precedes the verb phrase while the last part **ò** follows the verb phrase or occurs after an adverb. In Tɔ̀nǔ̀gbe, the second part of

the negative marker is lowered if preceded by [ə] or [ɛ]. As a result, the mid-closed vowel [o] is realized as mid-open [ɔ] in such instances. Observe the realizations of the second part of the negation marker in the following examples:

11. *ɲà m̀à bié t̀àtáɲ̀*

**ɲà**        **m̀à**    **bié**    **t̀àtá**    **-ɲà**        **-ò**  
 PRO.1SG    NEG    ask    father    -PRO.1SG    -NEG  
 ‘I did not ask my father’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 104.1)

12. *əd̀zrè alèké mé gé léó d̀òméɲ̀*

**əd̀zrè**    **alèké**        **mé**    **gé**    **lé**    **wó**  
 fight    no                NEG    fall    at    PRO.3PL  
**d̀òmè-é**                        **-ò**  
 midsection-PRO.3SG    NEG  
 ‘There was no enmity between them’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 533.1)

The habitual aspect marker in Tɔ̀ɲúgbe is **á**. The habitual marker undergoes assimilation; it is assimilated to the tongue position of the preceding vowel. As a consequence, it surfaces as **é** before front vowels (13) and as **ɔ́** before back vowels (14).

13. *wó má yìé aβ̀àò*

**wó**        **má**    **yì-á**        **aβ̀à**    **ò**  
 PRO.3PL    NEG    go-HAB    war    NEG  
 ‘They do not go to war’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 556.1)

14. *ɛβ̀iéó má d̀ùó ǹò níúò*

**ɛβ̀à-á-wó**                        **má**        **d̀ù-á**        **əǹò**        **ənū**  
 Ewe-ART.DEF-PL    NEG    eat-HAB    mother    thing  
**ò**  
 NEG  
 ‘The Ewes do not inherit maternally’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 276.1)

### 3. Morphology

This section is dedicated to the study of the strategies involved in word formation in Tɔ̀nùgbe and aims at facilitating the identification of morphemes in the examples cited later on in this thesis. From now, I shall use the standard Ewe orthography (see section 2.1.2 above) in presenting the examples.

#### 3.1. Word formation

Tɔ̀nùgbe, and the Ewe language, is with respect to its morphology, of the isolating type. As characteristic of isolating languages, morphemes are free. In example (15), for instance, all words correspond to free morphemes.

15. **amè**      **búbǔ**      **há**      **gá**      **fɔ̀**      **é-ké**  
       person    another    also    REP    pick    PRO.3SG-DEM  
       ‘Another person also took this’    (Flex\_Nar: Fam 80.1)

However, though an isolating language, the language does have some agglutinative features (Ameka 1991:7). There are certain words which are composed of two or more morphemes. In example (16), the words **agblènū** ‘hoe’ and **asìmè** ‘market’ are a combination of independent morphemes that are agglutinated, *i.e.* ‘farm’-‘thing’ and ‘market’-‘inside’.

16. a. **agblènú**                      b. **asìmè**  
       **agblè**    **-enū**                      **asì**      **-mè**  
       farm    -thing                      market    -inside  
       ‘hoe’                                      ‘market’

The major strategies of word formation in Tɔ̀nùgbe discussed below are: reduplication, compounding and affixation. In the following sections, I briefly present each of these word-formation strategies *i.e.* reduplication in section 3.1.1; compounding in section 3.1.2; and suffixation in section 3.1.3.

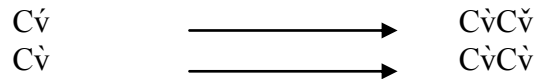
#### 3.1.1. Reduplication

Many words in Tɔ̀nùgbe are formed by reduplication. Reduplication consists in the repetition of a part or the whole of a base in order to

form a new word. In the example below, the noun form **kpàkpǎ** ‘stoppage’ is formed from the reduplication of the verb **kpá** ‘stop’.

17. **kpá**            **kpà~kpǎ**  
       stop            RED~stop  
                       ‘stoppage’

The tone on reduplicated forms depends on the tone of the base. For instance, in monosyllabic bases, tone patterns in reduplicated morphemes can be summarized as follows:



Hence, when the monosyllabic base has a high tone, as illustrated by the example (17), the output has a low tone on the first syllable and a rising tone on the second syllable. When the base has a low tone, the output has a low tone on both syllables, as demonstrated in example (18) below:

18. **kè**            **kè~kè**  
       ‘open’        RED~open  
                       ‘open wide’

There are two major patterns of reduplication in Tɔ̀ŋúgbè: partial reduplication and full reduplication. In partial reduplication, some of the sounds of the base are omitted in the reduplicated part, whereas in full reduplication no sound is lost in the reduplication process. I will illustrate these two types of reduplication by means of examples of the formation of deverbal nouns.

Partial reduplication occurs when the base to be reduplicated has a CCV syllable structure. In the process of reduplicating a verb with a CCV syllable structure to form a noun, the second consonant of the CC onset is omitted in the output. In the examples presented in (19) below, the second consonant of the onset, [l], is eliminated in the first syllable of the reduplicated forms.

19. a. **blá**    *bàblǎ*                      b. **v̀lè**            *vèvlè*  
       'tie'    **bà**    ~**blá**                      'struggle'    **vè**    ~**v̀lè**  
               RED    tie    RED    struggle  
               'the act of tying'    'a struggle'

Full reduplication occurs elsewhere *i.e.* when the base to be reduplicated is of CV syllabic structure or is multisyllabic. In the example (20), since the base to be reduplicated, *viz.* **kú** 'die', has a CV syllabic structure, the whole base is reduplicated. In the case of example (21), as the base to be reduplicated, *i.e.* **háyá** 'be lively' is multisyllabic, it is completely reduplicated to form the noun **hàyàháyá** 'healing'.

20. **kú**                                      **kù.kǔ**  
       die                                      RED~die  
     'The act of dying'
21. **háyá**                                      **hàyàháyá**  
       'be lively'                              háyà    ~háyá  
     RED    ~be adventurous  
     'a healing'

As can be observed from the example (21) above, the tone rules stated above do not hold when multisyllabic bases are reduplicated. Multisyllabic root words are not only rare in Tə̀ḡúgbe, but also, their reduplicated forms are not frequent. A critical examination will have to be carried out in order to identify these bases, their reduplicated forms, and the tone rules that operate there within.

### 3.1.2. Compounding

Compounding is a very common derivational strategy in Ewe (Ofori 2002); and the process functions according to similar principles in Tə̀ḡúgbe. Compounding consists of the combination of two or more forms in order to form a new lexical item. In example (22.a) two forms, **etò** 'river' and **evū** 'vehicle', are combined into a complex word **tòvú** 'stream', while in (22.b) three forms **sùkú** 'school', **exò** 'house' and **mè** 'interior.section' are combined into the complex word **sukúxóme** 'classroom'.

22. a. *tòvú*                      b. *sùkùxòmè*  
**etò**    - **evū**                      **sùkú**    - **exò**    - **mè**  
river    vehicle                      school house    interior.section  
‘stream’                              ‘classroom’

Tone change in compounding seems to be less systematic than in reduplication of monosyllabic bases. However, when compounded forms express possessive relations, there are systematic tone changes. I explore this systematic tone changes in chapter 3, section 3.3.

Compounding can be accompanied by phonological processes. In example (23), for instance, the compounding process goes along with nasalization (the insertion of the nasal sound [ŋ]) and coalescence *i.e.* the vowel coalescence rule [a] + [ə] = [ɛ] stated in section 2.3.2

23. *asīŋgè*  
**asī**    **ŋ**    -**gà**    -**é**  
hand    LIG    metal    -DIM  
‘ring’

### 3.1.3. Affixation

The third and final derivational strategy that is relevant to this work is affixation. Affixation consists in adding affixes to bases, in order to create new forms. In example (24), the diminutive suffix **-é** is added to the noun **atīkpó** ‘wood’ to form the word **atīkpóé** ‘a stick’.

24. *atīkpóé*  
**atī**    -**kpo**    -**é**  
tree    -baton    DIM  
‘a stick’

Affixation can be combined with other derivational strategies. Therefore, suffixes can, for instance, be affixed to nouns that are formed by composition as demonstrated in the example below, in which the possessee pronoun is agglutinated to the noun **bùbù** ‘respect’. The diminutive suffix is then suffixed to the form **bùbùtò** ‘Lit. The one possessed by respect’ in order to form the adverbial ‘respectfully’.



25. **bù**                    *bùbùtɔɛ*  
       ‘respect’            **bùbù**    **-tɔ̀-ɛ**  
                               respect    -PRO.PD-DIM  
                               respectfully’

#### 4. Syntax

This section presents a survey of the syntax of Tɔ̀nùgbe. A preliminary comment is necessary in respect of constituent order in Tɔ̀nùgbe. The various dialects of the Ewe language (Tɔ̀nùgbe included) have an subject-verb-object (SVO) constituent order, as is illustrated by (26). However, in certain specific circumstances, the construction can for instance have the order Subject-Copular-Verb-Object-Aspectual marker (when the verb is marked as being in the progressive aspect or in the prospective). Example (27) illustrates the latter scenario; in this instance, the verb is marked as being in the progressive aspect.

26. *avū́ ò dà atī*  
**avū́-á**                    **dà**                    **atī**  
 dog-ART.DEF    throw    tree  
 ‘The dog threw a stick’ (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 4.1)
27. *nỳǹǹvīé vá lè enū́ ó tūtú*  
**nỳǹǹvī-á**            **vá**            **lè**            **enū́-á**                    **tūtú-ń**  
 girl-ART.DEF    VENT    COP    thing-ART.DEF    clean-PROG  
 ‘The girl was cleaning the thing’ (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 29.1)

As in the sections devoted to phonology and morphology, two major criteria guide the choice of topics for this sub-section.

- I concentrate on the aspects of the syntax that are relevant to the work in the subsequent sections. For instance, the typology of clausal syntax, *i.e.* the distinction between simple, serial, overlapping and minor clauses (Ansre 2000: 36) will not be developed in the present survey.
- The focus is also on those aspects where the syntax of Tɔ̀nùgbe differs from the syntax of other dialects of Ewe.

These differences mainly concern some of the forms that occur in the different slots of the noun phrase, and the different markers that occur in the verb phrase to indicate tense, aspect and mood.

To these ends, I will successively present the noun phrase (section 4.1), the verb phrase (section 4.2), and the adpositional phrase (section 4.3). I will close the sub-section with a presentation of focus markers (section 4.4).

#### 4.1. Noun Phrase structure

The noun phrase in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe, and other dialects of the Ewe language, is composed of one or more nuclei optionally accompanied by other elements. The nucleus can be a noun, a pronoun or a quantifier. Modifiers and determiners include adjectives, quantifiers, demonstratives, articles and intensifiers (Duthie 1996: 44). Ameka (1991: 45) represents the internal structure of the noun phrase in Ewe as:

$$(INT) \left\{ \begin{array}{l} N \\ PRO \\ QT \end{array} \right\} (ADJ) *(QT) (DET) (PL) (INT)*$$

The noun phrase pattern in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe is identical to the noun phrase pattern as detailed by Ameka (1991) for standard Ewe. However, the various elements that enter the positions of the pattern in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe can manifest different characteristics from the forms that occur in other dialects of the language. The major divergences concern intensifiers (section 4.1.1), pronouns (section 4.1.2), demonstratives (section 4.1.3) and articles (section 4.1.4). The noun phrase, its nominal nucleus, and the elements that can occur to modify or determine it, will be crucial in understanding the relations that are examined later on in attributive possessive constructions and external possessor constructions *i.e* the discussions in chapter 3 and chapter 5 respectively.

#### 4.1.1. Intensifiers

Intensifiers (in noun phrases) are morphemes that are used to characterize or emphasize aspects of the head of the noun phrase (Konig & Siemund 2000: 45). Intensifiers of Tɔ̀nùgbe include words such as **alé** ‘such’, **nènié (neném)** ‘such’, **fòmèví** ‘type’, **tɔ̀ngbé** ‘type’, **kóŋ** ‘especially’, **pé** ‘only’, **ɖèdɛ** ‘only’ etc. The intensifiers **nènié (neném)** ‘such’ and **alé** ‘such’ occur in pre-nucleus slot of an expanded noun phrase (28), whereas all other intensifiers occur in post-nucleus slots of an expanded noun phrase, as is illustrated by the intensifier **tɔ̀ngbé** ‘type’ in (29).

28. *nènié nú máwò mè wèéá*  
**nènié** **nú** **má-wó** **mè** **wè-é-a**  
 INT thing DEM-PL PRO.1SG do-PRO.3SG-PART  
 ‘It’s those things that I am referring to’

29. *kɔ̀fé gá kíyíé tɔ̀ngbé*  
 village big DEM type  
 ‘This kind of big village’

#### 4.1.2. Nouns

Some morphological aspects of nouns in Tɔ̀nùgbe have been presented in the subsection on morphology (see section 3). In the framework of this study, it is important to focus also on some semantic sub-types of nouns. The two semantic sub-types of nouns that are relevant for this work are relational nouns and locational terms, labeled as ‘substantives of place’ by Westermann (1930: 51).

A relational noun is a noun that has an argument position, which can be saturated by an implicit or explicit argument (De Bruin & Scha 1988). In other words, relational nouns are nouns that evoke an association with some other nominal referent. For example, the English word **mother** entails **mother of someone**. In Tɔ̀nùgbe, body-part terms, kinship terms, spatial orientation terms and some socio-culturally important terms (which I refer to as socio-culturally relational terms) such as **wife** and **friend**, are construed as relational nouns.

The second semantic sub-type of nouns, locational terms, is used to denote parts or areas of another nominal referent. They can also be used to indicate spatial relations. Originating from nouns referring to body-parts, they have grammaticalized into adpositions (Ameka 1991: 243). The following table lists some of the commonest locational terms in Tɔ̀ngugbe and their body-part sources:

*Table 4: Locational terms and their body-part sources*

Body part	Locational term
<b>etá</b> ‘head’	<b>tá</b> ‘top’
<b>ɲutí</b> ‘skin’	<b>ɲutí</b> ‘by’
<b>así</b> ‘hand’	<b>sí</b> ‘space’
<b>etō</b> ‘ear’	<b>tó</b> ‘edge’
<b>enú</b> ‘mouth’	<b>nú</b> ‘entry’
<b>axá</b> ‘side’	<b>xá</b> ‘side’

The following examples illustrate the use of the noun **etá** ‘head’ as a body part (30) and as a locational term (31) that indicates the place or region considered the **western direction** relative of the Volta **river**.

30. **é**            **yì**        **wó**    **tá**  
 PRO. 3SG    go        POSS    head  
 ‘It goes towards his head’ (Flex\_Arr: Afi 14.1)

31. **é**            **yì**        **tsì-tá**  
 PRO.3SG    go        water-head  
 ‘Lit. It goes to water’s head’  
 (It goes towards upstream direction)’ (Flex\_Arr: Afi 10.1)

The distinction between the body-part terms and locational terms (which I refer to in the later chapters as spatial orientation terms) shall feature prominently in the study of attributive possessive constructions and the analysis of the concept of alienability (see Chapter 3, section 2.4.2.1). It will also be crucial for understanding the relations expressed in predicative possessive constructions (chapter 4) and locative constructions (Chapter 6, section 3).

### 4.1.3. Pronouns

The nucleus of the noun phrase can be a pronoun (*i.e.* they can be accompanied by modifiers). Pronouns of Təŋúgbè can be divided into four series: subject pronouns, object pronouns, independent pronouns and logophoric pronouns. The table below lists the pronominal forms available in Təŋúgbè.

Table 5: List of pronouns in Təŋúgbè

	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Subject</b>	mè	è	é (wò)	mí	mì	wó
<b>Object</b>	m̀	wò	é (í,é)	mí	mì	wó
<b>Independent</b>	enyè	ewò	yé	mié(ó)	miè(ó)	woóó
<b>Logophoric</b>		yè	yè		yèó	yèó

The pronouns that are most relevant in this work are the independent forms. Independent pronouns are pronouns that are used in emphatic contexts or in appositions. As can be observed from the table, Təŋúgbè has no possessive pronouns. The independent pronouns are therefore used in possessive constructions as well. The independent pronouns that occur in possessive constructions are the first and second person singular and plural forms.

Moreover, two other pronoun types, the third person singular subject pronoun and the logophoric pronoun, also occur in possessive constructions. With respect to the subject pronoun, only the form **é** occurs in possessive constructions.

The logophoric pronoun occurs in complement clauses introduced by the quotative marker **bé** (which can translated into English as ‘say’). It is used when an argument of the complement clause is coreferential with the subject of the quotative marker (typically in indirect speeches). In example (32), since the subject of the complement clause is the same as the subject of the quotative marker *i.e.* **avùó** ‘the dog’, the logophoric pronoun is used.

32. *avùó bé eyè mè lè lólò gèò*  
**avù-á**            **bé**            **yè**            **mè**    **lè**    **lólò**  
 dog-ART.DEF    QUOT    PRO.LOG    NEG    COP    agree  
**gè**            **ò**  
 PROSP    NEG  
 ‘The dog said it will not agree’ (Flex\_Ext: Viv 19.1)

#### 4.1.4. Demonstratives

The next slot in the noun phrase structure presented above is the Determiner (DET) slot. This slot can be filled by demonstratives or articles. Demonstratives are presented in the present section. Articles will be analyzed in section 4.1.5 below.

Demonstratives of Tɔ̀ngugbe in the noun phrase are post-head (nucleus) modifiers. They are of two major types: proximal and distal. In addition to this binary referential division, the demonstrative system of Tɔ̀ngugbe exhibits a five-term deictic opposition<sup>11</sup>, which is person-oriented (speaker-anchored). The demonstrative can denote a referent (i) in the proximity of the speaker, (ii) away from the speaker (iii) further away from speaker (iv) far away from the speaker (v) very far away from the speaker. Witness the following examples:

33. **enū**            **yíé**  
 thing            DEM:PROX  
 ‘This thing’
34. **amé**            **má-é**            **tsó**            **agbālē-á**  
 person            DEM:DIST1-FOC    take            book-ART.DEF  
 ‘Its that person who took the book’ (Flex\_Nar: Afi 47.1)

<sup>11</sup> The two competing forms for proximal referencing in table 6 do not differ in terms of deictic distance. Instead they differ in terms of their pragmatic values *i.e.* Prox A= ‘this’, Prox B= ‘this very’.

35. *amé kémúí, wó sú mé dè̀*  
**amè**    **kémú-í,**            **wó**    **sùsù**    **mé**    **dè̀**  
 person    DEM:DIST2-FOC    POSS    brain    NEG    reach  
**ò**  
 NEG  
 ‘That other person is not intelligent’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 546.1)
36. **wó**    **vá**    **lé**    **amé**    **kēmē-wó**  
 PRO.3PL    VENT    catch    human    DEM :DIST3-PL  
 ‘They caught those other people’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 271.1)
37. **é**    **yì**    **nyìnòè-á**            **kēmēhē**    **gbó**  
 PRO.3PL    go    uncle-ART.DEF    DEM:DIST4    vicinity  
 ‘Lit. He/she has gone to that other other uncle’s end’  
 ‘(He/she has gone to that other uncle’s)’

Table 6: List of demonstratives in Tə̀húgbe

	Prox 1	Prox 2	Dist 1	Dist 2	Dist 3	Dist 4
A	yì	ké	má	kém(ú)	kēmē	kēmēhē
B	yié	kíyié	kámá			

To form demonstrative pronouns, the third person singular subject pronoun (see section 4.1.3. above) is prefixed to the demonstrative such as **é-kámá** ‘that one’.

In addition to this, Tə̀húgbe also has a set of forms that function as adverbial demonstratives. These forms are compounds, resulting from the combination of the noun **gā** ‘place’ and the demonstratives presented in table 6 above. Table 7 lists the forms that function as adverbial demonstratives in Tə̀húgbe.

Table 7: Forms that function as adverbial demonstratives

FORM	MORPOLOGY	PHONO. PROCESS
<b>gíyié</b>	gá + yié	gí + yié
<b>gámá</b>	gá + má	gá + má
<b>gém(ú)</b>	gá + m	gé + m
<b>gēmē</b>	gá + mē	gē + mē
<b>gēmēhē</b>	gá + mēhē	gē + mēhē

In terms of deictic reference, the forms listed above exhibit a similar five-term deictic opposition as the demonstratives. In the following examples, for instance, the form **gíyíé** ‘here’ functions as a proximal demonstrative adverb; the form **gámá** ‘there’ functions as a distal demonstrative adverb that refers to a place away from the speaker; and the form **gámēhē** ‘that other place’ functions as a distal demonstrative adverb that refers to a place that is very far away from speaker.

38. *gíyíé dèvié tó*  
**gá-yíé**      **dèvī-á**      **tó**  
 place-DEM    child-ART.DEF    stop  
 ‘Here the child stops’ ( Flex\_Ext: Dzi 47.1)
39. *avūó vá gámá*  
**avūá**      **vá**      **gá-má**  
 dog-ART.DEF    come    place-DEM  
 ‘The dog came there’ ( Flex\_Ext: Des 8.1)
40. *etsiè yì tsí gámēhē*  
**etsi-á**      **yì**      **tsí**      **gá-mēhē**  
 water-ART.DEF    go    stay    place-DEM  
 ‘The stream is blocked at the other end’  
 ( Flex\_Sto: Azi 179-180.1)

#### 4.1.5. Articles

Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe and other dialects of the Ewe language have two articles: the indefinite article and the definite article. In order to understand the meanings expressed by articles, information will have to be provided on the definiteness that is associated with the meanings of bare nouns. Therefore, before I detail the two types of articles, I present the bare noun.

**The bare noun** in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, though without determiner, is not devoid of specificity. Indeed, the bare noun in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe as well as in other Ewe dialects refers to “instances of a substance or members of a class as well as generic reference” (Essegbey 1999: 43). For instance, in (41), the bare noun ‘dog’ refers to an instance of the class ‘dogs’.



41. *avū lè nyànùví-á sí*  
avū lè nyànùví-á sí  
 dog be.at girl-ART.DEF hand  
 ‘The girl has a dog’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 3.1)

**The indefinite article** denotes ‘a certain’ member of the class known to the speaker, but presented as unknown to the hearer. In Tɔ̀nùgbe, the indefinite article is **álé** and it occurs after the nominal head of the noun phrase in an expanded noun phrase.

42. *..wò lé kùkú álé lé asī*  
 ..wò lé kùkú álé lé asī  
 ..PRO.3SG hold hat ART.INDF at hand  
 ‘He had a hat in hand’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 15.1)

The indefinite article can be pluralized with the plural marker **wó** to refer to ‘certain’ members of a group known to the speaker. But the plural marker suffixed to the indefinite article undergoes various phonological processes (elision and coalescence) and thus surfaces as **áló**.

**The definite article** evokes the idea that the object being referred to is ‘a certain’ member (of a class) known to both speaker and hearer. The definite article in Tɔ̀nùgbe is **á**. It is cliticized to the noun phrase that it determines, as demonstrated in example (43).

43. **agbàlè agbàlè-á**  
 ‘book’ ‘the book’

The definite article can however occur in different forms due to its assimilation to the tongue position of the preceding vowel. Therefore, if the final vowel of the noun to which the definite article is cliticized is [i] or [e] the definite article surfaces as **é**; and if the preceding vowel is [u] and [o] it surfaces as **ó**. However, the article occurs as **ó** and **á** when the preceding vowel is the same vowel. Finally, when the preceding vowel is the schwa, the definite article can be involved in a double process of assimilation and dissimilation and surfaces as **é** (for instance when the definite article occurs with

**amè** ‘person’) or it surfaces as **á** (for instance when the definite article occurs with **akplě** ‘akple’). Witness the following examples:

- |     |                         |                                      |                          |                                |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 44. | <b>děvǐ</b><br>‘child’  | <b>děvǐ-é</b><br>‘the child’         | <b>dókoé</b><br>‘self’   | <b>dókoé-é</b><br>‘the self’   |
| 45. | <b>nyànù</b><br>‘woman’ | <b>nyànù-ǔ</b><br>‘the woman’        | <b>fófó</b><br>‘brother’ | <b>fòfò-ǔ</b><br>‘the brother’ |
| 46. | <b>esrò</b><br>‘spouse’ | <b>esrò-ǔ</b><br>‘the spouse’        | <b>agbà</b><br>‘load’    | <b>agbà-á</b><br>‘the load’    |
| 47. | <b>amè</b><br>‘person’  | <b>amìé</b><br>amè-é<br>‘the person’ | <b>akplě</b><br>‘akple’  | <b>akplě-á</b><br>‘the akple’  |

In the analysis of attributive possessive constructions, the role of definite articles will be discussed with respect to the third person singular pronominal possession (chapter 3, section 2.2.1). Also, I refer to the definite article and demonstratives to illustrate the syntactic features that characterize predicative possessive constructions, external possessor constructions, locative constructions and the existential construction (Chapter 6).

#### 4.1.6. Coordinate noun phrases

Two processes are used in coordinate noun phrases in Tɔ̀ngugbe: conjunction and disjunction.

In conjunctive coordinate noun phrases, two morphemes, **kplí** ‘and’ or **kpakplí** ‘and’ are used as coordinating conjunctions. While the form **kplí** is used before the second of two noun phrases (48), the form **kpakplí** is used to introduce the last noun phrase of a series of more than two noun phrases (49).

48. **avū kplí tòdzó**  
dog and cat  
‘A dog and a cat’ (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 2.1)

49. **sùkúdzìkpólá**      **dàrékta**      **kpákplí**      **másta**  
 school administrator    director      and      headmaster  
 ‘School administrator, director and headmaster’  
 (Flex\_Sto: Azi 430.1)

In dysjunctive coordinate noun phrases, two markers, **aló** ‘or’ and **ló** ‘or’ are used as coordinating conjunctions. Example (50) illustrates a dysjunctive coordinate noun phrase in Tɔ̀ṅúgbe.

50. **etɔ̀liá**      **aló**      **enèliá-á-wó**  
 third      or      fourth-ART.DEF-PL  
 ‘The third or the fourth ones’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 656.1)

#### 4.2. Verb Phrase Structure

Verbs feature prominently in chapters 4, 5 and 6, which deal with clausal constructions. Different kinds of verbs are to be noted in Tɔ̀ṅúgbe (from one place to multiple place verbs). However, one opposition needs to be noted in relation to this work: the opposition between inherent complement verbs (or inherent object verbs) and simple verbs.

Inherent complement verbs (ICV) are verbs that, independent of their objects, are semantically generic. They therefore rely for their interpretation on their complements (for a useful discussion on inherent complement verbs in Ewe, see Essegbey (1999, 2010)). The meaning of the verb **fú** in example (51) below cannot be determined independent of its complement **tsì** ‘water’. Such a verb is thus referred to as an Inherent Complement Verb.

51. **Kofi**      **fú**      **tsì**  
 Kofi    ICV    water  
 ‘Kofi swam’

Simple verbs, as opposed to inherent complement verbs are bare verbs that are semantically specific. Some bare verbs also participate in, especially predicative possessive constructions. To this end, some preliminary comments need to be made about verbs of Ewe in general.

First of all, bare verbs are in the aorist *i.e.* they typically express a completed action. Secondly, in Ewe, verbs do not convey inflection. Instead, free morphemes mark aspect, tense and mood. Ameka (1991, 2008) defines the structure of the verb phrase in Ewe as follows:

(IRR) (REP) (MOD/LOC) (TENSE) VERB (ASPECT)

The Tɔ̀nùgbe verb phrase structure does not differ from the structure stated above. However, the various elements that fill the various slots can differ from the elements that occur in other dialects of Ewe. This section will deal with modals (section 4.2.1), locatives (section 4.2.3) and aspectual markers (section 4.2.3).

#### 4.2.1. Modals

In addition to the modal **nyá**, which marks epistemic possibility, Tɔ̀nùgbe also has the modal **ɖá**, which expresses probability. The following examples illustrate the use of both modals:

52. *mé nyá ỳyɔ̃ né míó*  
**mé**      **nyá**      **lè**      **ỳyɔ̃-m**      **né**      **mí**  
 3SG.NEG    possibly    COP    call-PROG    DAT    PRO.1PL  
**ò**  
 NEG  
 ‘We found it difficult to pronounce’ (Flex\_Sto:Azi 247.1)

53. *é ɖá dzó*  
 PRO.3SG    probably    go  
 ‘He probably should have left’

Also the modal **téjú** ‘can’ marks ability and root possibility. The modal however has two allomorphs: **té** and **tá**. The form **té** surfaces in the absence of irrealis markers (the subjunctive or the potential marker) in the verb phrase (54); the form **tá** surfaces when any of the irrealis markers is present, such as the potential marker (55)

54. *è té vá*  
 PRO.2SG    can    come  
 ‘You are able to come’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1544.1)

55. *mí àtá xlà gbālēó*

**mí**            **à-tá**            **xlè**    **agbālē-wó**  
 PRO.1PL   POT -can    read    book-PL  
 ‘We can read books’    (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1155.1)

Tɔ̀nùgbe modals that express the idea of ‘attempted action’ are also fascinating. In addition to **kàtsè** (the most common of the two), which is present in other dialects of Ewe as well, and which expresses the idea of ‘daringness’ (Ameka 2008: 145), Tɔ̀nùgbe has the form **dzèhā** (grammaticalized from the verb **dzè** ‘to be in contact with’ and the noun **ehā** ‘crowd’) which communicates the idea of ‘someone being daring’. Examples (56) and (57) demonstrate the use of **dzèhā** and **katse** in Tɔ̀nùgbe respectively.

56. *mè dzèhā tró*

**mè**            **dzèhā**    **tró**  
 PRO.1SG    dare    return  
 ‘I dared return’

57. *kàtsè ná trɔ̃ yì*

**kàtsè**        **né-è-á**                    **tró**    **yì**  
 2SG.dare   IMP-PRO.2SG-SUBJ    return    go  
 ‘Don’t even dare trying to go again’

#### 4.2.2. Locatives

The most intriguing difference between the verb phrase stated in section 4.2 and the verb phrase of Tɔ̀nùgbe concerns the locative particles (LOC). In Tɔ̀nùgbe, the particles can be grouped into two sets: **hé** and **yì** on one hand, **vá** and **váyì**, on the other hand.

**Hé** and **yì** are used to indicate motion away from deitic centre *i.e* the itive. However, they also express the manner in which events are ordered with respect to each other. **Hé** is used to indicate the simultaneity of the event of the verb in respect of other events in the speech context while **yì** (which can be argued to have grammaticalized from the verb **yì** ‘go’) describes the sequentiality between the event expressed by the verb and another event in the preceding context. Due

to the ‘simultaneity’ signaled by **hé**, sentence (58) can be paraphrased as ‘the mother beat her and asked her to, at that very moment, go to Eso’. Sentence (59) in which the form **yì** is used, could also be glossed as ‘he did an activity, (then) he went to the farm and now he is back’.

58. *nàńǎ fòé vùuu bé né hé yì sò gbó*

**nàńǎ-á**                      **fò-é**                      **vùuu**    **bé**        **né**  
 mother-ART.DEF    beat-PRO.3SG    much    QUOT    IMP

**hé**    **yì**    **sò**                      **gbó**  
 IT    go    thunder.god    vicinity

‘The mother beat her well and asked her to eventually go to Eso’  
 (Flex\_Sto: Maw 38.1)

59. *é                      yì yì    agblè    -mè    vá*

PRO.3SG    IT    go    farm    inside    -come

‘He went to farm and came back’ (Flex\_Nar : Afi 3.1)

The second set of locative particles is **vá** and **váyì**. The form **vá** (which can be argued to have grammaticalized from the verb **vá** ‘go’) is used to express motion towards deitic centre or source *i.e.* the ventive. It also expresses the idea that the state of affairs or event expressed by the verb is eventually happening. The sentences in example (60), can therefore be paraphrased as ‘this thing that eventually came to pass’.

60. *enù            yíé    vá            dzò*

thing    DEM    VENT    happen

‘This thing came to pass’ (Flex\_Ext: Viv 12.1)

The second morpheme of the second set *i.e.* **váyì**, is a combination of the verbs **vá** ‘come’ and **yì** ‘go’. As a locative particle, **váyì** is used to express the idea that, the event expressed by the verb occurred at a place distinct from deictic center *i.e.* the altrilocal. Thus the meaning of the sentence in (61) can be paraphrased as ‘the dog went, and when there, picked it.’

61. *avūó yì váyì tsóé*  
**avū-á**            **yì**    **váyì**        **tsó-é**  
 dog-ART.DEF    go    ALTR    take-PRO.3SG  
 ‘The dog went and picked it’ (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 6.1)

#### 4.2.3. Aspectual markers

Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe exhibits specific features with respect to the progressive and habitual markers. In Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe as well as in other Ewe dialects, the progressive marker is **m̃**. It co-occurs with the copular **lè/ñ**, which can be elided in rapid speech. In other Ewe dialects, the progressive marker **m̃** is attached to the verb. In Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe the marker **m̃** either participates in resyllabification or it is elided, in which case the preceding vowel is nasalized.

The marker participates in resyllabification when the following element is a vowel. Thus, in example (62), the progressive marker becomes the onset of the newly constituted syllable **mé**.

62. *è nyàá mè se méà ?*  
**è**            **lè**        **nyàá**            **mè**        **sè**  
 PRO.2SG        COP        issue-ART.DEF    inside    hear  
**m-é-à**  
 PROG-LIG-Q  
 ‘Are you following what I am saying?’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 64.1)

The progressive marker is elided in the following contexts: when the following word begins with a consonant (63), when it is in sentence-final position (64) or when the verb is reduplicated (65). In these instances, the preceding vowel is nasalized. The nasalized vowel has a low tone when the verb is a low tone verb (63); the nasalized vowel has a high tone (64) or a rising tone (65) when the verb is a high tone verb.

63. *enyà dzrò mí lè*  
**enyà**    **dzrò-m̃**            **mí**            **lè**  
 issue    discuss-PROG    PRO.1PL    COP  
 ‘We are just having a discussion’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 262.1)

64. *wó nò wò vòvòvò atsà vòvòvòwó dǔ*  
**wó**            **nò**            **wò**            **vòvòvò**    **atsà**  
 PRO.3PL      COP:PST      dance      different    style  
**vòvòvò-wó**    **dǔ-m**  
 different-PL   dance-PROG  
 ‘They dance in different styles’ (Flex\_Sto: Fam 20.1)

65. *é lè vǐvǐ né*  
**é**            **lè**            **vǐ-vǐ-m**            **ná-é**  
 PRO.3SG    COP    RED~sweet-PROG    DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘She was enjoying the thing’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 69.1)

Finally, the Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ verb phrase exhibits a difference with respect to the form of the habitual marker. In other Ewe dialects, the habitual marker is **a** (the tone is underlyingly non-high). In Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ, the marker is **á** (the tone is typically high); and it is assimilated to the tongue position of the preceding vowel. The marker therefore occurs as **á** when the last vowel of the verb is [a] (66); It occurs as **é** when the last vowel of the verb is a front vowel, *i.e.* [i], [e], [ɛ] or the schwa, [ə] (67), (68); and it surfaces as **ǎ** when the last vowel of the verb is a back vowel, *i.e.* [u], [o], [ɔ] (69), (70). Observe the following examples:

66. **wó**            **dzrá-á**            **lǎ**  
 PRO.3PL    sell-HAB            animal  
 ‘They sell animals’
67. *wó vá yìé beach*  
**wó**            **vá**            **yì-á**            **beach**  
 PRO.3PL    VENT            go-HAB            beach  
 ‘They go to beach’ (Flex\_Sto: Fam 32.1)



68. *é là bé mé líé bē né nūò*  
**é**            **là**        **bé**        **mé**        **lé-á**        **bē**  
 PRO.3SG    POT        QUOT    3SG.NEG   hold-HAB   care  
**né**        **nū-ò**  
 DAT    thing-NEG  
 ‘he will say that she is careless’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 115.1)

69. *azàá mèá, wó váyì fòó ahà dè*  
**azà-á**                    **mè-á**                    **wó**                    **váyì**  
 festival-ART.DEF    inside-TOP    PRO.3PL            ALT  
**fò-á**            **ahà**        **dè-é**  
 beat-HAB    drink    at-PRO.3SG  
 ‘During the festival, libation is poured’ (Flex\_Sto: Fam 5.1)

70. *efiéó mí tsóó dèó*  
**efié-á-wó**                    **mí**                    **tsó-á**                    **dè-wó**  
 chief-ART.DEF-PL    PRO.1PL            take-ART.DEF    some-PL  
 ‘We carry some of the chiefs’ (Flex\_Sto: Fam 19.1)

### 4.3. Adpositional phrases

The adpositional phrase involves prepositions, postpositions or both. Prepositions in Ewe are argued to have developed from verbs (Ameka 1995), while some postpositions have developed from body-part nouns (see section 4.1. above). The example (71) below illustrates the occurrence of a preposition as the head of an adpositional phrase; example (72) demonstrates the use of a postposition as the head of an adpositional phrase; and example (73) illustrates the occurrence of both a preposition and a postposition in an adpositional phrase.

71. *tsiè xá lé tètē álé*  
**tsi-á**                    **xá**            **lé**            **tètē**        **álé**  
 water-ART.DEF    gather    at            place    ART.INDF  
 ‘The water gathers somewhere’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 5.1)

72. *é lè é mē*  
 PRO.3SG    be.at    PRO.3SG    inside  
 ‘Lit.It is inside’  
 ‘(It’s true)’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1184.1)

73. *mè vá sè kúlá lé dùó mè*  
**mè**      **vá**      **sè**      **kúlá**      **lé**      **dù-á**  
 PRO.1SG    VENT    hear    even    at      town-ART.DEF  
**mè**  
 inside  
 ‘I came to hear it in town’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1168.1)

Adpositional phrases are very important in the analysis of predicative possessive constructions, external possessor constructions, locative constructions and existential constructions because they occur in all these constructions.

#### 4.4. Focus marking

The different constituents of the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe sentence can be highlighted by focusing. Although the focus markers in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe can vary from the makers in other Ewe dialects, the focused constituents are the same across Ewe dialects. Therefore, following from Ameka (1991), I present focus particles highlighting either the arguments of the verb (section 5.1) or the verb and the event it evokes (section 5.2).

##### 4.4.1. Argument focus marking

Argument focus marking refers to the focusing of any of the verb’s arguments in the clause. Thus, all arguments in the clause can be focused. I start with focus markers in verbless constructions, and then continue with focus markers in clauses in which verbs occur.

The focus marker in the minor clause (clause without a verb) is **yó**. It occurs after the focused argument. Example (74) illustrates how arguments in the minor clause are focused.

74. *ɲùtsuó wó núdùgbá yó*  
**ɲùtsu-á**      **wó**      **núdù-gbá**      **yó**  
 man-ART.DEF    POSS    food-bowl    FOC  
 ‘It’s the man’s dinning plate’ (Flex\_Atr: Fam 10.1)

Turning attention to focusing the arguments of verbs, the focus marker that is used for the subject is **é**.

- a) When the argument to be focused is a noun, the focus marker is subject to assimilation. The marker is assimilated to the height of the preceding vowel. Therefore, if the last vowel of the focused noun is a close vowel, *i.e.* [i], [u], the focus marker occurs as **í**; if the vowel is a mid-close vowel, *i.e.* [e], [o], [ə], the focus marker surfaces as **é**; and if it is a mid-open or open vowel, it occurs as **é**; witness, in the following examples, how the focus marker is assimilated to the height position of the final vowel of the focused nouns.

75. *Kofí fò Amá*

**Kofí-é**    **fò**    **Ama**  
 Kofi-FOC    beat    Ama  
 ‘It was Kofi who beat Ama’

76. *avuí d̀̀ Amá*

**Avu-é**    **d̀̀**    **Amá**  
 dog-FOC    eat    Ama  
 ‘It was a dog that bit Ama’

77. *wó sr̀̀nyíwoé yé wò yó*

**wó**    **sr̀̀nyí-wo-é**    **yé**    **wò**    **yó**  
 POSS    nephew-PL-FOC    PRO.3SG    PRO.3SG    call  
 ‘It was his nephews that he took along’ (Flex\_Sto:Azi 114.1)

78. *̀̀tsuó sr̀̀óé ̀̀kíyíé*

**̀̀tsu-á**    **sr̀̀-á-é**    **nyé**    **kíyíé**  
 man-ART.DEF    spouse-ART.DEF-FOC    be    DEM  
 ‘Lit. It is the man’s wife this’  
 ‘(This is the man’s wife)’ (Flex\_Atr: Jul 2.1)

- b) If the subject that is focused is a pronominal, the focus marker is not assimilated to the height of the last vowel of the pronoun. When pronouns are to be focused, independent pronouns occur. Thus, the focus marker remains as **é** before all the focused pronominal forms. The following examples illustrate that whatever the independent pronoun, the form of the focus marker is same.

79. *enyèé dzùí*  
**enyè-é**            **dzù-é**  
 PRO.1SG-FOC    insult-PRO.3SG  
 ‘It was I who insulted him’
80. **yé -é**            **sí**    **dzó**  
 PRO.3SG-FOC    run    go  
 ‘Lit. It was he who run away’  
 ‘(He was the one who fled)’
81. **mió-é**            **tsó**  
 PRO.1PL-FOC        get.up  
 ‘Lit. It is us who got up’  
 ‘(We are the ones who got up)’
82. *wóé gblé nūó*  
**wó-é**            **gblé**    **nū-á**  
 PRO.3PL-FOC    spoil    thing-ART.DEF  
 ‘Lit. It is them who spoilt the thing’  
 ‘(They are the ones who spoilt the thing)’

When the argument to be focused is an object, in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, there is no focus marker involved. Focusing is done by constituent order. Hence, the item to be focused (*i.e.* the object) is simply clause-initialized: it is moved from its position within the clause and placed in front of the subject. In example (83) the object of the verb is **Kofi**. In example (84), in which **Kofi** is focused, it occurs clause-initially.

83. **Ama**    **dzù**    **Kofi**  
 Ama    insult    Kofi  
 ‘Ama insulted Kofi’
84. **Kofi**    **Ama**    **dzù**  
 Kofi    Ama    insult  
 ‘It was Kofi that Ama insulted’

Finally, if the item to be focused is an adverbial or an adpositional phrase, focusing is also done by constituent order. However, contrary

to what pertains in object focusing, the constituent order change for focusing adjuncts can be accompanied by the use of the marker **yé** (which is homophonous with the third person singular independent pronoun). In example (85), for instance, the adjunct position is filled by the adverb **etsò** ‘yesterday’. When **etsò** ‘yesterday’ is focused, it assumes clause-initial position. In clause initial position, **etsò** ‘yesterday’ can be accompanied by the focus marker (86) or not (87).

85. **Adzó vá etsò**  
Adzo come yesterday  
‘Adzo came yesterday’
86. **etsò yé Adzó vá**  
yesterday FOC Adzo come  
‘It was yesterday that Adzo came’
87. **etsò Adzó vá**  
yesterday Adzo come  
‘It was yesterday that Adzo came’

#### 4.4.2. Verb focus marking

Verb focus marking involves highlighting the verb and the event it evokes. There are two strategies for focusing the verb in Təṅúgbe: reduplicating and copying the verb to the clause-initial position and the use of the marker **dè**. Example (88) illustrates verb focusing by reduplication, whereas example (89) shows the use of the verb focus marker.

88. **dzò~dzò Kòwù dzó kò mí vá**  
go~go Korwu go then PRO.1PL come  
‘We came just as Korwu left’
89. *etòó dè wò avē*  
**etò-á dè wò avē**  
river-ART.DEF FOC do forest  
‘The stream had a lot of mangrove’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 183.1)

### 5. Conclusion

This chapter has offered a survey of the phonetics, morphology and syntax of Tɔ̀nùgbe. Two types of phonetic elements have been distinguished: segmentals and suprasegmentals. The segmentals consist of vowels and consonants while the suprasegmentals consist of tones. In all, sixteen vowels and twenty-nine consonant sounds have been recognized in the dialect. Concerning the suprasegmentals, four tones have been observed for Tɔ̀nùgbe: a high tone, a low tone, a (long) mid tone and rising tone. The segmental and the suprasegmentals combine into syllables. These syllables are also the tone bearing units. The syllable can however be subject to certain phonological processes. Some of the phonological processes surveyed in this section were elision, coalescence and assimilation.

The morphology section surveyed various morphological strategies that are available in Tɔ̀nùgbe. Three morphological strategies were identified: reduplication, compounding and affixation. The tone rules that characterize the reduplication of monosyllabic verbs to form nouns were also specified. Of the various morphological processes surveyed, the compounding and affixation strategies shall be of prime importance in the descriptions of attributive possessive constructions. Therefore, in the subsequent chapters, I make frequent references to them.

With respect of syntax, three different phrase types have been described: noun phrase, verb phrase and adpositional phrase. The various word classes that occur in each of these phrase types, were equally studied. Particular attention was given to the word classes that manifest variation in relation to the other dialects of the Ewe language. Therefore, focus was placed on demonstratives, articles, pronouns (independent pronouns), modals, locatives and aspectual markers of the verb, and adpositions. A final section has been devoted to focus marking.

The description of Tɔ̀nùgbe, as detailed in this chapter highlights some of the differences between Tɔ̀nùgbe and other dialects of Ewe. The chapter did not have the ambition of capturing all aspects of the grammar of Tɔ̀nùgbe. Rather, it is meant to be a sketch grammar that should serve as a background to analysis undertaken in the subsequent

chapters. Consequently, in the next chapters, where necessary, I refer to some of the items that have been developed above. More importantly however, this survey constitutes the very first attempt to describe Tɔ̀ṣúgbè and thus serves as a basis for further research.





## THE LINGUISTICS OF POSSESSION

**1. The notion of possession**

The notion of possession is difficult to capture in a single definition. It is widely accepted that the everyday use of the term “possession” is too narrow to account for the relationships established by markers of possession, such as possessive adjectives or pronouns, *e.g.* *my neighbor, I have a neighbor etc.*

Indeed, while in the everyday sense of the word, possession is conceived of as a *rapport d'appartenance* (belongingness relationship) between a possessor and a possessee (cf. Tesnière 1959, Junker & Martineau 1987), the notion has been recently redefined in a functional perspective (cf. Creissels 1984, Langacker 1987, Seiler 2001).

Creissels (1984, 2006: 139-144) defines possession – in a more abstract way – as evoking the participation of an item, labeled as the *possessee*, in the ‘personal’ sphere of another entity, corresponding to the *possessor*. In the English phrase **John’s book** for instance, the possessor is **John**, and the possessee is **book**. Creissels highlights the asymmetry between possessee and possessor by suggesting that the possessor is more salient than the possessee (since it has a higher degree of individuation). Thus for him, relating the possessed entity *i.e.* the possessee, to the possessor, offers a way of access to the former entity.

Seiler (2001) on the other hand, insists on the dynamic character of the possessive relationship and conceives the notion of possession as a functional relation under permanent construction in which an ego proactively and retroactively appropriates the things of the external world.

In these functionally inspired proposed definitions of the notion of possession, it is agreed that the relationships signaled by the notion of possession involves the meanings of ownership, kinship and part-whole relations (Gries & Stewanowitsch 2005). These meanings can

therefore be taken as the core meanings that are captured by the notion of possession (Dixon 2010b: 263, Aikhenvald et al. 2012).

## 2. Possessive constructions

In accordance with the definition of possession adopted above, I take as a possessive construction any construction that establishes a relationship between two entities, *viz.* the possessor and the possessee, which corresponds to any of the three core possessive meanings: ownership, kinship and part-whole relations.

As mentioned in the introduction, the typological literature distinguishes three fundamental syntactic patterns for possessive constructions: attributive possessive constructions, predicative possessive constructions and external possessor constructions.

The following examples from French, illustrate these three types of possessive constructions respectively: example (1) is an attributive possessive construction (often referred to as adnominal possessive constructions), example (2) is a predicative possessive construction, and example (3) is an external possessor construction.

*French (Indo-European, Romance)*

1. **la voiture de Pierre**  
ART.DEF car of Peter  
'Peter's car'
  
2. **Pierre a une voiture**  
Peter have ART.INDF car  
'Peter has a car'
  
3. **Jean lui a coupé les cheveux**  
John 3SG.CLIT.DAT have cut:PST ART.DEF.PL  
hair.PL  
'John cut his hair (for a third person)'

Within each syntactic pattern (*i.e.* attributive, predicative or external possessor), various strategies can be used in encoding the possessive relation, *e.g.* the presence or absence of a marker of possessive

relationship in attributive possessive constructions. In the next sections, I survey the three fundamental syntactic patterns and the strategies that are involved in each syntactic pattern. I start with the attributive possessive construction (section 2.1). I continue with the predicative possessive construction (section 2.2). I then proceed to present the strategies involved in external possessor constructions (section 2.3).

### 2.1. Attributive possessive constructions

Attributive possessive constructions refer to possessive constructions in which the possessor and the possessee are contained in the same nominal phrase. However, other constructions that encode meanings other than the ones retained here for possession (see section 1. above for details on the core meanings retained as possessive in this work) can also be expressed by complex nominal constructions (Nikiforidou 1991); and can also involve the same markers that occur in attributive possessive constructions (Dixon 2010b: 291). The following examples demonstrate how the same structure and the same marker in Swahili, conveying a meaning of ownership (4), can be used to encode nominal determination (5).

*Swahili (Bantu, Niger-congo)*

4. **kisu** **cha** **Hamisi**  
 knife POSS Hamisi  
 ‘Hamisi’s knife’

5. **chakula** **cha** **kutosha**  
 food with be-enough  
 ‘enough food’ (Welmers 1974: 276)

In such instances when the same structure or structures in which the same marker occurs express core possessive meanings, but can also express some other meanings, I focus on the description of the possessive use of the construction.

Attributive possessive constructions can vary according to formal parameters *i.e.* syntactic or morphological, and to semantic parameters stratifying the domain (Hammaberg & Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2003).

Below, I survey the formal variation that characterizes attributive possessive construction (section 2.1.1) and the semantic parameters that stratify the domain (section 2.1.2).

### 2.1.1. Formal variation of attributive possessive constructions

Attributive possessive constructions can vary according to the relative order possessor / possessee (Creissels 2006: 146) and on the basis of morphological characteristics. The typology of attributive possessive constructions has however been motivated by the latter variation *i.e.* morphological characteristics. I illustrate this with attributive possessive constructions in Mandinka, German and Turkish.

In Mandinka, a Niger-Congo language spoken across West-Africa, the possessor and the possessee of an attributive possessive construction can be juxtaposed (6) (Creissels 2001); in German, in the attributive possessive construction, the possessor can carry a genitive marker whereas the possessee is unmarked (7) (Lindauer 1998:110); in Turkish, both the possessor and the possessee in an attributive possessive construction can carry a marker: the possessor takes a genitive marker and the possessee takes a marker that Dixon (2010b: 268) refers to as a pertensive marker (8). Witness the examples that illustrate the scenario in each of these languages:

*Mandinka (Niger-Congo, Mande)*

6. **Mùsoo kuɲo**  
 woman head  
 ‘The woman’s head’ (Creissels 2001:5)

*German (Indo-European, Germanic)*

7. **Anna -s Bücher**  
 Anna GEN books  
 ‘Anna’s books’ (Lindauer 1998:110)

*Turkish (Turkic, Oghuz)*

8. **kitab -in kab -i**  
 book GEN cover PER  
 ‘the cover of the book’ (Yükseker 1998: 458)

The various strategies that are recognized typologically as operating within attributive possessive constructions are classifier strategies, indexical strategies, relational strategies, grammatical (markers of possession) strategies, and simple strategies (Croft 2003:31).

**Classifier strategies** involve the use of classifiers. To demonstrate the use of classifiers in the construction of attributive possessive constructions, I use a possessive construction of Tariana, a language from the Arawak family spoken in South-America. In the possessive construction of this language, a classifier is affixed to the possessor noun to form an attributive possessive construction (Aikhenvald 2000: 2). Witness an example of an attributive possessive construction of Tariana below:

*Tariana (Arawak, Northern Maipuran)*

9. **tfinu nu -te**  
 dog PRO. 1SG -CLF:ANIMATE  
 ‘my dog’

For a useful discussion of how the use of classifiers in possessive constructions interacts with other strategies, consult Lichtenberk (2009).

**Indexical** strategies involve some form of concord with a controller, which in the case of the attributive possessive constructions, corresponds usually to the head noun or the possessee. In Swahili for instance, the possessive connective **a** varies in order to agree to the appropriate class of the possessee noun (Welmers 1974: 275). Witness the change in form of the possessive connective in the examples below:

*Swahili (Niger-Congo, Bantu)*

10. **Kisu cha Hamisi**  
 knife POSS Hamisi  
 ‘Hamisi’s knife’
11. **nyumba ya mtu yule**  
 house POSS person DEM  
 ‘That person’s house’

12. **mkono wa mtu yule**  
 hand POSS person DEM  
 ‘That person’s hand’

In a **relational strategy**, a case marker is involved in the possessive construction. This case marker can be a bound form, *i.e.* a case affix, or a free form, *i.e.* an adposition. In Latin for instance, a genitive case affix is used to encode a possessive relationship between two noun phrases. Witness the example below:

*Latin (Indo-european, Italic)*

13. **Tauri-i cori-um protuli-t**  
 bull-GEN.M.SG hide-ACC.SG bring-PRF.3SG  
 ‘He brought the hide of the bull.’

(Carlier & Verstraete 2013: 3)

It should be noted that a case marker, such as the genitive affix, involved in the relational strategy of attributive possession marking, can be used to encode other types of meanings or relations such as the partitive and comparative (Nikiforidou 1991). They are in this way distinct from **grammatical markers of possession** or possessive connectives.

Possessive connectives are also a relational strategy, but unlike case markers, they are specialized in the expression of possessive relationships. In Mandinka for instance, a dedicated possessive connective, glossed as POSS, is used to encode the possessive relationship.

*Mandinka (Niger-Congo, Mande)*

14. **mùsoo la buṅoo**  
 woman POSS house  
 ‘The woman’s house’ (Creissels 2001: 5).

In **simple strategies** (juxtaposition, concatenation, fusion), the construction consists of only the possessor and the possessee, without an explicit morphological marking of the possessive relationship.

Example (15) below, a construction of Twi<sup>12</sup>, a language spoken in Ghana, illustrates the use of a simple strategy *i.e.* juxtaposition.

*Twi (Niger-Congo, Kwa)*

15. **Ama Papa**  
 Ama father  
 ‘Ama’s father’

The distinction between the three simple strategies consists in the degree of autonomy of the possessor with respect to the possessee: no morphological attachment or alteration in the case of **juxtaposition**, affixation or compounding in the case of **concatenation** and **fusion** into one unit.

In this study, I shall be concerned with the last two strategies *i.e.* grammatical and simple strategies. In chapter (3) I study extensively how the two strategies operate in Tɔ̀nùgbe, and the relationship that exists between the use of each strategy and the meaning expressed by each construction.

### 2.1.2. Semantic parameters in attributive possessive constructions

The second parameter along which attributive possessive constructions vary is of a semantic nature. This variation can concern the nature of the possessive relationship, the possessor noun type and the possessee noun type (Dixon 2010b, Karvovskaya 2018).

With respect to the nature of the possessive relationship, it can be physical, temporal, permanent, abstract etc. (Heine 1997: 34). The English phrase **my car**, for instance, can refer to a car that belongs to me legally (permanent possession), a car that I have rented for a determined period of time (temporary possession), a car that I intend to buy and of which I have spoken a lot about to my friends and family (abstract possession) etc.

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<sup>12</sup>All examples from Twi have been subjected to confirmation by native speakers of the language.

In some languages, these semantic distinctions correspond to formal differences in the attributive possessive construction. In Dyirbal for instance, temporal possession and permanent possession are distinguished from each other by the use of distinct genitive markers. Witness the following examples:

*Dyirbal (Pama-Nyungan, Desert Nyungic)*

16. **Tami-nu**      **wajal**  
 Tom-GEN      boomerang  
 ‘Tom’s boomerang (temporary possession)
17. **Jani-mi**      **wajal**  
 John-GEN      boomerang  
 ‘John’s boomerang’ (Dixon 2010b: 275)

In a similar way, with respect to the nature of the possessor, semantic distinctions can be correlated to formal differences. In the Anglo dialect of the Ewe language, for instance, where the feature of egocentricity is relevant, first and second person singular pronominal possessor is juxtaposed to the possessee (18), whereas other pronominal possessors occur in constructions involving a possessive connective (19).

18. **nye**      **vú**  
 PRO.1SG      vehicle  
 ‘My vehicle’
19. **miá**      **fé**      **vú**  
 PRO.1PL      POSS      vehicle  
 ‘Our vehicle’

A third semantic parameter concerns the nature of the possessee noun: in many languages, certain groups of nouns (often including but not restricted to kinship and body-part terms) are encoded differently from other noun types (Nichols 1988). In some Mandinka dialects for instance, possessee corresponding to kinship terms, body-part terms and spatial relational terms are juxtaposed to the possessor noun in an attributive possessive construction, whereas there is a possessive



connective when the possessee corresponds to other nouns (Welmers 1974: 279).

*Mandinka (Niger-Congo, Mande)*

20. **muso**      **dén**  
       woman    child  
       ‘The woman’s child’

21. **muso**      **ká**      **fani**  
       woman    POSS    cloth  
       ‘The woman’s cloth’

This latter split has been explained in the literature in terms of alienability (Hyman et al 1970, Seiler 1981, Chappell & McGregor 1989, Velazquez-Castillo 1996,). Thus, the split is often qualified as an alienability split (Haspelmath 2008). The alienability split, similar to the two preceding lines of variations, has implications on the meanings expressed by the constructions.

It is argued that inalienable constructions express a close conceptual relation between possessor and possessee, while alienable constructions mark a conceptual distance between possessor and possessee (Haiman 1983). This split exists in Tɔŋúgbe; and it will be discussed extensively in chapter 3, section 2.4.2.1.

## 2.2. Predicative possessive constructions.

The second type of possessive constructions identified typologically is predicative possessive constructions. Predicative possessive constructions are possessive constructions that establish a possessive relationship (Dixon 2010b: 298). Predicative possessive constructions encode the possessor and the possessee as arguments of the verb. Witness a predicative possessive construction in Twi below:

*Twi (Niger-congo, Kwa)*

22. **Kofi**      **wɔ**      **akɔɔa**  
       Kofi    be.at    child  
       ‘Kofi has a child’

Thus, the principal difference that exists between prototypical instances of the predicative possessive constructions and prototypical instances of attributive possessive constructions is that the former make use of verbs, while attributive possessive constructions are encoded within a noun phrase.

The verbs that occur in predicative possessive constructions can be transitive verbs that can be translated into English as ‘grasp’, ‘hold’ and ‘get’ or intransitive verbs meaning ‘be’, ‘exist’ and ‘stay’. The predicative possessive construction in West-African Pidgin English<sup>13</sup> (as spoken in Ghana) for instance involves a verb meaning ‘get’ while in Logba, a verb meaning ‘stay’ is used.

*West African Pidgin English (Pidgin, English-based pidgin)*

23. **I**            **gɛ**        **kaa**  
       PRO.1SG    get        car  
       ‘I have a car’

*Logba (Niger-Congo, Kwa)*

24. **a-susú**        **dúkpá**        **á-bo**        **Esi**  
       CM-brain    good        SM.SG-stay    Esi  
       ‘Esi has good ideas’        (Dorvlo 2008: 109).

Semantically, the different predicative possessive constructions correspond to either ‘*X has Y*’ or ‘*Y belongs to X*’, (Heine 1997). This semantic dichotomy has thus motivated a typological classification of possessive constructions into two categories: *Belong-possessive constructions* and *Have-possessive constructions*.

Have-constructions (which I refer to henceforth as H-possessive constructions) are sub-divided into different sub-constructions depending on the features associated with them (Heine 1997, Stassen 1995, Creissels 2006, Dixon 2010b). Four main sub-constructions have been identified for H-possessive constructions: have possessive

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<sup>13</sup> I speak West African Pidgin English. However, all examples cited for West African pidgin have been corroborated by other speakers from both Ghana and Nigeria.

constructions, locative possessive constructions, comitative possessive constructions and topic possessive constructions.

### 2.2.1. Have possessive constructions

In this type of construction, word order is such that the possessor (PR) occurs in subject position while the possessee (PD) occurs in complement position. Often labeled as “Action schema construction” (Heine 1997) or “Have construction” (Stassen 2009), Have possessive constructions can be summarized as POSSESSOR-VERB-POSSESSEE (PR V PD). In Portuguese for example, the predicative possessive construction is a Have construction.

*Portuguese (Indo-European, Romance)*

25. **O Pedro tem dinheiro**  
 ART.DEF Pedro has money  
 ‘Pedro has money’ (Avelar 2009: 141)

Verbs that occur in have possessive constructions can be verbs that have the meaning of “get”, “seize”, “grab”, “put” etc. In Fongbé for instance the verb that occurs in the predicative possessive construction is “put” (Lefebvre & Brousseau 2002: 252).

*Fongbé (Niger-Congo, Kwa)*

26. **k̀̀k̀ú q̀́ wémâ**  
 Koku put book  
 ‘Koku has a book’

### 2.2.2. Locative possessive constructions

Locative possessive constructions are distinguished from have possessive constructions by the type of verbal element that is involved in the construction. In locative possessive constructions, typically, the verb that is involved is a locative/existential predicate that has the meaning of ‘be’ (Stassen 2009: 995). In Mandinka, for instance, the verb that is involved is **bɛ**, an operator that has the meaning ‘be.at’.

*Mandinka (Niger-Congo, Mande)*

27. **wari**            **bɛ**    **Seku**    **bolo**  
 money.DEF    be.at    Seku    POSTP  
 ‘Seku has money’ (Creissels 2006: 98)

Thus, syntactically, in this predicative possessive construction type, the possessee is constructed as the grammatical subject and the possessor as an oblique or adverbial case form. The construction can thus be stated as POSSESSEE-BE.AT-POSSESSOR (PD BE.AT PR). Semantically, the possessee is construed as located relative to the possessor. Tɔŋúgbe, similar to what pertains in other dialects of the Ewe language, has a locative possessive construction. Thus, among the constructions surveyed in chapter (4), these constructions feature prominently.

### 2.2.3. Comitative Possessive Constructions

The third type of H-possessive constructions is the comitative possessive construction. Similar to locative possessive constructions, in comitative constructions, locative/existential predicates that have the meaning of ‘be.at’ are involved. However, in the comitative construction, the predicate (the verbal element) can be eliminated. In Hausa for instance, the verb, **yanà dà** ‘be.with’, which occurs in the H-possessive construction can be omitted (Newman 2000:222).

*Hausa (Afro-Asiatic, Chadic)*

28. **yārò**            **yanà**    **dà**    **fensìr̄**  
 boy            be.CONT    with    pencil  
 ‘The boy has a pencil’

Syntactically, in comitative possessive constructions, the possessor occurs as the subject of the construction and the possessee occurs as a complement. Semantically, the possessee is construed as ‘being with’ the possessor. Witness the comitative possessive construction in *Maltese* as well:

*Maltese (Afro-Asiatic, Semitic)*

29. **vand -kom ziemel**  
 at/with -you horse  
 ‘You have a horse’ (Ultan 1978: 38)

#### 2.2.4. Topic Possessive constructions

Topic possessive constructions, similar to locative possessive constructions and comitative possessive constructions, involve existential/locative predicates. In Mandarin Chinese for instance, the same predicate that is involved in the construction of existential sentences (30) is also used to construct predicative possessive constructions (31).

*Mandarin Chinese (Sino-Tibetan, Sinitic)*

30. **yǒu yi zhi gou zai yuanzi-li**  
 exist one CLF dog LOC yard-inside  
 ‘There is a dog in the yard’

31. **Ta yǒu yi ge meimei**  
 3SG exist one CLF younger-sister  
 ‘S/he has a younger sister’ (LaPolla 1995: 311-314)

The syntactic arrangement in topic possessive constructions is such that the possessor acts as the topic of the construction while the possessee is in complement position. Semantically, the construction can be stated as ‘As for PR, PD exists for PR’. This syntactic arrangement is more clearly marked in Japanese, where the possessor (topic) is marked with the topic maker **ga**.

*Japanese (Japonic, japanesic)*

32. **zoo wa hana ga nagai**  
 elephant TOP nose SUB long  
 ‘the elephant has a long nose’ (Comrie 2011: 272)

Three comments need to be made about the survey of H-predicative possessives as it has been presented above. Firstly, the four basic H-predicative possessive construction types that have been surveyed are meant to take into account the most common forms of the construction

that have been noted typologically. The survey that I present above therefore does not presume that other types of this construction cannot exist (cf. Feuillet 2006: 188 for a description of some variant constructions).

Secondly, the survey does not exclude the fact that variations of these ‘common’ construction types can occur in different languages (Stassen 2009). Finally, and more importantly, the constructions noted above exhibit various relationships with locative and existential constructions (Heine 1997; Stassen 2009). This relationship is surveyed in section 2.4.

### 2.3. External possessor constructions

The final formal type of possessive constructions is external possessor constructions. External possessor constructions are possessive constructions in which there is a misalignment in semantic dependency and syntactic dependency (Deal 2003). In external possessor constructions, the possessor is syntactically encoded as a verbal dependent but semantically understood as dependent on the possessee (similar to what pertains in attributive possessive constructions).

In the German construction in (33) for instance, although the possessive relation is in the form X’s Y, the possessee and the possessor are not encoded in the same phrase. Instead, the possessee is in object position and the possessor is in the dative case.

*German (Indo-European, Germanic)*

33. **mir**     **brennt**     **das**     **Gesicht**  
       to.me    burn        ART.DEF    face  
       ‘My face is burning me’ (König & Haspelmath 1997: 526)

External possessor constructions can assume different configurations. The commonest configuration found in the literature is the type of external possessor constructions that are commonly referred to as possessor raising constructions (Blake 1990: 79-83). In these constructions, the possessor is analyzed as ascending to the position that the possessee occupies in the corresponding attributive possessive

construction. Witness the positions of the first person pronominal possessor and the possessee **relka** ‘head’ in the following examples:

*Lardil (Pama-Nyungan, Lardil)*

34. **ngithum**    **relka**    **kalka**    **kun**  
 me:GEN    head    ache    EV  
 ‘My head aches’

35. **ngata**    **kalka**    **kun**    **relka**  
 I    ache    ev    head  
 ‘My head aches’ (Klokeid 1976:265ff cf. Blake 1990: 80)

The second type of external possessor constructions is constructions in which the possessor is encoded as a dative and the possessee encoded as a direct object (see König & Haspelmath 1997 for a useful discussion of these constructions). This configuration is illustrated by dative possessive constructions of French. In these constructions, the possessor, a dative pronominal, although not lexically selected by the verb, is incorporated into the predicate frame, *i.e.* it is syntactically dependent upon the verb (Lamiroy & Delbecque 1998: 31). The possessee on the other hand occurs in object position.

*French (Indo-European, Romance)*

36. **je**    **lui**    **ai**    **pris**    **la**  
 PRO.1SG    3SG.CLIT.DAT    have    take:PST    ART.DEF  
**main**  
 hand  
 ‘I took his hands’

Also, in this later type of external possessor constructions, the possessor can be encoded in a kind of locative structure. In Norwegian for instance, the possessor is encoded in a locative structure; it is thus introduced by the morpheme **på** which literally means ‘on’ (Lødrup 2009: 221).

Norwegian (*Indo-European, Germanic*)

37. **de**                **barberte**    **hodet**    **på**    **ham**  
 PRO.3PL    shave:PST    head.DEF    on    him  
 ‘They shaved his head’

The third type of external possessor constructions is constructions in which the possessor is encoded by the use of applicatives. In the Oluta Popoluca language for instance, the applicative prefix **küj** is used to introduce the possessor into the construction (Zavala 1999:340); hence allowing the possessor to be expressed in two positions: within the noun phrase (**tan**<sup>14</sup>), and as an incorporated noun phrase external of the attributive construction (**ta**<sup>15</sup>).

Oluta Popoluca (*Mixe-Zoque, Mixe*)

38. **ta=küj-?o:k-ü-w=ak**                                **tan=majaw**  
 B1(ABS)=APPL2-die-INV-CMPL=ANIM    A1(POSS)=wife  
 ‘My wife died on me’ (Zavala 1999:340)

External possessor constructions occur in languages from diverse linguistic families across the world; featuring prominently in the languages of Asia (Sinitic languages) through the Pacific region (Austronesian), Australia (Nyulnyulan), the Americas and Africa (Benue-Congo) (Payne & Barshi 1999).

Certain features have however been noted as characterizing all external possessor constructions. The first characteristic noted for external possessor constructions is that they express the idea that someone is affected by an action due to the fact that an entity he/she possesses has been affected by the events expressed by the predicate (Croft 1985). As such, they generally involve dynamic verbs.

Also, it has been observed that external possessor constructions evoke part-whole relations between possessor and possessee (Baron & Helsund 2001: 15). Witness the difference between the manner in which the body-part term **áka** ‘arm’ is encoded differently from the

<sup>14</sup> the possessor *tan* occurs as a modifier of the possessee *majaw*

<sup>15</sup> Syntactically, the newly incorporated morpheme, which is the first-person absolutive proclitic, is a direct dependent of the verb (Zavala 1999)



non-part term **ósisi** ‘stick’ in Igbo, a language spoken in West Africa, principally in Nigeria.

*Igbo (Niger-congo, Igboid)*

39. **ó gbàjiri m áka**  
 he broke to.me arm  
 ‘he broke my arm’

40. **ó gbàjiri ósisi m**  
 he broke stick my  
 ‘he broke my stick’ (Hyman et al. 1970: 86)

Thus, external possessor constructions offer an ideal environment for the verification of hypotheses that are formulated on alienability in attributive possessive constructions, especially on the ideas expressed about part-whole relations (see section 2.1.2. above for details on the notion of alienability in attributive possessive constructions). The type of nouns that are encoded in alienable and inalienable constructions and the conceptual relations that are encoded by each of these constructions should be supported or infirmed by data from external possessor constructions. These discussions feature prominently in chapter (5) where I survey the external possessor constructions of Təŋúgbe.

#### **2.4. Possessive, Locative and Existential constructions**

In section (2.2) above, it was noted that predicative possessive constructions exhibit special relationships with locative and existential constructions. Below, I present a survey of these relationships, and how they have been accounted for in typological studies. However, before the details of the relationships, I present locative and existential constructions.

##### **2.4.1. Locative and existential constructions**

Locative constructions refer to English constructions such as **the book is on the table**. They establish the location of an entity present in discourse (Zeitoun *et al* 1999: 2). They therefore are prototypic of figure-ground constructions (Talmy 1975); and thus encode figure-

ground relationships<sup>16</sup>. In the English sentence **the book is on the table**, **book** acts as the ‘figure’ while **table** acts as the reference object. Example (41) illustrates a locative construction in Russian.

*Russian (Indo-European, Balto-slavic)*

41. **kniga byla na stole**  
 book.NOM.F was on table.LOC  
 ‘The book was on the table’ (Freeze 1992: 553)

Existential constructions on the other hand refer to English sentences such as **there are people in the village**. These constructions introduce an indefinite entity by asserting its existence (Zeitoun *et al* 1999: 2). Thus both existential and locative constructions encode a relationship between a figure and a ground.

In the English existential construction **there are people in the village**, **people** functions as the ‘figure’ while **village** functions as reference object. The example below illustrates an existential construction in Somali.

*Somali (Afro-Asiatic, Cushitic)*

42. **dad badan oo madluumiin-a’ baa jira’**  
 people many REL unhappy.PL-be FOC  
 exist.PRS.HAB  
 ‘There are many unhappy people’ (Koch 2012: 540)

The difference between the two constructions *i.e.* existential and locative lies in the fact that while locative constructions establish the location of an entity, existential constructions introduce an entity into discourse *i.e.* locative constructions zoom in on the location of the figure; existential constructions highlight the figure that is located (Creissels 2015).

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<sup>16</sup> By figure-ground relationship, I draw on Creissels (2015)’s definition: ‘episodic spatial relationships between a concrete entity conceived as movable (the figure) and another concrete entity (the ground) conceived as occupying a fixed position in the space, or at least as being less easily movable than the figure’

### 2.4.2. Relationship between locative and existential constructions

Locative constructions and existential constructions, as noted earlier, have in common the ability to encode figure-ground relationships (Creissels 2014:5). Hence, it has sometimes been argued that they express the same state of affairs (Wang & Xu 2013: 6). This proximity between both construction types is not only semantic in nature, but may also be reflected in morpho-syntax. As such, it is not uncommon that the same predicate is used in both constructions (Koch 2012). The following examples from West-African Pidgin English as it is spoken in Ghana illustrate the use of the same predicate in both the locative and existential constructions.

*West African Pidgin English (Pidgin, English-based pidgin)*

Locative

43. **də**            **boy**    **dé**    **school**  
       ART.DEF    boy    COP    school  
       ‘The boy is in school’

Existential

44. **də**            **búk**    **dé**  
       ART.DEF    book    COP  
       ‘The book exists’

Also, both locative and existential constructions may exhibit essentially the same constituent order. In Ga-Dagme, a Kwa language, for instance, the same constituent order that is used in the locative construction is also used in the existential construction. The following examples illustrate a locative construction and an existential construction in Ga-Dagme<sup>17</sup>.

*Ga-Adagme (Niger-Congo, Kwa)*

Locational

45. **kpóto** **ɲε**    **kpatá**    **mi**  
       pig    be.at    kitchen    inside  
       ‘The pig is in the kitchen’

---

<sup>17</sup> These examples were elicited during my visit to Sege.

Existential

46. **kpóto**    **ɲɛ**  
 pig            be.at  
 ‘There are pigs’

Despite these lexical and structural similarities, locative and existential constructions exhibit morphosyntactic differences as well (Clark 1978).

In some languages, the predicate used to encode the locative construction is not same as the one used in existential constructions. This is the case in Brazilian Portuguese in which the predicate that is used to encode the locative construction is **estar** ‘be (in a state)/be somewhere’ whereas the predicate that is used to encode the existential construction is **tener** ‘have’.

*Portuguese (Indo-European, Romance)*

Locative

47. **o**                    **livr-o**    **est-á**                    **sobre**    **a**  
 ART.DEF.M    book-M    be-PRS.3SG    upon    ART.DEF.F  
**mes-a**  
 table-F  
 ‘The book is on the table’

Existential

48. **tem**                    **um**                    **livr-o**  
 have.PRS.3SG    INDF.M            book-M  
 ‘There is a book’ (Koch 2012: 536)

The word order of the elements present in both constructions can also differ. In Breton, a Celtic language spoken in France, for instance, the word order in the existential construction is different from the word order in the locative construction. While the figure, *i.e.* **vehicle** is not clause final in the existential construction, in the locative construction, it is clause-final.

*Breton (Indo-European, Celtic)*

Locative

49. **aman ar voetur amañ**  
 COP ART.DEF vehicle here  
 ‘The vehicle is here’

Existential

50. **amañ ezeus eur voetur**  
 here COP ART.INDF vehicle  
 ‘There is a vehicle here’ (Feuillet 1998: 691)

### 2.4.3. Relations between possessive, locative and existential constructions

Possessive constructions (predicative) share many properties with locative and existential constructions. Semantically, the three constructions have been argued to be fundamentally locative in meaning (Herslund & Baron 2011). This semantic commonality finds expression in the morphosyntax of the three construction types.

Indeed, in many languages, the same predicate can be used in the different construction types. In French for example, the same predicate, **avoir**, occurs in both predicative possessive constructions and existential constructions.

*French (Indo-European, Romance)*

Possessive

51. **Jean a une voiture**  
 Jean have:PRS ART.INDF vehicle  
 ‘Jean has a car’

Existential

52. **Il y a une voiture ici**  
 PRO.3SG PRO.COMPL have ART.INDF vehicle here  
 ‘There is a car here’

Apart from the use of the same predicate, constituent order can be the same for the predicative possessive construction, the locative construction or the existential construction. The examples from

French illustrate the same constituent order for possessive and locative constructions.

*French (Indo-European, Romance)*

Possessive

53. **La voiture est à Jean**  
 ART.DEF vehicle COP to Jean  
 ‘The car is John’s’

Locative

54. **La voiture est au parking**  
 ART.DEF vehicle COP to.ART.DEF car.park  
 ‘The car is at the car park’

Crucially however, the three constructions can have the same predicate and the same word order. In Akan, a Niger-Congo language, the possessive construction, the locative construction and the existential construction can be constructed with the same predicate **wɔ** ‘be.at’; the constituent order of the three constructions can also be essentially similar (SUBJECT-VERB-COMPLEMENT). Witness the following examples of a predicative possessive construction, a locative construction and an existential construction in Akan:

*Akan (Niger-Congo, Kwa)*

Possessive

55. **nwoma nó wɔ Kwaku nkyɛn**  
 book ART.DEF be.at Kwaku side  
 ‘Kwaku has the book’  
 ‘The book is with Kwaku’

Locative

56. **nwoma no wɔ edan nó mú**  
 book ART.DEF be.at house ART.DEF inside  
 ‘The book is in the room’

Existential

57. **nwoma bi wɔ hɔ**  
 book ART.INDF be.at DEM  
 ‘There is a book (A book exists)’

#### 2.4.4. Accounting for the relationships: approaches

The relationships between these three construction types have been the study of many typological studies (Lyons 1967, Back 1967, Clark 1978, Freeze 1992, Koch 2012, Wang & Xu 2013, Creissels 2014). Two major approaches emerge from the multitude of studies on the subject: the derivational approach and the functional approach.

**a. The derivational approach:** studies that have sought to account for the asymmetry between predicative possessive constructions, locative constructions and existential constructions with derivational approaches consider that the three construction types can be reduced to one single deep structure. The hypothesis, put forward by Lyons (1967), Bach (1967), Freeze (1992) etc., is to consider that possessive constructions, existential constructions and locative constructions can be reduced to a single basic construction (D-structure), and that the three constructions are derived from this D-structure by rules that involve features such as animacy and definiteness (Freeze 1992).

**b. The functional approach:** Studies that have relied on functional approaches to account for the asymmetry between possessive, existential and locative constructions consider the three constructions as evidence of cognitive operations. Such approaches are thus not only often couched in cognitive approaches to linguistics (Langacker 1995, Creissels 2014), but also seek to draw ‘universality’ from a typological perspective in order to formulate hypotheses about the cognitive sources of linguistic structures (Koch 2002 and Heine 1997 for instance). Although the functional approaches recognize the relation between the three constructions (Heine 1997 for instance postulates a diachronic link), they do not assume that the three constructions are reducible to a single construction.

These two approaches of accounting for the asymmetry between the three constructions have some similarities, but also differ substantially. Touching on the similarities between the two approaches, both approaches recognize the syntactic and semantic relationship between the three types of constructions. For instance, on a syntactic level, the definiteness/indefiniteness alternation of the

figure in existential and locative constructions (Clark 1978) is duly recognized. On the semantic level, both approaches recognize the link between the meanings expressed by the three construction types (Stassen 2009: 5).

The major difference between both approaches can however be summarized in the following question: owing to the syntactic and semantic similarities between the three constructions, are the three constructions synchronically reducible to a single basic construction? To this question, derivational approaches respond in the affirmative while functional approaches disagree. Thus, instead of a single syntactic base structure transformable into locative, possessive and existential constructions, functional approaches, although recognizing the link between the three constructions, rather postulate independent synchronic constructions. The approach adopted in this study is a functional approach.



## ATTRIBUTIVE POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TŌŊÚGBE

**1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I establish a fine-grained typology of attributive possessive constructions in Tŏŋúgbé. Two major construction types will be distinguished for these constructions that involve two noun phrases that form a syntactically complex noun phrase: constructions that are constructed in syntax and constructions that are processed on the interface between syntax and morphology (or are simply constructed in morphology). The type of construction that is under investigation in this chapter is illustrated by the noun phrase in bracket in example (1) below.

1. *ŋútsùò sròò nyé kíyíé*  
 [ŋútsù- á srò-á] nyé kíyíé  
 man-ART.DEF spouse-ART.DEF be DEM  
 ‘This is the man’s wife’ (Flex\_Atr:Fam 9.1)

These two major types of attributive possessive constructions will be studied respectively in the sections that follow. Section 2 presents an exhaustive study of syntactically processed attributive possessive constructions while section 3 describes constructions that are at the interface between syntax and morphology or are constructed in morphology. I capture the latter constructions under the title “constructions at the syntax/morphology interface”.

**2. Syntactic attributive possessive constructions**

Attributive possessive constructions in Tŏŋúgbé that are constructed in syntax do not involve morphological processes such as compounding or suffixation. I will distinguish two major types of these constructions: constructions that involve a grammatical strategy *i.e.* the use of a possessive connective, and constructions that involve a simple strategy *i.e.* juxtaposition (see chapter 2, section 2.1.1 for the various strategies that are involved in attributive possessive constructions). These two major types of syntactic attributive possessive constructions of Tŏŋúgbé are illustrated by examples (2) and (3).

2. *ɲùtsùó wó nùdùgbá yó*  
**[ɲùtsù-á            wó            nùdù-gbá]            yó**  
 man-ART.DEF      POSS      food-bowl          FOC  
 ‘It’s the man’s dinning plate’                      (Ch. 1: 74)
3. **tòvú      álé            tó**  
 stream   ART.INDF   edge  
 ‘The edge of a stream’ (Flex\_Sto: Maw 53.1)

### 2.1. Constructions with connective

Attributive possessive constructions encoded by means of a connective involve two markers *i.e* **wó** and **bé** (see section 2.1.2 for details on the markers). These constructions are dependent-initial: the dependent or possessor noun phrase precedes the head or possessee noun phrase; and the possessive connective is inserted between possessor and possessee.

In example (4) below, the possessor noun phrase **ɲùtsu-ó** ‘the man’ precedes the possessee noun **kápù** ‘cup’. The possessive connective **wó** is then inserted between the two noun phrases.

4. *ɲùtsùó wó kápù*  
**ɲùtsù-á            wó      kápù**  
 man-ART.DEF      POSS      cup  
 ‘The man’s cup’ (Flex\_Atr: Fam 12.1)

The possessor in possessive constructions involving the connective can be a noun (or noun phrase) or a pronoun. The examples below illustrate a possessive construction with a connective containing a noun phrase (5) and a pronoun (6) that functions as possessors.

5. *ɲùtsùó wó avò*  
**ɲùtsù-á            wó      avò**  
 man-ART.DEF      POSS      cloth  
 ‘The man’s cloth’ (Flex\_Atr: Fam 41.1)

6. *miéó lǎ*  
**mié**      **wó**      **lǎ**  
 PRO.1PL   POSS   animal  
 ‘Our animal’

### 2.1.1. Possessee in connective constructions

*Case 1: The possessor is a noun (phrase)*

When the possessor in a construction with a connective is a noun or noun phrase, the possessee can be a non-relational noun (NON-R) or a body-part term (BP). Some kinship terms (KIN+) can also occur as possesseees in this type of possessive construction.

In example (7), the possessee noun is a non-relational term **dǎwǎkódzǎ** ‘working hoe’; in example (8), the possessee noun is a body-part term **sūsū** ‘brain’; in example (9) the possessee noun is a kinship term **tǎgbéyǎví** ‘grandchild’.

7. *ηùtsùò wó dǎwǎkódzǎ*  
**ηùtsù- á**      **wó**      **dǎ-wǎ-kódzǎ**  
 man-ART.DEF   POSS   work-do-hoe  
 ‘The man’s working hoe’ (Flex\_Atr: Fam 14)
8. *bōsò wó sūsú*  
 whale   POSS   brain  
 ‘The thought of the whale’ (Flex\_Sto : Viv 45.1)
9. *etúglóó tǎgbéyǎví*  
**etúgló**   **wó**      **tǎgbéyǎví**  
 Etuglo   POSS   grandchild  
 ‘Etuglo’s grandchild’

In this same type of attributive possessive construction, spatial relational terms (SPAT), socio-culturally relational terms (SOCIO-C) and some kinship terms (KIN-) cannot occur as possesseees. Hence, the following constructions are not grammatical in Tǎηúgbe.

10. \**ekplǎ wó dzí*  
 table   POSS   top  
 ‘The table’s top’

11. \***Kofi**    **wó**    **srɔ̀**  
 Kofi    POSS    spouse  
 ‘Kofi’s spouse’
12. ?**Ama**    **wó**    **nàné**  
 Ama    POSS    mother  
 ‘Ama’s mother’

*Case 2: The possessor is a plural personal or a logophoric pronoun*

When the possessor is a plural personal pronoun or the logophoric pronoun, the same types of nouns occur as possessees: non-relational nouns, body-part terms and some kinship terms.

In example (13) a pronominal possessor combines with a non-relational possessive **evù** ‘vehicle’; example (14) contains a pronominal possessor occurring with a body-part term **afɔ̀** ‘leg’ as possessive; example (15) exemplifies a pronominal possessor that occurs with a kinship term **evī** ‘child’. Finally, example (16) shows the case in which the logophoric possessor occurs.

13. *miè̀s vù̀s gblé̀*  
**miè̀**    **-wó**    **vù̀-á**    **gblé̀**  
 PRO.2PL    -POSS    vehicle-ART.DEF    spoil  
 ‘Your car has broken down’
14. *miè̀s afɔ̀ dè glá?*  
**miè̀**    **-wó**    **afɔ̀**    **dè**    **glá-á?**  
 PRO.2PL    -POSS    leg    Q    crooked-Q  
 ‘Are your legs crooked’
15. *miè̀s víé*  
**miè̀**    **-wó**    **evī-á**  
 PRO.1PL    -POSS    child-ART.DEF  
 ‘Our child’

16. *..é vá dádzo yèó agbàlé*  
**...é vá dà adzò yé-wó**  
 ..PRO.3SG VENT throw robbery PRO.LOG-POSS  
**agbàlé**  
 book  
 ‘..He took her book from her’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 92.1)

*Case 3: The possessor corresponds to the third person singular*

The first person singular pronoun and the second person singular pronoun do not occur as possessors in connective constructions. Therefore, example (17) and (18) are not grammatical in Tə̀júgbe.

17. **\*nyè wó/bé vú**  
 PRO.1SG POSS vehicle  
 ‘My vehicle’
18. **\*wò wó/bé vú**  
 PRO.2SG POSS vehicle  
 ‘Your vehicle’

The possessor can however be the third person singular. In these instances, the possessor is not overtly expressed. Two forms are possible in such instances:

- the construction is composed of only the possessive connective **wó** and the possessee noun, as demonstrated in example (19);
- The possessee noun occurs with the clitic definite article, as illustrated in example (20).

19. **[wó kúkú]**  
 POSS hat  
 ‘Her hat’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 25.1)
20. **nàńě-á**  
 mother-ART.DEF  
 ‘Her mother’ (Flex\_Ext: Fok 48.)

In the former case, when the construction is composed of only the possessive connective and the possessee, non-relational nouns, body-part terms and some kinship terms *eg.* parental and descending kinship terms, (see section 2.4.1.1 below for further discussion of kinship term possesseees and the constructions in which they occur as possesseees) occur as possesseees.

In example (21), the non-relational noun **awù** ‘dress’ occurs as possessee; in example (22), the body-part term **edzi** ‘heart’ occurs as possessee; and in example (23), the parental kinship term **tátě** ‘father’ occurs as possessee.

21. *wá wùó*  
**wó**      **awù-á**  
 POSS      dress-ART.DEF  
 ‘Her dress’
22. **wó**      **dzi**  
 POSS      heart  
 ‘His heart’ (Flex\_Sto: Viv 123.1)
23. **wó**      **tátě**  
 POSS      father  
 ‘Her father’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 58.1)

When the construction is composed of the possessee noun and the clitic definite article, only kinship terms occur as possesseees (24). Any attempt to insert other types of noun therefore results in a non-possessive construction (a noun phrase composed of a noun and a definite article) as exemplified in example (25).

24. *fòfòó*  
**fòfò-á**  
 elder.brother-ART.DEF  
 ‘His elder brother’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 28.1)

25. *atìé*  
**atì-á**  
 tree-ART.DEF  
 ‘The tree’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 11.1)

Below, I list the features associated with possessees and possessors in constructions that involve possessive connectives. The result is three constructional patterns that involve the grammatical categories of the forms that function as possessor *i.e.* nominal (NOMI) or pronominal (PRO), and the semantic type of nouns that function as possessees.

- a. PR [NOMI] POSS PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN+]
- b. PR [PRO.PL] POSS PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN+]
- c. POSS PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN-] / PD[KIN-]-ART.DEF

### 2.1.2. The possessive connectives

As already mentioned in section 2.1 above, two connectives occur in attributive possessives constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe, *i.e.* **wó** and **bé**. However, the connective **bé** is not used in the same way in the various local varieties of Tɔ̀nùgbe.

Possession marking with **bé** is inexistent in communities such as Battor, Mepe and Mafi *i.e.* areas in the extreme-western side of the Tɔ̀nùgbe speaking area (see chapter 1 section 1.1 for details on the east/west divide of the Tɔ̀nùgbe speaking area). Possession marking with **bé** is present in the Tɔ̀nùgbe of communities such as Vume, Sokpoe, Tefle and Sogakope *i.e.* areas that are either on the eastern side of the Tɔ̀nùgbe speaking area or are contiguous to eastern side communities.

In the Tɔ̀nùgbe spoken between the west and the east *i.e.* the Tɔ̀nùgbe spoken in Mafi-Kumase and the surrounding villages such as Mafi Asiekpe, Ameworlorlope, Bakpa (both old and new Bakpa), in addition to Yorkutikpokope, Dendo, and the villages along the Adidome-Sogakope stretch, **bé** appears in a less systematic way.

Consequently, the discussions and examples on constructions involving **bé** concern only the Tɔ̀nùgbe spoken in the eastern communities, communities that are contiguous to eastern

communities, and intermediate communities. Also, since data were principally collected in Mepe and its environs, examples with **bé** are unavailable in the corpus I constituted. Examples are therefore taken from personal communication with Tɔ̀húgbe speakers, especially from Sokpoe and Sogakope. I also have had personal communication with a speaker from Ameworlorlope.

### 2.1.2.1. The conditions of use of the connectives

In Tɔ̀húgbe, the possessive connective **wó** is the unmarked connective; and the connective **bé** is the marked connective. This is evidenced by the distribution of the connectives in Tɔ̀húgbe varieties in which both forms are present. In eastern and intermediate Tɔ̀húgbe in which both **wó** and **bé** occur, **wó** occurs with singular nominal possessors and first and second person plural pronoun possessors. The other connective, *viz.* **bé** occurs when the possessor is a plural noun or the third person plural pronoun. Witness the following examples:

26. *dèvié wá fɔ̀kpà*  
**dèvi-é**                    **wó**    **afɔ̀kpà**  
 child-ART.DEF          POSS    footwear  
 ‘The child’s shoe’
27. *?dèvi-é*                    **bé**    **afɔ̀kpà**  
 child-ART.DEF          POSS    footwear  
 ‘The child’s shoe’
28. *dèviéó bá fɔ̀kpà*  
**dèvi-é-wó**                    **(\*wó) bé**    **afɔ̀kpà**  
 child-ART.DEF-PL      POSS          footwear  
 ‘The children’s shoe’
29. **wó**                    **bé**    **sùkú`**  
 PRO.3PL      POSS    school  
 ‘Their school’
30. **\*wó**                    **wó**    **sùkú`**  
 PRO.3PL      POSS    school  
 ‘Their school’



Thus, in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe varieties with a competition between the two connectives, the marked connective *i.e.* **bé** is used to avoid a succession of two homophonous occurrences of **wó**, the plural marker or the third person plural pronoun on the one hand, and the connective on the other hand.

In western Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe varieties, in which **bé** does not occur, context resolves this expected ambiguity. More precisely, the ambiguity is resolved through cross-referencing of the possessor. In example (31) for instance, to avoid ambiguity, the third person plural possessor is cross-referenced by the third person plural independent pronoun that occurs clause-initially. In example (32), the third person singular possessor is also cross-referenced by the noun phrase ‘a certain girl’.

31. *wó dèdèò kófé*  
**wó**      **dèdè**      **wó**      **kófě**  
 PRO.3PL   alone   PRO.3PL   village  
 ‘They alone, their village’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 145.1)
32. *nyànùvì alé wó kplí wó nàǎ*  
 girl      ART.INDF   PRO.3PL   and   POSS   mother  
 ‘Lit. A certain girl they and her mother’  
 ‘(A certain girl and her mother)’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 2.1)

### 2.1.2.2. Constraints on the use of the connective **wó**

As stated earlier, the possessive connective **wó** is homonymous with the third person plural subject pronoun, and with the plural marker. Witness the three forms respectively, *i.e.* connective (33), pronoun (34), and plural marker (35).

33. *ɲùtsùò wá sí*  
**ɲùtsù-á**      **wó**      **asī**  
 man-ART.DEF   POSS   hand  
 ‘The man’s hand’ (Flex\_Arr: Afí 32.1)

34. **wó**            **yì**  
 PRO.3PL    go  
 ‘They went’                    (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 2.1)
35. *atsruévíó*  
**atsrué-ví-wó**  
 spear-small-PL  
 ‘Arrows’                            (Flex\_Arr: Afi 1.1)

In the possessive phrase, in both western and eastern Tɔ̀ḡúgbè varieties, the unmarked possessive connective **wó** does not co-occur with the third person plural pronoun. It also does not co-occur with nouns marked for plurality (nouns that immediately precede the unmarked connective). Example (36) below illustrates that the possessive connective **wó** does not co-occur with the third person plural; and example (37) demonstrates that the connective **wó** does not co-occur with an immediately preceding plural marker.

36. **wó**            **(\*wó)**            **sùkú`**  
 PRO.3PL    POSS            school  
 ‘Their school’                    (=30)
37. *?ḡ̀tsuóó wá sí*  
**ḡ̀tsu-á-wó**            **wó**            **así**  
 man-ART.DEF-PL    POSS            hand  
 ‘The men’s hand’

However, **wó** as plural marker and **wó** as the third person plural pronoun can follow each other. Witness the example below:

38. *nyànùóó wó núnòlá vá*  
**nyànù-á-wó**            **wó**            **núnòlá**    **vá**  
 woman-ART.DEF-PL    PRO.3PL    leader    come  
 ‘The women, their leader has come’

Thus, in these latter instances, two noun phrases form a complex noun phrase. The first phrase (to which the plural marker is affixed) functions as a non-restrictive appositive; the second, the third person

plural, functions as a possessor. The first argument in favor of this analysis comes from the fact that each of the two noun phrases can function as subject of the clause. The following examples illustrate each of the phrases occurring as the subject of the clause in (38).

39. *nyànùsósá vá*  
**nyànù-á-wó**                      **vá**  
 woman-ART.DEF-PL              come  
 ‘The women came’
40. **wó**                      **núnòlá**      **vá**  
 PRO.3PL      leader      come  
 ‘Their leader came’

A second, and very pertinent, argument in favor of the assertion that the possessive connective is not involved in example (38) above is that, the plural marker and the third person pronoun can co-occur with the marked connective **bé** in Tə̀̀̀̀̀̀̀̀̀̀̀̀ varieties in which both connectives are present. Witness the following constructions.

41. *nyànùsósá bé núnòlá vá*  
**nyànù-á-wó**                      **bé**      **núnòlá**      **vá**  
 woman-ART.DEF-PL      POSS      leader      come  
 ‘The women’s leader has come’
42. **wó**                      **bé**      **núnòlá**      **vá**  
 PRO.3PL      POSS      leader      come  
 ‘Their leader has come’

The point I am putting forward then is that, although the three instances of **wó** are homophonous and occur in the same syntactic units, *i.e.* noun phrases, their distribution does not trigger ambiguity in interpretation. More critical is the fact that **wó** as a possessive connective is distinguished from the other instances of **wó** by a no contiguity constraint.

### 2.1.2.3. Tɔŋúgbɛ connectives and other Ewe dialects

The two possessive connectives under discussion are not specific to Tɔŋúgbɛ, as both connectives are present in other dialects of the Ewe language (albeit with differences in the contexts of use). Generally speaking, there is an important dialectal variation in Ewe with respect to the distribution of possessive connectives.

Ameka (1991: 160) reports of the use of **bé** in Gbĩ and Gẽ dialects, **mé** in kpellegbɛ and **wó** in Anfɔɛgbɛ. In coastal dialects (cf. Kluge 2000), the connective **fé** is used in contexts where **bé** and **wó** occur in Tɔŋúgbɛ. Hence, in the former area, the same connective is used when the possessor is singular and when the possessor corresponds to a plural noun or the third person plural pronoun. The following examples illustrate possessive constructions with a connective in the Aŋlɔ́ dialect of Ewe (a coastal dialect).

43. **dèvi-á**            **fé**            **kplɔ́**  
 child-ART.DEF    POSS        table  
 ‘The child’s table’

44. **wó**            **fé**            **kplɔ́**  
 PRO.3PL    POSS        table  
 ‘Their table’

Ameka (1991: 240) offers a more detailed account of the use of **wó** as a possessive marker in the colloquial variant of a northern dialect (inland dialect). In this latter dialect, **wó** and **fé** are in free variation when the possessor of the construction is a singular possessor whereas only **fé** (sometimes realized as **fó**) is used when the possessor is a plural possessor (nominal or pronominal). He gives the following examples to illustrate his assertion.

45. **koklo**    **wó/fé**        **blè**  
 hen        POSS        tail  
 ‘a hen’s tail’

46. **koklo-wó**                    **(wó\*) fé**    **blè**  
       hen-.ART.DEF PL        POSS            tail  
       ‘the tail of hens’

Thus, contrary to the several classifications in which Tɔ̀nùgbe is grouped with coastal dialects (Ansre 2000, Kpodo 2017), due to its geographical proximity with these dialects, the distribution of possessive connectives in Tɔ̀nùgbe (at least in the eastern varieties) brings them closer to the inland dialects. Indeed, the distribution of the connective **bé** in eastern Tɔ̀nùgbe varieties demonstrates some parallels with the distribution of **fé** in northern colloquial dialects: in the two dialects these connectives occur in constructions in which the possessor is a plural.

However, there are also major differences that characterize the distribution of these connectives in the two dialects. In the northern colloquial dialects, **fé** occurs as a free variant in constructions with singular nominal possessors; whereas in eastern Tɔ̀nùgbe variants, **bé** does not occur with singular nominal possessors. Thus, **fé** is unmarked in northern colloquial dialects while **bé** is marked in eastern Tɔ̀nùgbe dialects. The connective **wó** on the other hand is restricted in use in inland dialects as compared to its use in eastern Tɔ̀nùgbe varieties.

## 2.2. Juxtaposed possessive constructions

Juxtaposed possessive constructions refer to attributive possessive constructions constructed in syntax in which two independent noun phrases (possessor phrase and possessee phrase) are placed side by side without the intervention of a possessive connective. Example (47) illustrates this pattern.

47. *ezìè dzì*  
       **ezì-á**                    **dzì**  
       stool-ART.DEF        upper.section  
       ‘The top section of the stool’ (Flex\_Arr: Afi 38.1)

The possessor in a juxtaposed construction can be a noun (phrase) or a pronoun. Example (47) above illustrates a noun **ezì** ‘stool’ as the

possessor. The examples below illustrate respectively a personal pronoun (48) and a demonstrative pronoun (49) as possessors.

48. **é**            **gbó**  
 PRO.3SG    vicinity  
 ‘Lit. His/her vicinity’  
 ‘(His/her side)’ (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 65.1)
49. [**é-kámá**        **nú**]        **vá**        **yi**  
 PRO.3SG-DEM    mouth    VENT    go  
 ‘Lit. That one’s mouth come go’  
 ‘(That one was over)’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 565.1)

The possessee in a juxtaposed construction can also be a noun or pronoun. When the possessee is pronominal, the form **tɔ̀**, a dedicated possessee pronoun, is used. In the examples above, all the possesseees are nominal. Example (50) below illustrates a juxtaposed construction in which the pronoun occurs as a possessee.

50. *yé nyé sèvíéó tɔ̀*  
**yé**            **nyé**        **sèví-á-wó**                    **tɔ̀**  
 PRO.3SG    be        servier.clan-ART.DEF-PL    PRO.PD  
 ‘It is the Servier clan’s’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1496.1)

### 2.2.1. Possessee in juxtaposed constructions

*Case 1: The possessor is a noun (phrase)*

When the possessor of a juxtaposed construction is a nominal, nouns that function as possesseees are spatial relational terms (SPAT), socio-culturally relational terms (SOCIO-C) and some kinship terms (KIN-) as demonstrated in the following examples:

51. *é yì zìè gòmè*  
**é**            **yì**        [**zì-á**                    **gòmè**]  
 PRO.3SG    go        stool-ART.DEF        below.section  
 ‘It goes to the lower section of the stool’  
 (Flex\_Arr: Afi: 42.1)

52. *ɲùtsùò sròò nyé kíyíé*  
 [ɲùtsù-á      srò-á                      nyé      kíyíé  
 man-ART.DEF   spouse-ART.DEF   be      DEM  
 ‘This is the man’s wife’ (Flex\_Atr: Fam 9.1)

53. *nyànùò vīé nyé kíyíé*  
 [nyànù-á              vī-á                      nyé      kíyíé  
 woman-ART.DEF   child-ART.DEF   be      DEM  
 ‘This is the woman’s child’ (Flex\_Atr: Fam 9.1)

Body part terms (BP) and non-relational nouns (NON-R) do not occur as possessives in this pattern. Therefore, the following constructions are infelicitous in Tɔ̀ɲúgbè:

54. \***Kofi**      afò  
 Kofi      leg  
 ‘Kofi’s leg’
55. \***Kofi**      zìkpé  
 Kofi      chair  
 ‘Kofi’s chair’

*Case 2: The possessor is a plural personal pronoun or the logophoric pronoun*

When the possessor of a juxtaposed construction is a plural personal pronoun or the logophoric pronoun, nouns that function as possessives are the same as nouns that function as possessives when the possessor is a nominal *i.e.* spatial relational terms, socio-culturally relational terms and some kinship terms (KIN-) occur as possessives while body-part terms and non-relational terms do not occur as possessives<sup>18</sup>. Observe the following examples:

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<sup>18</sup> I show in section 2.3.1 that when non-relational nouns and body-part terms occur in constructions with plural personal pronoun possessors, there is a floating tone between the possessor and possessor. This floating tone, I suggest, is the result of the elision of the possessive connective.

56. **miè** (**mié/wó**)                      **tógbé**  
 PRO.2PL (PRO.1PL/PRO.3PL)    elder  
 ‘Your (our/their) grandfather’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 162.1)
57. *wò wáí gblǎ́é né bōsò bè fífíé átá wá yè gbó*  
**wò**            **wáyí**        **gblǎ-é**            **ná**    **bōsò**    **bé**  
 PRO.1SG    ALTR    tell-PRO.3SG    DAT    whale    QUOT  
**fífíé**    **á-téṅú**                      **wá**    [**yè**    **gbó**]  
 now    PRO.3SG.SUBJ-can    come    LOG    vicinity  
 ‘He<sub>i</sub> went to tell the whale that he<sub>j</sub> can now come to his<sub>i</sub> end’  
 (Flex\_Sto: Viv 27/28.1)
58. ? **miè**            **afò**  
 PRO.2PL    leg  
 ‘Your leg’
59. ? **miè**            **zìkpé**  
 PRO.2PL    chair  
 ‘Your (our/their) chair’

*Case 3: The possessor corresponds to a singular third person*

When the possessor is the third person singular, the subject pronoun **é** occurs as the possessor. Nouns that occur as possessees in such instances are spatial relation terms and socio-culturally relational terms **xlǎ** ‘friend’ and **hātí** ‘mate’ (SOCIO-C+). In example (60), the spatial relation term **dzí** ‘upper section’ occurs as the possessee; in example (61), the noun **hātí** ‘mate’ occurs as the possessee noun. When the kinship term **nàně** ‘mother’, for instance is inserted into the possessee position, the construction is infelicitous (62).

60. *atsrué yì ekpló dzí*  
**atsrué**    **yì**    **ekpló**        **dzí**  
 spear    go    table        upper.section  
 ‘An arrow goes towards the upper section of the table’  
 (Flex\_Arr: Afi 44.1)



61. *kèsé váyì kplò é há tí s*  
**kèsé**      **váyì**      **kplò**                      [**é**                      **há tí-wó**]  
 monkey    ALT    accompany    PRO.3SG    mate-PL  
 ‘The monkey called his friends’ (Flex\_Sto: Viv 66.1)
62. \***é**                      **nàné**  
 PRO.3SG    mother  
 ‘His/her mother’

### 2.2.2. Head-initial and dependent-initial constituent orders

The first or second person singular independent pronouns can equally function as possessors in a juxtaposed construction. When these pronouns function as possessors, two constituent orders occur: the possessor precedes the possessee (dependent-initial) or the possessee precedes the possessor (head-initial). These two constituent orders are illustrated respectively by the examples (63) and (64):

63. **nyè**                      **srɔnyí**                                      (*dependent-initial*)  
 PRO.1SG    nephew  
 ‘My nephew’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1335.1)
64. **tátá**                      **nyè**    (*head-initial*)  
 father    -PRO.1SG  
 ‘My father’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 104.1)

In the dependent-initial construction, non-relational nouns, body-part terms and some kinship terms (KIN+) occur as possesseees. In example (65) for instance, the non-relational term **bá gì** ‘bag’ occurs as possessee; in example (66), the body-part term **ɲkúmè** ‘face’ occurs as the possessee; and in example (67), the kinship term **tsé** ‘junior brother’ occurs as possessee.

65. *nyè bá gì é*  
**nyè**                      **bá gì-á**  
 PRO.1SG    bag-ART.DEF  
 ‘My bag’ (Flex\_Ext: Ven 5.1)

66. **nyè**            **nkú-mè**  
 PRO.1SG    eye-interior.section  
 ‘My face’    (Flex\_Ext: Ven 2.1)

67. **wò**            **tsé**  
 PRO.2SG    junior.brother  
 ‘Your junior brother’

In the head-initial construction, the possessee nouns are some kinship terms (KIN-), the socio-culturally relational nouns such as **esrò** ‘spouse’, **xlò** ‘friend’ and **hātí** ‘mate’(SOCIO-C+), and the spatial relational terms **dzí** ‘upper surface’ and **gbó** ‘vicinity’. When any other noun is inserted into the possessee slot, the resulting construction is not acceptable as a possessive construction in Tɔ̀nùgbe. Witness the following examples:

68. **srò/xlò/hātí**            **nyè**  
 spouse/friend/mate    PRO.1SG  
 ‘My spouse/friend/colleague’

69. **gbò**            **wò**  
 vicinity    PRO.2SG  
 ‘Lit. your vicinity’  
 ‘(Your side)’                            (Flex\_Sto: Azi 4.1)

70. **fòfò**            **wò**  
 elder.brother    PRO.2SG  
 ‘Your elder brother’            (Flex\_Sto: Azi 153.1)

71. **?ekplɔ̀**    **nyè**  
 table    PRO.1SG  
 ‘My table’

Below, I list the various juxtaposed possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe. The lists consist of the grammatical category of the forms that function as possessors, and the semantic properties of the forms that function as possesseees.

- a. PR [NOMI] PD [+SPAT/SOCIO-C/KIN-]
- b. PR [PRO.PL] PD [+SPAT/SOCIO-C/KIN-]
- c. PR [PRO.3SG] PD[+SPAT/SOCIO-C+]
- d. PR [PRO.1/2SG] PD[+NON-R/BP/KIN+]  
PD [+SPAT/SOCIO-C+/KIN-] PR [PRO.1/2SG]

### 2.3. Tones in syntactic attributive possessive constructions

Tones of nouns in Tə̀nù̀gbe are of four (productive) types: high tone, long mid tone, low tone and rising tone<sup>19</sup> (see chapter 1 section 2.2. for more details). Attributive possessive constructions of Tə̀nù̀gbe that are processed in syntax have two features in relation to tones: they are involved in tone spreading (section 2.3.1), and they feature only high and low tones on the possessee nouns (section 2.3.2).

#### 2.3.1. Tone spreading

Attributive possessive constructions involving connectives are concerned by tone spreading: In the first place, the tone of the possessive connective spreads unto the residue noun prefixes of possesseees in all instances. Thus, the residue noun prefix **a** of **asikéti** in example (72) below, has outside the possessive construction, a low tone. However, due to tone spreading, in the possessive construction, the noun prefix has a high tone.

72. *avù wá síkétí*  
**avù -á wó asíkétí**  
 dog ART.DEF POSS tail  
 ‘The dog’s tail’ (Flex\_Ext: Dzi 21.1)

In rapid speech or when the possessor of the connective construction is a plural pronoun, the possessive connective can be elided. In such instances, the only trace of the connective is the high tone that spreads unto the noun prefix. Consequently, while example (73) is a felicitous construction (the high tone of the possessive connective spreads unto

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<sup>19</sup> The short mid-tone is not as productive in non-noun prefix syllable of root nouns as the four other tones noted

the noun prefix *viz.* **a** of **afò** ‘leg’), example (74) is not grammatical (the tone of the residue noun prefix is low).

73. *mié afò*  
**mié**      **wó**      **afò**  
 PRO.1PL    POSS    leg  
 ‘our leg’

74. **?mié**      **afò**  
 PRO.1PL      leg  
 ‘Our leg’

Some possessee nouns may not however have a noun prefix. When the possessee noun does not have a noun prefix and the possessive connective is elided, there is a floating high tone between the possessor and the possessee as demonstrated by the example below.

75. *mié' zìkpé*  
**mié**      **wó**      **zìkpé**  
 PRO.1PL    POSS    chair  
 ‘Our chair’

A further argument in favor of this assertion comes from possessee nouns that begin with **ŋ**, which are often complex lexemes in which other nouns are agglutinated to the noun **ŋù** ‘psychologised eye’. When **ŋ**-nouns occur as possesseees in a connective construction, the tone of the possessive connective spreads to **ŋ**. Hence, the low tone that **ŋ** has outside the possessive construction, changes into a high tone in the possessive construction. In example (76) below, **ŋ**- in the possessee noun **ŋkó** ‘name’ has a high tone.

76. **wó**      **ŋkó**  
 POSS    name  
 ‘His name’ (Flex\_Sto : Nor 15.1)

### 2.3.2. Tones of possesseees

The tones that occur on possesseees in syntactically constructed attributive possessive constructions are restricted to high and low

tones. I demonstrate this in constructions involving the possessive connective, and then continue to present the tones of possessives in juxtaposed constructions.

In connective constructions, nouns with a high or low tone conserve this high or low tone when inserted in the possessee slot. The noun **etá** ‘head’, having intrinsically a high tone, keeps this high tone when it occurs as a possessee; the noun **alò** ‘arm’, having intrinsically a low tone, has also a low tone when it occurs as a possessee. Witness both nouns in the connective constructions.

77. **wó**    **tá**  
 POSS    head  
 ‘His head’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 98.1)

78. *atīé wá lò*  
**atī-á**            **wó**    **alò**  
 tree-ART.DEF    POSS    arm  
 ‘The branch of the tree’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 113.1)

However, when nouns with the long mid tone or with the rising tone occur as possessives in connective constructions, they are realized with a high tone<sup>20</sup>. The noun **enū** ‘thing’ outside the possessive construction has a long mid tone, but in the possessive construction (79), it has a high tone. The noun **efɔ̃** ‘palm branch’ has a rising tone outside the possessive construction; however, in the possessive construction in example (80), it has a high tone.

79. *wó ní*  
**wó**    **nū**  
 POSS    thing  
 ‘Her thing’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 112.1)

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<sup>20</sup> In these instances, the short mid-tones which presumably occur on the noun prefixes get elided with the vowel (77) or the noun prefix has a high tone that spreads from the possessive connective (78).

80. *Kwamì wó fǔ yó*  
**[Kwamì wó fǔ]**                      **yó**  
 Kwami    POSS    palm.branch    FOC  
 ‘Its Kwami’s palm branch’

This feature does not concern only monosyllabic possessee nouns but also multisyllabic nouns. For instance, the word **agblèñǔ** ‘hoe’ has a low tone and a rising tone outside the possessive construction. However, when it occurs as a possessee in the connective construction, the rising tone changes into a high tone while the low tone is maintained.

81. *ṅùtsuó ágblènú*  
**ṅùtsu-á**                      **wó**                      **agblèñǔ**  
 man-ART.DEF    POSS    hoe  
 ‘The man’s hoe’                      (Flex\_Atr: Jul 6.1)

Another multisyllabic noun **nū̀dù̀gbá** ‘dining bowl’ also illustrates this scenario. Outside the possessive construction, the first syllable of the noun has a long mid tone, the second syllable has a low tone, and the last syllable has a high tone. However, in the possessive construction, the long mid tone of the first syllable is realized high, the low tone of the second syllable is realized low, and the high tone of the third syllable is realized high.

82. *ṅùtsuó wó nū̀dù̀gbá*  
**ṅùtsu-á**                      **-wó**                      **nū̀-dù̀-agbā**  
 man-ART.DEF    POSS    thing-eat-bowl  
 ‘The man’s dinning bowl’                      (Flex\_Atr: Fam 10.1)

Attributive possessive constructions without connective, or juxtaposed attributive constructions, seem to obey to the same phonological rules: nouns that have rising and long-mid tones outside of the juxtaposed possessive constructions have high tone when they occur as possesseees.

The noun **m̄n̄nú** ‘entrance’ has a long-mid tone on the first syllable and a high tone on the second syllable when it occurs outside of the

possessive construction. However, in the juxtaposed construction of example (83) below, both syllables have a high tone. The spatial relational term **mè** ‘interior.section’ on the other hand has intrinsically a low tone and conserves the same low tone as a possessee in the juxtaposed construction.

83. *xò mónú*  
**xò**      **mónú**  
 house    entrance  
 ‘The entrance of the house’    (Flex\_Arr: Afi 80)
84. *vùmè*  
**vù**      **mè**  
 vehicle   interior.section  
 ‘The inside of a canoe’        (Flex\_Sto: Nor 12.1)

To summarize the discussion of tones of possessee nouns in syntactic attributive possessive constructions: low and high tones remain as such; rising and long mid tones are realized as high tones; the short mid tone of the residue noun prefix is either elided or is realized as a high tone as a result of tone spreading.

However, the above conclusions apply only to constructions that have a dependent-initial constituent order (see section 2.2.2 above for details on constituent order in juxtaposed constructions). In constructions with head-initial constituent order, no tone change is involved. Witness the tone of the noun **evī** ‘child’ in the dependent-initial construction (85) and the head-initial construction (86).

85. *atsùsì vī*  
**atsùsì**   **vī**  
 rival    child  
 ‘A child of a rival wife’        (Flex\_Sto: Azi 151.1)
86. **vī**      **wò**  
 child   PRO.2SG  
 ‘your child’                        (Flex\_Sto: Maw 67.1)

#### 2.4. Splits in syntactic attributive possessive constructions

The discussions above have focused on describing features associated with syntactically processed attributive possessive constructions in Tɔŋúgbe. I have not only presented details on the semantic features that characterize the possessee slots of the various sub-construction types, but also, I have sought to present the tonal features associated with all the construction types. The different constructions presented so far as syntactically constructed are listed below.

##### Connective constructions

- a. PR [NOMI] POSS PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN+]
- b. PR [PRO.PL] POSS PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN+]
- c. POSS PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN-] / PD[KIN-]-ART.DEF

##### Juxtaposed constructions

- a. PR [NOMI] PD [+SPAT/SOCIO-C/KIN-]
- b. PR [PRO.PL] PD [+SPAT/SOCIO-C/KIN-]
- c. PR [PRO.3SG] PD[+SPAT/SOCIO-C+]
- d. PR [PRO.1/2SG] PD [+NON-R/BP/KIN+]  
PD [+SPAT/SOCIO-C+/KIN-] PR [PRO.1/2SG]

A critical observation of the data presented above presents some oppositions. The notable ones that can be observed are: some kinship terms occur in connective constructions while other kinship terms occur in juxtaposed constructions; Some other particular semantic sub-types of nouns occur in connective constructions (non-relational nouns and body-part terms) as possesseees, while other semantic sub-types of nouns (spatial relational terms and some socio-cultural relational terms) seem restricted to juxtaposed constructions; finally, the opposition is further sub-categorized in the head-initial/dependent-initial constituent order constructions.

In the following sub-sections, I examine critically these oppositions. I first of all detail the opposition that characterizes kinship terms (section 2.4.1.); then continue to examine the motivations that underlie these oppositions (section 2.4.2), first concerning the divide in the semantic types of nouns that occur as possesseees in either construction (2.4.2.1), and then according to constituent order (2.4.2.2).



### 2.4.1. Kinship terms in syntactic possessive constructions

Kinship terms come up repeatedly in the description of syntactic possessive constructions of Tə̀́gbe. Throughout the description presented above, the adjective ‘some’ has been used to qualify kinship terms any time they occur as possessives; and they either have been labelled with the abbreviation KIN+ or KIN-. Such a qualification is in reference to the fact that, kinship terms are not uniform in their occurrence. As demonstrated by the examples below, they can occur as possessives in connective constructions (87), in a dependent-initial juxtaposed construction (88), and in a head-initial juxtaposed construction (89).

87. **Amí wó tásiyóví**  
 Ami POSS nephew/niece  
 ‘Ami’s nephew’
88. **Amí náné**  
 Ami mother  
 ‘Ami’s mother’
89. **tàtà nyè**  
 father PRO.1SG  
 ‘my mother’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 105.1)

In order to clarify the distribution of kinship terms as possessives in syntactic possessive constructions, a detailed analysis of kinship terms has been undertaken in the framework of this research.

#### 2.4.1.1. Kinship terms of Tə̀́gbe

Kinship terms in Tə̀́gbe can make reference to various relationships: ascending relationships, descending relationships, horizontal relationships, parental relationships etc. (cf. Dahl & Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2001, Aikhenvald 2010: 16)<sup>21</sup>. Consequently, whereas I refer to **nyì̀nḗ** ‘uncle’ in relation to **eví** ‘child’ as an ascending term; I refer

<sup>21</sup> The relationships designated by the different kinship term types are not mutually exclusive of each other; they are in various intersecting relations *e.g.* **fofó** can refer to a ‘father’, but can also refer to ‘an elder brother’ or ‘any respected man in a community’.

to **nàñvĩ** ‘consanguineous sibling’ in relation to **evĩ** ‘child’ as a horizontal kinship term, and **nàñě** ‘mother’ in relation to **evĩ** ‘child’ as a parental kinship term<sup>22</sup>.

In addition to these relationships, Tɔ̀nùgbe, like other Ewe dialects, has a set of names called **dzìdzìmèḡkówó** ‘names of order of birth’ (cf. Egblewogbe (1977) and Adjah (2011) for a useful discussion of these names in the Ewe language). These names are given to children in order to indicate the order of birth of same-sex siblings. The first boy for instance is called **folĩ**, the second boy **tsàtsú**, the third boy **běsá** etc. More importantly, however, these names, apart from identifying each child and his/her order, also signal specific relations. Indeed, these names are only more specific variants of consanguineous ascending and descending kinship terms. Thus a **tsàtsú** ‘the second of many boys’ or a **běsá** ‘the third of many boys’ is only a specific **tsé** ‘junior brother’ of a **fòlĩ** ‘the first of many boys’. I therefore consider such names as kinship names. The table below lists the commonest kinship terms in Tɔ̀nùgbe and the commonest relationships that are associated with them:

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<sup>22</sup> There is also an opposition between reference terms and address terms which can be illustrated by the opposition between **nané** ‘mother’ and **ḡdã** ‘mum’: I concentrate only on reference term kinship terms given that they are critical to the discussions that follow.

Table 8: a list of the most common kinship terms in Tɔ̀nùgbe

Ascending(A)	Descending(D)	Horizontal(H)	Parental(P)
<b>t̀gbé</b> 'grandfather'	<b>evī</b> 'child'	<b>ǹv́í</b> 'sibling'	<b>ǹnè</b> 'mother'
<b>m̀mǎ</b> 'grandmother'	<b>etsé</b> 'junior brother'	<b>ǹnèv́í</b> 'sibling'	<b>t̀tè</b> 'father'
<b>t̀gá/ǹgǎ</b> 'uncle/aunt'	<b>efé</b> 'sister'	<b>t̀tèv́í</b> 'step-sibling'	
<b>t̀dè/ǹdè</b> 'uncle/aunt'	<b>sr̀nyí</b> 'nephew'	<b>A+A+ v́wó</b>	
<b>nyiǹdè</b> 'uncle'	<b>A+ ỳv́í</b>		
<b>t̀śí</b> 'aunt'			
<b>f̀fó/d̀dà</b> 'big sibling'			
<b>Kinship Names (N)</b>			
<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
1. <b>f̀ĺí</b>		<b>ev̀v́í</b>	
2. <b>ts̀tśú</b>		<b>egb̀</b>	
3. <b>b̀śá</b>		<b>m̀śá</b>	
4. <b>aǹńí</b>		<b>m̀ǹá</b>	
5. <b>aǹm̀ú</b>		<b>m̀k̀</b>	
Twins			
<b>ats̀/ etsé</b>		<b>ewoé /woétsá</b>	
<b>ats̀</b>		<b>ats̀f́é</b>	
<b>g̀s̀ú/g̀s̀útsé</b>			
<b>ed̀</b>		<b>ed̀</b>	
<b>d̀tsé</b>		<b>d̀f́é</b>	

### 2.1.1.1. Explaining the kinship terms

The table of kinship terms contains several kinship terms that need some clarification.

The first comments concern the set of descending kinship terms that have the form **A+ ỳv́í**. These terms are formed from the composition of a term that makes reference to an ascending relationship (A) and

the form **yóní** ‘caller-child’. Each of the resultant forms specifies the relation between the person referred to by the ascending term and the ‘child’ that is referred to by the **yóní** term. For instance, a **tògbéyóní** ‘grand-child’ is a child who will call the elderly person **tògbé** ‘grandfather’, and a **mámáyóní** ‘grand-child’ is a child who will call the elderly person **mámă** ‘grand-mother’. Below, I list some **yóní** terms and their significations

<b>tògáyóní</b>	‘a child who will call the elderly person <b>tògá</b> : the elder brother of father’
<b>tòdèyóní</b>	‘a child who will call the elderly person <b>tòdè</b> : junior brother of father’
<b>nyìnòyóní</b>	‘a child who will call the elderly person <b>nyìnò</b> : junior or elder brother of mother’
<b>nògăyóní</b>	‘a child who will call the elderly person <b>nògă</b> : elder sister of mother’
<b>tàsíyóní</b>	‘a child who will call the elderly person <b>tàsí</b> : sister of father’
<b>nòdèyóní</b>	‘a child who will call the elderly person <b>nòdè</b> : junior sister of mother’

The second series of forms that needs some clarification is the horizontal term **A+A+ víwó**. These terms consist of the combination of two ascending terms and the term **víwó**. The compound refers to the horizontal relation that can exist between members of an extended family *i.e.* cousin relations. Given that two people A and B are members of the same family, and that the relation holding between the two is such that A designates one of the parents of B by any ascending term (for instance **tòdè**) and B also refers to one of the parents of A by any ascending term (for instance **tògá**), the two *i.e.* A and B are **tògátòdévíwó** ‘cousins’.

If the relationship is such that at least a feminine ascending term is involved, **ví** is inserted between the two ascending terms. Therefore, there is **tàsívítòdévíwó** and **tàsívínòdévíwó** but not **\*tàsítòdévíwó** or **\*tàsínòdévíwó**. With respect to the topic of this dissertation, it should be noted that, typically, these kinship terms do not participate in attributive possessive constructions.

The third form that needs some comment is the form **nàñvĩ**. It is also formed from the composition of the nouns **nàñě** ‘mother’ and **evĩ** ‘child’. The form can refer both to a maternal step-sibling *i.e.* anyone born of the speaker’s mother but not of the same father, and to a consanguineous sibling *i.e.* anyone with whom the speaker has the same mother and father.

Furthermore, the meaning of **nàñvĩ** ‘maternal/consanguineous sibling’ needs to be stated in relation to the term **nòvĩ** ‘sibling’. Indeed, the latter term refers not only to a consanguineous sibling, but also to other sibling relations that are not necessarily consanguineous (any relation that the speaker construes as sibling-like). Thus, **nòvĩ** ‘sibling/friend’ can mean ‘colleagues’ as well. Example (90) illustrates this use of the term.

90. *nòvĩnyè mà tsó nũó ðèké nú mà?*  
**nòvĩ-nyè**            **mèà**            **tsó**            **nũ-á**            **ðèké**  
 sibling-PRO.1SG    NEG-POT    take    thing-ART.DEF    none  
**ná-m**                    **à**  
 DAT-PRO.1SG        Q  
 ‘My friend, will you not give me some of the thing?’  
 (Flex\_Sto: Viv 34.1)

The next comments concern the kinship names that refer to twins. Many of these twin kinship names are compounds. The list below presents all the twin kinship names that are compounds and their constituent forms

91. **woétsá**    **atsúfé**    **gàsútsé**    **dòtsé**    **dǒfé**  
 woé-tsé    atsũ-efé    gasú -etsé    edò-etsé    edò-efé

When there is an all male twin, the elder one (the one that is born second<sup>23</sup>) is called **atsũ** and the younger one is called **etsé**. However, when the twins are a male and a female, the male is called **atsũ** and

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<sup>23</sup> Traditionally, it is believed that the elder one stays back and sends the younger one out into the world.

the female is called **atsúfé**. When the twins are all girls, the elder one is called **ewoé** and the younger one is called **woétsá**. If after a set of twins, another set of masculine twins are born, the elder one is called **gàsú** and the younger one is called **gàsútsé**. If after a set of twins, the next child is a single boy or girl, they are called **edō**. The child after **edō** is called **dòtsé** if he is a boy and **dǒfé** if she is a girl.

#### 2.4.1.2. Kinship terms in connective constructions

Descending kinship terms, kinship names (twin and non-twin) and parental kinship terms can occur as possessives in constructions that involve connectives. The following examples illustrate the descending kinship term **nyìnḡéyóví** ‘nephew’ and the kinship name **edō** ‘born after twins’ occurring in constructions involving the possessive connective.

92. **Akòlò wó nyìnḡéyóví**  
 Akorlor POSS nephew’  
 ‘Akorlor’s nephew’ ( Flex\_Sto: Azi 53.1)
93. *atsúféó dó*  
**atsúfé wó edō**  
 twin girl POSS born after twins  
 ‘Atsufé’s junior brother/sister’

#### 2.4.1.3. Kinship terms in juxtaposed constructions

The different kinship terms distribute differently as possessives in juxtaposed constructions according to the form that occurs to function as the possessor.

*Case 1: the possessor is a nominal or a plural personal pronoun*

When the possessor is a nominal or plural pronominal, apart from kinship names, all kinship terms can occur as possessives in juxtaposed constructions. Witness the following examples with an ascending term (94), a descending term (95) a horizontal term (96) and a parental term (97) functioning as possessives in constructions involving nominal and plural pronominal possessors:

94. **mié**      **tògá**  
 PRO.1PL    big uncle  
 ‘Our uncle’
95. **miè**      **ví**  
 PRO.2PL    child  
 ‘Your child’
96. **kòdzó**      **nòvì-é**  
 Kodzo      sibling-ART.DEF  
 ‘Kodzo’s sibling’
97. **mié**      **tàtè-wó**  
 PRO.1PL    father-PL  
 ‘Our fathers’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 167.1)

*Case 2: The possessor corresponds to the third person singular*

When the possessor of a kinship term possessee corresponds to the third person singular, the construction can be of two forms:

- The kinship term possessee can occur together with the third person singular subject pronoun **é**, which functions as the possessor.
- The kinship term possessee occurs together with the clitic definite article

The kinship terms that can occur in the first type of construction are paternal relation ascension terms *i.e.* **tògbé** ‘grandfather’, **tòdè** ‘younger brother of father’, **tògá** ‘elder brother of father’, **tàsí** ‘sister of father’. Example (98) illustrates the ascending paternal relation term **tòdè** ‘younger brother of father’ in a third person singular possession. When the clitic definite article is eliminated, the construction is infelicitous; when the third person singular pronoun is eliminated, except the possessive relationship is specified in the context, the construction can be ambiguous (99).

98. *é tódíé*  
**é**            **tódé**    **-á**  
 PRO.3SG    uncle    -ART.DEF  
 ‘His/her uncle’

99. *tódíé*  
**tódé**    **-á**  
 uncle    -ART.DEF  
 ‘Uncle/ his/her uncle’

The kinship terms that occur in the second form of third person singular possessor constructions *i.e.* constructions in which the kinship term possessee occurs only with the clitic definite article, are non-paternal relation ascension terms (**nyìnḽé** ‘brother of mother’, **nḽdé** ‘younger sister of mother’ **fofó** ‘elder brother’, **dàdà** ‘elder sister etc.), parental terms (**nàḽ** ‘mother’, **tàḽ** ‘father’) and horizontal kinship terms (**nàḽví** ‘consanguinal sibling’, **tàḽví** ‘step-sibling’). The following examples demonstrate this fact:

100. **(\*é)**            **nyìnḽé-á**  
 PRO.3SG    uncle-ART.DEF  
 ‘His/her uncle’            (Flex\_Sto:Azi 265.1)

101. **(\*é)**            **tàḽ-á**  
 PRO.3SG            father-ART.DEF  
 ‘His/her father’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 49.1)

102. *nàḽví-é*  
**(\*é)**            **nàḽví-á**  
 PRO.3SG    sibling-ART.DEF  
 ‘His sibling’

*Case 3: When the possessor is the first or second person singular*

When the possessor of a kinship term possessee is the first or second person pronominal, three constituent orders are possible: dependent-initial (POSSESSOR-POSSESSEE), head-initial (POSSESSEE-POSSESSOR) and inserted possessor (POSSESSEE-POSSESSOR-POSSESSEE).



When descending kinship terms (except **evī** ‘child’) and kinship names occur as possessives in a construction with a first or second person singular possessor, the construction is dependent-initial. Witness the following examples:

103. **nyè**      **tsé**      **vrs**      **\*tsé**      **nyè**  
 PRO.1SG    sibling                      sibling      PRO.1SG  
 ‘My junior brother’
104. **wò**      **atsú**      **vrs**      **\*atsǔ**      **wò**  
 PRO.2SG    twin boy                      twin boy      PRO.2SG  
 ‘Your younger twin boy’

When ascending terms, parental terms and the horizontal term **nòví** ‘sibling’, occur as possessives in a construction with a first or second person singular possessor, the construction is head-initial. Witness the following constructions:

105. **tògá**    **wò**      **vrs**      **\*wò**      **tògá**  
 uncle    PRO.2SG                      PRO.2SG      uncle  
 ‘Your uncle’
106. **tàtá**    **wò**      **vrs**      **\*wò**      **tàtá**  
 father    PRO.2SG                      PRO.2SG      father  
 ‘Your father’
107. **nòví**      **nyè**      **vrs**      **\*nyè**      **nòví**  
 sibling      PRO.1SG                      PRO.1SG      sibling  
 ‘My sibling’

The third and final order that a juxtaposed construction can assume when a kinship term occurs as a possessee and the possessor is the first or second person singular is the *possessor inserted order*. This order concerns horizontal terms that refer to ‘step-sibling (sibling/junior sibling)’ *i.e.* **nàněví** ‘maternal step-sibling/consanguinal sibling’ and **tàtěví** ‘paternal step-sibling’.

Indeed, as briefly mentioned in sub-section (2.4.1.2), these forms are formed from the composition of the nouns **nàně** ‘mother’ ( which is

also composed of the noun **nàná** ‘mother’ and **é** ‘PRO.3SG’) **tàtě** ‘father’ (which is also composed of the noun **tàtà** ‘father’ and **é** ‘PRO.3SG’) and the noun **evī** ‘child’. When the compounded forms **nàněví** ‘maternal step-sibling/consanguinal sibling’ and **tàtěví** ‘paternal step-sibling’ occur as possessees in a construction with the first or second person singular as a possessor, the possessor is inserted in lieu of the ‘redundant’ third person singular<sup>24</sup>. Witness the examples below:

108. **nàná**     **nyè**     **ví**  
 mother     PRO.1SG     child  
 ‘My sibling’

109. **tàtá**     **wò**     **ví**  
 father     PRO.2SG     child  
 ‘Your paternal step-sibling’

To summarize the discussion on kinship terms in juxtaposed constructions, when the possessor of the construction is a nominal or a plural personal pronoun, all the terms can occur to function as possessees. However, when the possessor corresponds to the third person singular, there is a distinction in the way paternal ascension terms are encoded as opposed to non-paternal, parental and horizontal terms. When the possessor is the first or second person singular pronoun, descending kinship terms and kinship names are encoded in a dependent-initial construction, ascending terms, parental terms and the horizontal term **nəví** ‘sibling’ occur in head-initial constructions while horizontal terms that refer to ‘step-sibling’ are encoded in an inserted possessor construction. It can thus be said that the very subtle distinctions in the relations expressed by the various kinship terms (paternal versus non-paternal, consanguinal sibling versus step-sibling etc.) find expression in syntax.

#### 2.4.1.4. Alternation of kinship terms between constructions

The above discussions have detailed which kinship terms occur in either connective constructions or juxtaposed constructions. The

<sup>24</sup> cf. Ameka (2006) for details on the redundant third person singular pronoun in the Ewe language

distribution of the different kinship terms as possessees in either construction type can be summarized as follows:

Table 9: *distribution of kinship terms in syntactic attributive possessive constructions*<sup>25</sup>

X'tion type	Form of x'tion	Possessor	Kinship posd.
<b>Connective</b>	PR POSS PD	N/PRO(PL)	D (-evī)/P/K.N
<b>Juxtaposed</b>	PR PD	N/PRO(PL)	A/D/H/P
	PR PD-ART.DEF	PRO.3SG	A (PAT.)
	PD-ART.DEF	PRO.3SG	A (NON-PAT.)/P/H
	PR PD	PRO.1/2SG	D/K.N
	PD PR	PRO.1/2SG	A/P/H (nòví)
	PD PR PD	PRO.1/2SG	H(-nòví)

From the table above, it can be noted that some kinship terms (especially the descending and parental kinship terms) can occur as possessees in both connective and juxtaposed constructions. To illustrate this, I use the descending kinship term *evī* ‘child’. This term can occur as a possesser in a connective construction (110) and in a juxtaposed construction (111)

110. *Kòdzóó ví wàqē má bú*  
**[Kòdzó wó ví] wà-aqē má bú**  
 Kodzo POSS child do-tongue DEM lose  
 ‘That child of Kodzo, who insults, is missing’

111. *yè bié bé yè ví nyánùví lé?*  
**yé wò bié bé [yè ví**  
 and PRO.3SG ask that PRO.LOG child  
**nyánùví] dé**  
 girl Q  
 ‘and he asked about the whereabouts of his girl child’  
 (Flex\_Nar: Fam 35-36.1)

<sup>25</sup> For purposes of recall, A=Ascending kinship term, D=Descending kinship term, H=Horizontal kinship term, K.N=Kinship name, P=Parental kinship term. Pat=Paternal, Non-Pat=Non paternal

Also, the distinction between kinship terms that occur as possessives in connective constructions and terms that occurs as possessives in juxtaposed constructions collapses when the possessor is the first or second person singular pronoun. Consequently, even kinship names, which are restricted to occurring in connective constructions, are encoded as possessives in a juxtaposed construction when the possessee is either the first or second person singular as demonstrated by example (112) below.

112. nyè            (\*wó) gàsútsé  
       PRO.1SG    POSS    twin.boy  
       ‘My twin boy’

Thus although some kinship terms are restricted to particular constructions, some other ones alternate between both constructions; thus collapsing the dichotomy between connective construction possessives and juxtaposed construction possessives. This phenomenon *i.e.* the collapse of the connective/juxtaposed possessee dichotomy, is not to be limited to only kinship terms but involves other semantic sub-types of nouns as well. I examine this larger collapse in the subsection below.

#### 2.4.2. Motivations of splits in syntactic possessive constructions

The above discussions have highlighted the splits that occur according to which kinship term occurs as possessee. In the following subsections, I attempt to investigate the motivations that trigger the split in the larger sense *i.e.* which constructions encode either relational or non-relational nouns as possessives. I discuss this general split under the title “alienability split” (section 2.5.1), and then continue to discuss the head-initial/dependent-initial split under the title “the constituent order split” (section 2.5.2)

##### 2.4.2.1. The alienability split

Syntactically constructed attributive possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe can be subdivided in two major types: connective constructions and juxtaposed constructions. In the literature (Heine 1997; Haspelmath 1999; Creissels 2001 etc.), this division has been labelled the alienability split. Consequently, in the discussions that

follow, I shall refer to the connective construction as the alienable construction, and to the juxtaposed construction as the inalienable construction<sup>26</sup>.

113. *ekplò wá fòtí* (alienable construction)  
**ekplò** **wó** **afòtí**  
 table POSS leg  
 ‘The leg of the table’ (Flex\_Arr: Afi 46)
114. **kèsé** **nòví** (inalienable construction)  
 monkey sibling  
 ‘A sibling of the monkey’ (Flex\_Sto: Viv 70.1)

In order to account for the motivations that underlay alienability split in language typology, two main hypotheses have been advanced:

- The redundancy hypothesis
- The iconicity hypothesis

The redundancy hypothesis, advanced mainly by Haspelmath (1999, 2017), suggests that the alienability split is the result of the exploitation of linguistic economy. Thus, according to this hypothesis, the more it can be predicted that a particular noun occurs with a determiner (in this instance a ‘possessor’), the more likely this noun is to occur in a more reduced construction (in this case, an inalienable construction). On the other hand, the less likely the prediction, the more likely it is that an alienable construction will occur. Thus, given that a noun such as ‘father’ is more likely to occur with a possessor, it has a higher probability of occurring in an inalienable construction. On the other hand, a noun such as ‘goat’ is less likely to occur with a possessor, hence, the probability that this will occur in an alienable construction.

While the redundancy suggestion holds true in many languages (Hyman et al. 1970, Nichols 1988, Lichtenberk 2009: 262), it cannot be said to account for the totality of the data presented so far for

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<sup>26</sup> I use the terms alienable and inalienable construction only nominatively; and do not intend to cast any semantic innuendoes by referring to the constructions as such.

Tɔ̀ŋúgbe. Although, in accordance with the redundancy proposal, in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe, some of the relational nouns (a cover term for spatial relational terms, kinship terms, socio-cultural relational terms, body-part terms etc.) such as spatial relational terms, ascending, horizontal kinship terms, parental kinship terms and socio-culturally relational nouns occur in the inalienable construction (juxtaposed construction) as possessives and non-relational nouns occur in alienable constructions (connective constructions) as possessives<sup>27</sup>, the redundancy proposition is not able to account for the distribution of the kinship term possessives that alternate between alienable (connective) and inalienable (juxtaposed) constructions (see section 2.4.1.5 above for further details), and body-part terms (115).

115. *wá bɔ́*

<b>wó</b>	<b><u>abɔ́</u></b>	<b>vrs</b>	<b>*é</b>	<b><u>abɔ́</u></b>
POSS	arm		PRO.3SG	arm
‘His arm’			‘His/her/its arm’	

(Flex\_Arr: Afi 24.1)

On the other hand, the iconicity hypothesis, advanced mainly by Haiman (1983), suggests that the alienability split is reflective of iconic distance. According to this position, the longer the conceived distance between the possessor and the possessee, the more elaborate the linguistic material that encodes the possessor and the possessee; the shorter the conceived distance between the possessor and the possessee, the more reduced the linguistic material that encodes the possessor and the possessee. Thus, alienable constructions encode non-intimate relationships between the possessor and the possessee, while the inalienable construction expresses an intimate relation between the possessor and possessee.

The alienability split in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe can be accounted for in terms of iconic relations. The choice of either the inalienable construction (juxtaposed construction) or the alienable construction (connective construction) is dependent on the conceptual distance established

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<sup>27</sup> This statement does not take into account instances when the possessor is the first or second person singular; see section 2.4.2.2 below for an account on constructions in which the possessor is either the first or second person singular.

between the possessor and the possessee. Consequently, the inalienable construction (juxtaposed construction) corresponds to a conceptual closeness between possessor and possessee, and the alienable construction (connective construction) corresponds to a conceptual distance between possessor and possessee (Velazquez-Castillo 1996).

To bring this assertion to concrete grounds, I take the example of the relationship between a family and a child. Impoliteness is frowned upon in Tḡú culture. Therefore, a speaker may establish distance between a disrespectful child and his/her family by choosing the alienable construction (connective construction) for the relational noun *evī* ‘child’. The construction will thus be as in (116) below.

116. *Túglóó ví màbùàmé ma kú*  
 [Túgló **wó** ví] màbùàmé má kú  
 Tuglo POSS child impolite DEM die  
 ‘That impolite child of Tuglo’s lineage, is dead’

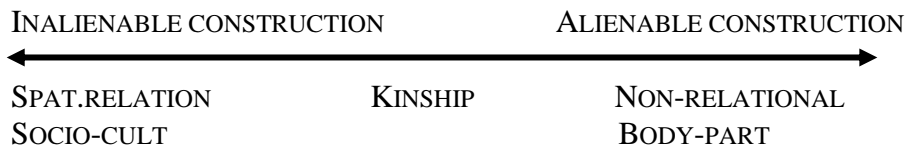
On the other hand, if the child is polite, the speaker can choose to establish an intimate relationship between both participants. As such, the resultant construction is an inalienable construction (the juxtaposed construction). Witness the construction below:

117. *Túglóó ví bùmé ma kú*  
 [Túgló ví] bùmé má kú  
 Tuglo child polite DEM die  
 ‘That polite child of Tuglo’s lineage, is dead’

This hypothesis accounts for the alternation of kinship terms as possesseees in both types of syntactically processed attributive possessive constructions: they occur in either construction depending on the relation a speaker conceptualizes between them and the possessor.

However, other nouns cannot be used as possessives in both constructions<sup>28</sup>. Non-relational terms, body-part terms and some kinship terms occur exclusively in the alienable construction (connective construction); spatial relational terms, socio-cultural relational terms and some of the kinship terms occur in the inalienable construction *i.e.* juxtaposed construction (See figure 6 below for a distribution of possessives in either construction type). It can be said that, these nouns, in syntactically processed attributive possessive constructions, are conceptualized as independent of possessor and close to possessor respectively. The stated relation is not dependent on the possessive noun, but rather, is a feature of the construction in which the noun occurs as possessive.

**Fig.6-** *Representation of the distribution of nouns as possessives in syntactic attributive possessive constructions*



Having accounted for what can be termed the alienability split on the macro-level, I turn my attention to accounting for the micro-level splits. The first of the micro-splits concerns the manner in which kinship terms are encoded as possessives in juxtaposed constructions. As pointed out in sub-section (2.4.1.4.), in juxtaposed constructions, paternal ascending kinship terms can be encoded differently from non-paternal kinship terms *i.e.* while maternal ascending terms are encoded in the same way as parental and horizontal terms, the paternal terms seem to deviate when the possessor corresponds to the third person singular.

This distinction, I suggest, finds its source in the social infrastructure of Tɔŋú society. Witness the opposition as illustrated by the examples below (when the paternal ascension term occurs as possessive, the form of the construction is PRO.3SG PD-ART.DEF *eg.* (118); when

<sup>28</sup> This statement does not take into account constructions in which the possessor is either the first or second person singular.



maternal ascending, parental or horizontal terms occur as possessee, the construction is of the form PD-ART.DEF *eg.* (119)):

118. **é tógã -á**  
 PRO.3SG uncle -ART.DEF  
 ‘His/her uncle’

119. **nyìnḍé-á**  
 uncle-ART.DEF  
 ‘His/her uncle’ (=100)

Tḥnú communities are organized in such a way that a child’s day-to-day upbringing is mainly done by the mother (and by extension, members of the mother’s family). The father (and by extension the father’s family) plays a supervisory role. Thus, although the society is patrilineal, the affectiveness of the child towards one family or the other is generally in favor of the mother’s family. A child is therefore generally closer to members of the maternal family as opposed to members of the paternal family.

The suggestion I am making then is that, it seems this social-relational closeness to one’s maternal family members finds expression in grammar. Thus, that, maternal ascension terms, are encoded in a shorter linguistic unit (*i.e.* the kinship term and the definite article clitic) as opposed to paternal ascension terms which are encoded in a more elaborate linguistic pattern (the possessor is explicitly marked and juxtaposed to the kinship term, and the clitic definite article again added) is only but a reflection of iconicity of distance.

Further support for this hypothesis comes from the opposition in the constructional pattern for step horizontal relations (step-brother, step-sister, etc.) as opposed to non-step horizontal relations (brother, sister, elder sibling etc.) when the possessor is the first or second person singular pronoun. As stated above in sub-section (2.4.1.4), the possessor pronoun is inserted between the composing elements of the step-kinship term, while with the non step-kinship term **nḍví** ‘sibling’ which is also a compounded form made up of **nḍ** ‘mother’ and **evī**

‘child’, the possessor is simply juxtaposed to the possessee. Witness the opposition in the examples below:

120.	<b>tàtà</b>	<b>-nyè</b>	<b>-ví</b>	vrs	<b>nòví</b>	<b>nyè</b>
	father	PRO.1SG	child		sibling	PRO.1SG
	‘my step-sibbling’				‘my sibling’	

Again, the construction that expresses a closer kinship relation (non-step) *viz.* the construction in which **nòví** ‘sibling’ occurs as possessee is lighter than the construction that expresses a more distant kin relation (step) *i.e.* the construction in which **tàtėví** ‘step-sibling’ occurs as possessee. The idea then is that, similar to what pertains on the macro scale in Təŋúgbe; the micro split is also conditioned by iconic considerations.

The above observations are not specific to Təŋúgbe. Indeed, in his work on Paamese possessive constructions, Devylder (2018) observes that in Paamese culture, there is a closer relationship with consanguine kins as opposed to affinal kins. This social-relational closeness is similarly reflected in a distinction in the constructional pattern of the possessive construction for each type of kinship term as a possessee. Like in Təŋúgbe, less elaborate constructions encode closer kinship relations (consanguine kinship terms occur in shorter constructions), while more elaborate constructions encode less intimate kinship ties (affinal kinship terms occur in heavier constructions).

The second micro split concerns the opposition between the constructions in which the possessor is the first or second person singular pronoun and constructions in which the possessor is either a third person singular or a plural pronoun. This variation is beyond the alienable/inalienable account. I therefore discuss them in the section below.

#### 2.4.2.2. The constituent order split

When the possessor is the first or the second person pronoun, the alienable (connective) construction/inalienable (juxtaposed) construction distinction is collapsed. All nouns occur in an inalienable

(juxtaposed) construction; even body-part terms (121) and non-relational nouns (122).

121. **nyè**            (**\*wó**)    **tá**  
       PRO.1SG    POSS        head  
       ‘My head’

122. **nyè**            (**\*wó**)    **xò**  
       PRO.1SG    POSS        house  
       ‘My house’

The alienable (connective) construction/inalienable (juxtaposed) construction distinction collapses when the possessor is either the first or second person singular due to the fact that these latter constructions involve egocentricity (Ameka 1991). Since the first and second person singular possessors involve speech act participants (cf. Dahl 1997, Bhat 2004), possessive constructions in which these pronouns occur as possessors do not only establish proximity between the possessor and possessee, but also include the idea that, it is the speech act participant that is the possessor.

Also, when the possessor is the first or the second person singular pronoun, the construction has a head-initial constituent order (and not the usual dependent-initial constituent order) when the possessee is a spatial relation, an ascending kinship term, a parental kinship term, a horizontal kinship term and a socio-culturally relational term. Thus, when the ascending kinship term **tǎgbé** ‘grandfather’ for instance occurs as a possessee in a construction in which the possessor is the first person singular pronominal, the construction is head-initial (POSSESSEE-POSSESSOR).

123. **tǎgbé**            **nyè**            vrs    **?nyè**        **tǎgbé**  
       grandfather    PRO.1SG                    PRO.1SG    grandfather  
       ‘My grandfather’                    ‘My grandfather’  
       (Flex\_Sto:Azi 16.1)

This opposition in constituent order, I suggest, corresponds to a subtle difference in the meaning evoked by each construction type. Indeed,

constructions with the head-initial constituent order, in addition to conceiving the possessive relation as close and asserting that the speech act participant is the possessor, also evoke an idea of ‘endearment to possessor’ while constructions with a dependent-initial order do not involve an ‘endearment to possessor’ meaning. This difference in meaning between the two construction types is brought to bear when a noun such as **amè** ‘person’ is to be encoded as possessee.

<i>dependent-initial</i> 124. <i>nyà mè</i> <u>nyè</u> <b>amè</b> PRO.1SG  person ‘My person’	vrs	<i>head-initial</i> <b>amè</b> nyè person  PRO.1SG ‘My <u>personal</u> person’
---	-----	---

When **ame** ‘person’ is encoded in the dependent-initial construction, it expresses the idea that the person is a person that I have an unknown relation with. However, when **ame** ‘person’ is encoded in the head-initial construction, the construction expresses the idea that this is not just any person, but someone with whom I have a close and endearing relation *i.e.* someone on whom I can count. The expression with the head-initial order is therefore used in cajoling someone, or as a sign of friendship and camaraderie.

### 3. Attributive possessive constructions on the syntax/morphology interface

This section captures not only constructions that are constructed on the syntax/morphology interface, but also, constructions that are simply constructed in morphology. The constructions that are discussed are constructions that are formed by a morphological process.

The two main morphological processes that are involved in these constructions are suffixation and compounding. In possessive constructions formed from suffixation, a possessor suffix is affixed to the possessee noun phrase; in possessive constructions formed from compounding, two independent nouns are joined into a single lexical unit. In example (125) the morpheme **tɔ́** is suffixed to the possessee

noun **ezià** ‘poverty’. In example (126), the construction is composed of the nouns **sùkú** ‘school’ as the possessor and **exò** ‘house’ as the possessee.

125. **ezià -tǔ**  
 poverty PRO.PR  
 Lit. ‘poverty owner’  
 ‘(Poor person)’ (Flex\_Sto: Maw 77.1)
126. **sùkú -xó**  
 school-house  
 ‘Lit.house of school’  
 ‘(Classroom)’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 86.1)

In the next sub-sections, I present constructions formed from suffixation (section 3.1), constructions formed from compounding (section 3.2), and the tonal characteristics of both constructions (section 3.3). All through the sections, I shall demonstrate that although involving morphological processes, syntax has access to the constructions involving suffixation (so they are processed on the syntax morphology interface), but not to constructions involving compounding (so they are constructed in morphology).

### 3.1. Suffixed constructions

#### 3.1.1. The possessor suffix

In suffixed attributive possessive constructions, the three forms **tó**, **nò** and **sì** are suffixed to the possessee noun phrase. They have the meaning of indicating the possessor in a suffixed construction. Witness the following examples:

127. **egà-tǔ**  
 money-PRO.PR  
 ‘Lit. owner of money’  
 ‘(Rich person)’ (Flex\_Sto: Maw 75.1)
128. **afè-nò**  
 house-PRO.PR  
 ‘The woman of a household’ (Flex\_Ext: Viv 1.1)

129. **agblè-sì**  
 farm-PRO.PR  
 ‘Lit. Woman of farm’  
 ‘(A woman born in the farm)’

These suffixes function as indefinite pronoun possessors. Indeed, the ‘suffixes’ are obsolete nouns that refer to ‘father’ (**tó**), ‘mother’ (**nò**) and ‘female partner’ (**sì**) respectively; but which have grammaticalized into possessor marking. There are contexts in which the lexical interpretation is possible, namely when they occur in subject position. In example (130) for instance the term **tó** is used to refer to ‘father’.

130. *etōnú vòs dūó*  
**etó**      **nú**      **evè-á-wó**      **dū-á**  
 father    thing    ewe-ART.DEF-PL    eat-HAB  
 ‘The Ewes inherit paternally’

As a suffix in the possessive construction, **tó** mostly indicates ‘general possession’, while **nò** and **sì** (which are infrequent) indicate instances of ‘female possession’. However, **nò** can also indicate cases of ‘general possession’ when the possessed noun is traditionally (supposed to be) associated with females. Thus, traditionally, ‘fear’ is considered an attribute of females, since males must entertain no fear in order to be respected. The suffix **nò** is therefore used as the general possessor of ‘shout of fear’ as demonstrated in example (131) below:

131. *vòvòlínò*  
**vòvò-ylí-nò**  
 fear-shout-PRO.PR  
 ‘Lit. Owner of shout of fear’  
 ‘A coward’

Another strategy used for indicating ‘general possession’, is the adjunction of two suffixes to a possessee noun. In example (132), for instance, the possessee noun is consecutively suffixed with the suffixes **nò** and **tó**.

132. **kèsì-nò-t́**  
 wealth-PRO.PR-PRO.PR  
 Lit. ‘Owner of wealth’  
 ‘(A rich person) (Flex\_Sto: Maw 6.1)

### 3.1.2. The possessee in suffixed constructions

Forms that function as possesseees in suffixed constructions can be nouns or pronouns. I present constructions in which the possesseees are nominal (case 1), and then continue to present constructions in which pronouns occur in possesseees slot (case 2, 3 and 4).

*Case 1: The possessee is a nominal*

Nouns that occur as possesseees in suffixed constructions are body-part terms and non-relational nouns. The following examples contain the body-part term **etá** ‘head’ and the non-relational term **efiè** ‘chief’ as possesseees in suffixed constructions:

133. **ta-t́**  
 head-PRO.PR  
 Lit. ‘Owner of head’  
 ‘(Leader)’.
134. *efiètóó*  
**efiè-t́-wó**  
 chief-PRO.PR-PL  
 Lit. ‘chief’s owners’  
 ‘(Royals)’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 159.1)

The socio-cultural relational term **esrò** ‘spouse’ and the kinship term **evī** ‘child’ can also occur as possesseees. Apart from these two nouns, other socio-cultural relational terms, kinship terms and spatial relational nouns do not occur in suffixed constructions as possesseees. Witness the following constructions:

135. **esrò/evī**      **t́**  
 spouse/child    PRO.PR  
 ‘Lit. A spouse/child owner’  
 ‘(A married person/a parent)’

136. \*exlò/tòdè/gbó            **tó**  
 friend/uncle/vicinity    PRO.PR  
 ‘Lit. A friend/uncle/vicinity owner’

*Case 2: a plural personal pronoun occurs in possessee position*

When a plural pronoun occurs with the form **tó**, the lexical meaning of **tó** is evoked. Therefore, **tó** in these constructions generally refers to ‘father’. Consequently, **tó** ‘father’ can be replaced by the word **tàtě** ‘father’. Witness the following constructions:

137. *miétóó*  
**mié**            **tó-wó**  
 PRO.1PL    father-PL  
 ‘Our fathers’

138. *mié tàtéó*  
**mié**            **tàtě-wó**  
 PRO.2PL    father-PL  
 ‘Our fathers’

*Case 3: the third person singular occurs in possessee position*

When the pronoun is the third person singular, again, the lexical meaning of **tó** is evoked. Typically, the pronoun, which functions as possessor, is not realized overtly; the possessive connective occurs with **tó** (139). However, although generally interpreted as a construction of other Ewe dialects, a construction in which the third person singular pronoun occurs (140), can also be used. In this latter construction, the form **tàtě** ‘father’ cannot replace **tó**.

139. *wótóó/ tàtéó*  
**wó**            **tó-wó**            **/tàtě-wó**  
 POSS            father-PL            father-PL  
 ‘His/her fathers’

140. **é**            **tó-wó**            **/(?tàtě-wó)**  
 PRO.3SG    father-PL            father-PL  
 ‘His/her fathers’



*Case 4: the possessee corresponds to the first or second person singular pronoun*

When the possessee of a suffixed construction corresponds to the first or second person singular, the construction is such that the first or second person pronoun is agglutinated with **tɔ̃** (the form that is referred to in section 2.2. as *possessee pronoun*). Then the possessor suffix **tɔ̃** is suffixed to the newly constructed form. The whole construction is then pluralized. Example (141) below illustrates a suffixed construction in which the possessee corresponds to the first person singular.

141. **tɔ̃- nyè- tɔ̃- wó**  
 PRO.PD PRO.1SG- PRO.PR- PL  
 ‘Lit. people who own me’  
 ‘(My family relations)’

142. **\*nyè- tɔ̃-wó**  
 PRO.1SG PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘My colleagues’

In constructions in which the possessee corresponds to the first or second person singular, the relations expressed within the construction are different from other suffixed constructions. In the first place, in the first unit of the construction *i.e.* PRO.PD-PRO.1/2SG, the first or second person singular functions as a possessor. However, in the full construction *i.e.* PRO.PD-PRO.1/2SG-PRO.PR-PL, the first unit *viz.* PRO.PD-PRO.1/2SG, functions as the possessed constituent. The relations in this construction can be stated as follows:

- |      | POSSESSEE                      |             | POSSESSOR-PL |           |
|------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
|      | POSSESSEE                      | POSSESSOR   | POSSESSOR    | PL        |
| 143. | <b>tɔ̃-</b>                    | <b>nyè-</b> | <b>tɔ̃-</b>  | <b>wó</b> |
|      | PRO.PD                         | PRO.1SG-    | PRO.PR-      | PL        |
|      | ‘Lit. people who own me’       |             |              |           |
|      | ‘(My family relations)’ (=141) |             |              |           |

The meaning of the construction can therefore be described as reciprocal egocentric possession: the **PRO.1/2SG** and the **PRO.PR** both

have possessives; but the **PRO.1/2SG** is a constituent of the possessee of the **PRO.PR**. More importantly, in this construction the possessor suffix generally refers to family relations. Thus, the construction as a whole expresses consanguine relations or very intimate relations.

### 3.1.3. Suffixed possessive constructions: morphological or syntactic constructs?

Having discussed the features of the individual constituents of suffixed constructions, I now turn to the analysis of the construction as a whole.

As demonstrated in sub-section 3.1.1, the forms that are suffixed to the possessives are synchronically possessor suffixes. However, contrary to what is expected for morphologically complex forms, suffixed possessive constructions fail the lexical integrity test (cf. Anderson 1992). In the first instance, suffixed constructions (constructions involving nominals and first and second person pronouns)<sup>29</sup> can occur with the possessive connective as demonstrated by the example below.

- tònyìéótóó*
144. **tò-**        **nyè**        **á**        **wó**        **tó-**        **wó**  
 PRO.PD    PRO.1SG-    ART.DEF    POSS    PRO.PR-    PL  
 ‘Lit. The fathers/owners of my own’  
 ‘(The fathers of my child/The owners of mine)’

Also, elements relating to the possessee can be inserted between the possessee and the possessor suffix. Witness example (145) below, in which the definite article occurs as a determiner of the possessee noun **afē** ‘home’.

<sup>29</sup> I do not consider constructions in which plural pronouns and the third person singular occur with **tó** as suffixed constructions. These constructions are juxtaposed constructions (NP NP). This is evidenced by the fact that the lexical meaning of **tó** ‘father’ is evoked in these constructions (Cf. case 2 and 3 of section 3.1.2).

145. *afié tó*  
**afè-á**                    **tó**  
 house-ART.DEF    PRO.PR  
 ‘The owner of the house’  
 ‘ (The landlord)’

On the basis of these observations, it can be stated that although suffixed possessive constructions (constructions involving nominals and first and second person singular pronouns) involve the suffixation of grammaticalized forms (construction in morphology), there is still syntactic flexibility. Consequently, suffixed constructions can be described as being processed on the interface between syntax and morphology.

### 3.2. Compound constructions

Compound possessive constructions involve two nouns. Therefore, pronouns do not occur as either possessor or possessee in compound constructions. The noun that functions as possessor precedes the noun that functions as possessee; the constructional pattern is thus dependent-initial.

Nouns that occur as possesseees in compound constructions are body-part terms, descending kinship terms, and non-relational nouns. In example (146), the body-part term **etá** ‘head’ functions as a possessee; in example (147), the descending kinship term **evī** ‘child’ functions as a possessee; and in example (148), the non-relational noun **ezē** ‘pot’ functions as a possessee.

146. **tsì**            **-tá**  
 water    head  
 ‘Lit. water’s head’  
 ‘ (Upstream)’            (Flex\_Arr: Afi 10.1)
147. **adzè-ví**  
 witchcraft-child  
 ‘Lit. child of witchcraft’  
 ‘(Witch/wizard)’

148. **adzè-zé**  
 witchcraft-pot  
 ‘Lit. Pot of witchcraft’  
 ‘(A pot believed to be used for witchcraft activities)’  
 ‘(A lover of the art of witchcraft)’

### 3.2.1. Compound possessive constructions and classificatory constructions

When the noun that occurs in possessee slot is a non-relational noun, the resultant construction can be classificatory in nature *i.e.* the noun that occurs in possessor slot refers to the type of entity that is referred to by the noun that occurs in possessee slot (Chappel & McGragor 1989:28). In example (149), the possessor noun **agbèli** ‘cassava’ refers to the type of **ati** ‘tree’ that is being referred to.

149. **agbèli -tí**  
 cassava tree  
 ‘A cassava stick’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 116.1)

For the construction to express a possessive relation, the non-relational noun that occurs as possessee must be institutionally associated with the possessor noun. Thus, contrary to what is observed for other Ewe dialects, habitual association is not sufficient in Tɔ̀nùgbe. Thus in example (150), the construction expresses possession because institutionally a stool is associated with the chieftaincy institution. This latter stool is not a kind of ‘stool’, but a ‘stool of the chieftaincy institution’.

150. **efiè-zìkpé**  
 chief-stool  
 ‘stool of the chieftaincy institution’

On the other hand, usually, in traditional Tɔ̀nù homes, some stools are associated with the kitchen because women usually sit on them while cooking. To differentiate these stools from other stools in the home, these stools (the stools habitually associated with kitchen work) are referred to by means of the classificatory compound in example (151) *i.e.* a type of stool.

151. **dzòdòfé-zìkpé**  
 kitchen-stool  
 ‘A kitchen stool’

### 3.2.2. Compound constructions as morphological constructs

The compound construction involves two nouns that have been concatenated into a single lexical entry. Thus, compound constructions are morphological constructs. However, the frontier between the compound construction and the juxtaposed construction (constructed in syntax) can be blurred as juxtaposed constructions can be formed by the insertion of a modifier between the possessor and possessee of a compound construction<sup>30</sup> as demonstrated by the examples below.

152. **tsì -tá** *compound*  
 water head  
 ‘Lit. Water’s head’  
 ‘(Upstream or western direction)’ (=146)
153. **etsì -gá -tá** *juxtaposed*  
 water big head  
 ‘Lit. head of big water’  
 ‘(Upstream of the lake)’

There are however clear differences between the compound possessive construction and the juxtaposed possessive construction. These differences can be grouped into four levels: semantic, syntactic, lexical and phonetic.

The **semantic** difference between the two construction types can be noted in their referential values. While compound possessive

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<sup>30</sup> Contrary to what occurs with compound possessive constructions, classificatory compounds cannot be ‘turned into’ juxtaposed constructions as demonstrated by the example below:

1. **\*agbèli -é -tí**  
 cassava ART.DEF tree  
 ‘A cassava stick’

constructions make reference to a single entity in the world, juxtaposed constructions make reference to more than one entity in the world. Thus, although the compound possessive construction **afè-me** is made up of the nouns ‘house’ and ‘interior.section’, in the real world, it refers to ‘the home’. On the other hand, the juxtaposed construction **afiémè** ‘house-ART.DEF-interior.section’ refers to ‘the interior.section of the house’.

**Syntactically**, given that compound constructions form one lexical unit, the constituent elements cannot be replaced with for instance demonstrative pronouns (154). On the other hand, the possessor of a juxtaposed construction can for instance be replaced with a demonstrative pronoun as demonstrated in example (155).

- |      |  |                    |                   |
|------|--|--------------------|-------------------|
| 154. | <b>?é-kíyíé</b><br>PRO.3SG-DEM<br>‘Upstream’                               | <b>-tá</b><br>head | <i>compound</i>   |
| 155. | <b>é-kíyíé</b><br>PRO.3SG-DEM<br>‘On top of this one’<br>‘because of this’ | <b>-tá</b><br>head | <i>juxtaposed</i> |

The **lexical** difference that characterizes both construction types concerns the noun types that occur as possessees. Typically, spatial relational terms, socio-cultural relational terms, ascending kinship terms, horizontal kinship terms and parental kinship terms occur as possessees in juxtaposed constructions (see section 2.2. for further details). Typically, in compound constructions, non-relational nouns, body-part terms (nouns in a part-whole relationship with the possessor) and descending kinship terms (**vī** ‘child’ **tsé** ‘junior brother’ and **fé** ‘junior sister’) occur as possessees. Thus, there seems to be a complementary distribution with respect to the nouns that occur in juxtaposed and compound possessive constructions as possessees. Witness the following examples:

	<i>Compound</i>				<i>Juxtaposed</i>	
156.	<b>esrò</b> spouse	<b>*Kofí</b>	<b>-sró</b> Kofi spouse 'Kofi's wife'	vrs	<b>Kofi</b>	<b>srò</b> Kofi spouse 'Kofi's wife'
157.	<b>afò</b> leg	<b>egbò</b> goat	<b>-fò</b> leg 'leg of a goat'	vrs	<b>*egbò</b> goat	<b>fò</b> leg 'A goat's leg'

However, some nouns can occur as possessees in both construction types; and the case of the descending kinship term **evī** 'child' comes up for discussion as it not only occurs in both constructions, but also offers some interesting insights into the fact that when the same noun occurs in both constructions, it refers to different entities (for instance **etá** 'head' in *e.g.* 152, a compound construction, can be argued to refer to a part of the river, while **etá** 'head' in *e.g.* 153, a juxtaposed construction, can be argued to function as a spatial orientation term).

When **evī** 'child' occurs in both construction types, it is difficult to distinguish the constructions from each other: the tone (see section 3.3. below) does not allow distinguishing the two constructions (the long mid tone becomes a high tone in both constructions); and **evī** 'child' expresses the same meaning of 'child' in both constructions.

A difference can however be noted with respect to the nature of the possessor in each construction. The term occurs as a possessive in compound constructions when the possessor is a toponym; and occurs as a possessive in juxtaposed constructions when the possessor is any other noun or a pronoun. Thus, the compound construction in which **evī** 'child' occurs as a possessive expresses a meaning that correlates to the meaning expressed by classificatory compound constructions: the toponym, which occurs in the possessor slot identifies the 'type' of 'child' that is under discussion. Witness the example below:

158. **Mefé -ví**  
 Mepe child  
 ‘Lit. A child of Mepe’  
 ‘(A child from Mepe)’

159. **Anání ví**  
 Anani child  
 ‘Anani’s child’

Support for the claim above stems from the fact that, similar to other constructions which are classificatory, compound constructions with **evī** ‘child’ do not accept modifiers or determiners between the noun in the possessor slot and **evī** ‘child’ *i.e.* they cannot be ‘turned into’ a juxtaposed construction (160). On the contrary, juxtaposed possessive constructions can accept modifiers between the possessor and the possessee.

160. *?mèfiéví* *Classificatory*  
**mefé-á** **-ví**  
 Mepe-ART.DEF child  
 ‘Lit. A child of Mepe’  
 ‘(A child who hails from Mepe)’
161. **Anání kém ví** *Possessive*  
 Anani DEM child  
 ‘That Anani’s child’

Finally, concerning the **phonetic** difference between compound possessive constructions and juxtaposed possessive constructions, both constructions are distinguished from each other by the tones that characterize them. While the possessee noun in juxtaposed constructions can have a low tone or a high tone (see section 2.3 for further details), the possessee noun in compound constructions has a high tone (see section section 3.3. below for details on the tone pattern that characterizes compound constructions).

The nouns **nàně** ‘mother’ and **zidoě** ‘magic of disappearance’ have the same tone pattern of Low-Rising. When **nàně** ‘mother’ occurs as a



possessee in the juxtaposed construction, it has a tone pattern of Low-High. On the other hand, when **zidoě** ‘a kind of magic’ occurs in the compound construction as a possessee, it has a tone pattern of High-High.

- |      |  |  |                   |
|------|--|--|-------------------|
| 162. | <b>efiè</b><br>chief                   | <b>nàné</b><br>mother                    | <i>Juxtaposed</i> |
|      | ‘The mother of the chief’              |  |                   |
| 163. | <b>efiε</b><br>chief                   | <b>-zidoé</b><br>-magic of disappearance | <i>Compound</i>   |
|      | ‘The magic of disappearance of chiefs’ |  |                   |

### 3.3. Tones in attributive possessive constructions on the syntax/morphology interface

In constructions processed on the syntax/morphology interface, tones of possessives vary according to the type of construction. In suffixed constructions, possessee nouns have the same tones they have when they are independent. Witness the following examples:

- |      |                           |  |
|------|---------------------------|--|
| 164. | <b>akpá</b><br>tilapia    | <b>akpá-tó</b><br>tilapia-PRO.PR<br>‘owner of tilapia’ |
| 165. | <b>edà</b><br>snake       | <b>edà-tó</b><br>snake-PRO.PR<br>‘owner of snake’      |
| 166. | <b>akplě</b><br>banku     | <b>akplě-tó</b><br>banku-PRO.PR<br>‘owner of banku’    |
| 167. | <b>adzē</b><br>witchcraft | <b>adzē-tó</b><br>witchcraft-PRO.PR<br>‘wizard/witch’  |

In compound constructions, possessee nouns have a high tone irrespective of the tone they have outside the compound possessive

construction. The examples below illustrate the high tone on possessives in compound possessive constructions.

168. **enyà**                      **afe-nyá**  
       ‘issue’                        home-issue  
   ‘an issue meant to be settled at home’
169. **axá**                        **exò-xá**  
       ‘side’                         house-side  
   ‘the side of a house’
170. **gàgō**                      **ɲùtsù-gágó**  
   man-bucket  
   ‘the bucket of a man’

#### 4. Accounting for Tɔ̀ɲúgbe attributive possessive constructions

Throughout the study of the different types of attributive possessive constructions, it has been argued that the constituents that function as possessor and possessee are noun phrases in the case of constructions processed in syntax, noun phrase and suffix in the case of suffixed constructions and nouns in the case of compound constructions. Consequently, the different constructions surveyed up to this point can be represented as follows:

• Connective	PR	PD	
	NP POSS NP		
	PR	PD	(dependent-initial)
• Juxtaposed	PD	PR	(head-initial)
	NP	NP	
• Suffixed	PD	PR	
	NP	-PRO.PR	
• Compound	PR	PD	
	N	-	N

Also, it has been observed that the possessives in some of the constructions have different tones from those they have when in isolation. Indeed, in the syntactic constructions (in constructions with

a connective and in dependent-initial juxtaposed constructions), the possessives have only high and low tone tones; in compound constructions, possessives have only high tones and in suffixed constructions, possessives have no specific tone pattern. Hence, the different constructions are not only distinguished from each other by morpho-syntactic features, but also by the tones of the noun phrase or noun in the possessee slot.

There however is one structure that does not fit completely in this typology: constructions in which **A+** **yóví** terms occur as possessives. The example (171) below illustrates the construction.

171. *kòblá' nyínóéyóví*  
**Kòblá wó nyínóéyóví**  
 Kobla POSS niece/nephew  
 'Kobla's niece/nephew

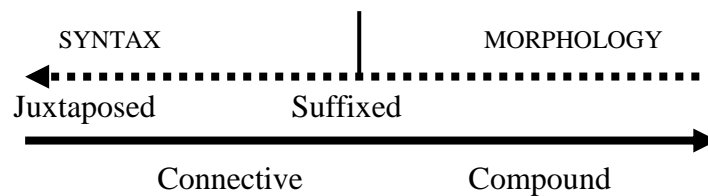
At first sight, the construction can be considered a juxtaposed construction due to the fact that there is no connective between the possessor and the possessee. A critical observation of the construction reveals that the construction is a connective construction in which the connective is elided; and the floating tone is a trace of this process (see section 2.3.1. for more on floating tones in connective constructions). However, the possessee does not have the tone features of a connective construction (see section 2.3.2. for the tone features of connective constructions). Instead, the tone features of the construction are tone features that are associated with compound constructions *i.e.* all the syllables of the possessee noun have a high tone.

To summarize the features of the construction in (171) above, the morpho-syntax identifies the construction as syntactically constructed, but the tone characteristics identify the construction as processed in morphology. To account for such a mismatch, I posit that the construction is just a synchronic illustration of the diachronic process involved in the development from connective possessive constructions to compound possessive constructions.

Indeed, it has been observed that the opposition between connective constructions and non-connective constructions (alienability split) is sourced in diachrony (Dahl & Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2001); and of both connective constructions (alienable constructions) and non-connective constructions (inalienable constructions), the latter construction is relatively older than the former construction (Creissels 2001). In the same vein, the construction involving a connective in Tɔ̀húgbe can be argued to be the newer construction as compared to juxtaposed possessive constructions, suffixed possessive constructions and compound possessive constructions.

In line with Givón (1971)'s famous 'today's morphology is yesterday's syntax' *i.e.* the univerbation principle, the compound possessive construction can also be considered as more recent than the suffixed and juxtaposed constructions. Finally, following from the arguments presented in sub-section (3.1), suffixed constructions can be described as grammaticalized juxtaposed constructions. The model below is a tentative representation of the gramaticalization path of the Tɔ̀húgbe data analyzed.

**Fig.7-***Grammaticalization path of Tɔ̀húgbe attributive possessive constructions*



I represent the possible leftward development with dashed lines considering the fact that the analysis presented on the data from Tɔ̀húgbe is to illustrate the rightward development: from juxtaposed constructions to suffixed constructions; and from connective constructions to compound construction (*i.e.* the illustration involving **A+ yóví** term functioning as possessees above).

## 5. Conclusion

The study of attributive possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe reveals that attributive possessive constructions of the dialect are not homogenous in respect to their properties. They can however be grouped into two large groups: syntactically constructed constructions and constructions processed on the syntax/morphology interface. Syntactic attributive possessive constructions are sub-divided into connective constructions and juxtaposed constructions while constructions processed at the syntax/morphology interface are sub-divided into suffixed and compound constructions.

The discussions in this chapter enrich not only the literature on attributive possessive constructions in Ewe, but also, contribute to discussions in typological linguistics. I present some of the contributions that this chapter makes to Ewe linguistics; and then continue to detail how the current chapter sits within discussions in typological linguistics.

In chapter 1, section 1.4, I noted that Tɔ̀nùgbe's distinctive features have been associated with either that of standard Ewe or one of the two dialectal divides of the Ewe language: Inland and coastal dialects. The study of the attributive possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe demonstrates that Tɔ̀nùgbe, similar to all other dialects of the Ewe language, has constructions with the same constituent order. However, the dialect manifests characteristics that are different from the characteristics manifested by the attributive possessive constructions of any of the dialects of the Ewe language. Below, I survey some of the most salient differences between attributive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe and attributive possessive constructions of other dialects.

The major characteristic that distinguishes constructions involving connectives of Tɔ̀nùgbe from constructions involving connectives of other Ewe dialects is the two forms that occur as possessive connectives. As noted in the discussion in section 2.1.2, the distribution of the two forms is different from what pertains in other dialects in which they occur.

Also, constructions involving connectives in Tɔ̀nùgbe have a distinct tone pattern characterizing the possessee slot (see section 2.2).

Constructions in which the possessor is a third person singular in Tɔ̀nùgbe is also different from what pertains in other dialects: in Tɔ̀nùgbe, the possessor is not overtly expressed, whereas in other Ewe dialects, the possessor is overtly expressed.

Juxtaposed constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe on the other hand bring to the fore some of the most intriguing characteristics as compared to the juxtaposed construction in other dialects. The first difference concerns the nouns that occur as possesseees. Also, when the possessor is a third person singular, the double indexation of the possessor (overt expression and the occurrence of the clitic definite article) on ascending kinship terms offers new data for consideration. In addition to this, the subtle differences in encoding paternal and non-paternal ascension terms are different from what pertains in other dialects. Finally, the tone that characterizes the possessee slot of juxtaposed constructions in Tɔ̀nùgbe is different from what occurs in other dialects of the Ewe language. Thus, contrary to what pertains in other Ewe dialects in which a floating high tone is observable (Ameka 1995: 793), in Tɔ̀nùgbe, floating tones occur only when the connective is elided.

Tɔ̀nùgbe attributive possessive constructions that are processed on the syntax/morphology interface also bring new data to the fore. While the referents of the suffixes in suffixed constructions are the same as in other Ewe dialects, compound constructions differ in what is considered a possessive relation. Thus, while in Tɔ̀nùgbe, possessive relation is expressed when possessee is institutionally associated with the possessor noun, in other Ewe dialects, a habitual association between the two nouns can trigger a possessive relation (Ameka 1991: 180).

In addition to this, the Tɔ̀nùgbe compound construction has a feature of high tone for the possessee slot (all syllables of the possessee noun have this tone feature) while other Ewe dialects have a possessive suffix (only the final syllable of the possessee noun has the high tone feature). In sum, not only has the discussion above brought to bear new data, but also, they shed new lights on the features that characterize each construction, the details to be considered when studying the noun types that occur in each possessee slot and more

importantly, the possible paths of development of the various constructions.

The chapter's relatedness to discussions within typological linguistics mainly concerns discussions in relation to what is referred to as the alienability split (connective construction as opposed to non-connective constructions). Indeed, the split in Tɔ̀nùgbe, it has been observed, supports the idea that conceptual distance is iconically reflected in linguistic distance. In addition to conceptual distance, egocentricity has also been identified as contributing to the configuration of constructions in which the possessor is the first and second person singular.

Finally, the discussions touch on the grammaticalization paths of the various constructions. It is worth adding that although many of the spatial relational terms grammaticalize from body-part terms, the two noun types do not occur in the same construction type; and that in syntactic possessive constructions for instance, spatial relational terms occur in juxtaposed constructions (relatively older construction) while body-part terms occur in connective constructions (relatively newer constructions).





## PREDICATIVE POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TỌ̀DÚGBE

**1. Introduction**

Predicative possessive constructions are constructions that have a clausal syntax, with the possessor and the possessee filling argument slots of the verb (Perniss & Zeshan 2008:3). In Tọ̀dúgbẹ̀, different verbs can fill the predicate slot in a predicative possessive construction. The following examples illustrate three different verbs in predicative possessive constructions:

1. **todzó**      **yibɛ-á**                      **nyé**      **ati-tò**  
     cat            black-ART.DEF            be            Ati-PRO.PD  
     ‘The black cat is Ati’s’
  
2. *dàsé álé lès sí*  
**dàsé**            **ále**                      **lè**      **wó**            **sí**  
     witness      ART.INDF            be.at      PRO.3PL      hand  
     ‘They have a witness’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 108.1)
  
3. **ezià-tǔ-ó**                                      **vá**            **kpó**      **gà**  
     poverty-PRO.PR-ART.DEF            VENT            see            money  
     ‘Lit. The poor person come see money’  
     ‘(The poor man became rich)’ (Flex\_Sto: Maw 78.1)

In the discussions that follow, I establish a typology of the different predicative possessive constructions and subdivide them into two major categories: copular possessive constructions, which contain a copular verb (section 2), and locative possessive constructions, which contain most often a locative verbal predicate, but are also compatible with other verbs (section 3). I identify the formal and semantic features that characterize each construction, and that which differentiates it from other constructions that bear similarity to it.

**2. Copular possessive constructions**

In copular predicative possessive constructions, a copular links either the possessor or the possessee to a nominal predicate. Copular predicative possessive constructions occur in two distinct patterns. The two patterns are:

- a. NP (PR) COP NP (PD)-t<sup>ó</sup>  
 b. NP (PD) COP NP (PR)-t<sup>ò</sup>

In the first pattern, the possessor occurs in subject position while the nominal predicate phrase contains the possessee and the possessor suffix which reindexes the possessor, as is illustrated in example (4). In the second pattern, the possessee occurs in subject position while the nominal predicate is composed of the possessor and the dedicated possessee pronoun which reindexes the possessee, as is the case in example (5):

4. *Kofí nyé lāátó*  
**Kofí-é nyé lā-á-tó**  
 Kofi-FOC be animal-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘It is Kofi who is the owner of the animal’
5. *elā-á nyé Kofí-tò*  
 animal-ART.DEF be Kofi-PRO.PD  
 ‘The animal is Kofi’s’

The copulas that occur in copular possessive constructions of Tɔ̀ngugbe are **nyé** ‘be’ and **zù** ‘become’. The two verbs, outside possessive constructions, are used to link a subject to the nominal predicate. Example (6) illustrates the (non possessive) copular use of the verb **nyé** ‘be’; and example (7) demonstrates the (non possessive) copular use of **zù** ‘become’.

6. *wó tàtée nyá kwémútóó*  
**wó tàt-é nyé Akwémú-tó-wó**  
 PRO.3PL father-FOC be Akwamu-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘Lit. Their father was an Akwamu owners’  
 ‘(Their father was an Akwamu)’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 229.1)
7. *wó vá zù tɔ̀nú-tóó,*  
**wó vá zu tɔ̀nú-tó-wó**  
 PRO.3PL VENT become tɔ̀nú-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘Lit.They became Tɔ̀nú owners’  
 (They became Tɔ̀nú)’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1368.1)

When the copula **nyé** ‘be’ occurs in possessive constructions, the constructions convey the idea of permanent possession *i.e.* the meaning expressed by the construction can be stated as ‘possessee belongs to possessor permanently’. On the other hand, when the copula **zù** ‘become’ occurs in possessive constructions, the meaning that is expressed can be glossed as ‘possessee **now** belongs to possessor’ *i.e.* a sort of inchoative belonginess.

8. *avùó nyé mié tò*  
**avu-á**            **nyé**    **mié-tò**  
 dog-ART.DEF    be        PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘The dog is our’s’
9. *avùó zù miétò*  
**avu-á**            **zù**        **mié-tò**  
 dog-ART.DEF    become    PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘The dog is now our’s’

Therefore, possession in constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’ can be described as stative, while possession in constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ can be described as dynamic (since inchoativity is associated with dynamic aktionsarten cf. Dowty 1979). Constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’ are therefore incompatible with the progressive aspect (10), contrary to constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ (11).

10. *?avùó lè mié tò nyé*  
**avu-á**            **lè**        **mié-tò**            **nyé-ń**  
 dog-ART.DEF    COP        PRO.1PL-PRO.PD    be-PROG  
 ‘The dog is being our’s’
11. *avùó lè miétò zù*  
**avu-á**            **lè**        **mié-tò**            **zù-ń**  
 dog-ART.DEF    COP        PRO.1PL-PRO.PD    become-PROG  
 ‘The dog is gradually becoming our’s’

In addition to expressing inchoative belonginess, constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ are compatible with the idea of ‘prior possession in relation to present possession’ *i.e.* ‘reappropriation’.

Consequently, constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ can co-occur with the verb **tró** ‘get back’, which indicates the ‘the transfer of possessee from past possessor to present possessor’ *i.e.* possessee was possessed by present possessor; present possessor lost it to another possessor; present possessor possesses possessee again. On the contrary, constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’ do not express ‘reappropriation’. Hence, when **tró** ‘get back’ is inserted into constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’, the construction is odd *i.e.* permanently possessed items cannot be reappropriated.

12. *avùó tró zù miétò*

**avù-á**            **tró**            **zù**            **mié-tò**  
 dog-ART.DEF    get.back    become    PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘The dog is now our’s (after we lost it to someone else)’

13. *?avùó tró nyé mié tò*

**avu-á**            **tró**            **nyé**        **mié-tò**  
 dog-ART.DEF    get.back    be        PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘The dog is our’s (after we lost it to someone else)’

Concerning the structure of both construction types, as stated above, the nominal predicate that occurs in post-copular position is a ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’ that involves either the dedicated possessee pronoun **tò** (see chapter 3, sub-section 2.2) or the possessor suffix **tó** (see chapter 3, section 3.1). I will successively present constructions that involve the dedicated possessee pronoun (section 2.1) and constructions that involve the possessor suffix (section 2.2).

### 2.1. Constructions with dedicated possessee pronoun

In copular possessive constructions involving the possessee pronoun, the possessee occurs as the subject of the construction while the possessor is part of the ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’ *i.e.* the nominal predicate. Witness the constituent order in the following constructions in which the dedicated possessee pronoun occurs in the mini-attributive possessive construction:

14. *egbòó nyé miétò*  
**egbò-á**            **nyé**        **mié-tò**  
 goat-ART.DEF    be        PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘The goat is ours’

15. **é**            **zù**            **wó-tò**  
 PRO.3SG    become    PRO.3PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘It is now theirs’

Nouns that occur as possessees in subject position of these constructions are non-relational nouns. Hence, when relational nouns such as body-parts, spatial relation terms, kinship terms and socio-culturally relational terms are inserted into the possessee slot, the construction is infelicitous.

16. *tòdzóó nyé ñùtsùò tò*  
**tòdzó-á**            **nyé**        **ñùtsù-á-tò**  
 cat-ART.DEF    be        man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD  
 ‘The cat is the man’s’

17. **\*abò/dzì/esrò-á**            **nyé**        **ñùtsù-á-tò**  
 hand/top/spouse-ART.DEF    be        man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD  
 ‘The hand/top/wife is the man’s’

Moreover, the possessee in this construction, typically, is definite. As such, definite markers (articles, demonstratives etc.) occur in the possessee phrase. Therefore, when the definite marker that occurs with the possessee in example (16) above is eliminated, the resultant construction is odd (18).

18. **?tòdzó**        **nyé**        **ñùtsù-á-tò**  
 cat            be        man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD  
 ‘Cat is the man’s’

The possessee in these constructions is reindexed in the ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’ that occurs as the nominal predicate *i.e.* the possessee is expressed twice: overtly as the subject, and reindexed with the pronoun in the noun phrase that occurs post-

copularly to function as the nominal predicate. Evidence in favor of the assertion comes from the fact that, when the possessee is expressed by a noun, the construction can be paraphrased such that in the paraphrased version, the possessee replaces the dedicated possessee pronoun in the mini-attributive possessive construction. Witness below example (19) and its corresponding paraphrase (20):

19. *egbɔ́ nyé mié-tò*  
**egbɔ́-á**            **nyé**        **mié-tò**  
 goat-ART.DEF    be            PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘The goat is ours’                            (=14)
20. *egbɔ́ nyé miéó gbó*  
**egbɔ́-á**            **nyé**        **mié**        **wó**        **gbó**  
 goat-ART.DEF    be            PRO.1PL    POSS    goat  
 ‘The goat is our goat’

Concentrating on the ‘mini attributive possessive construction’ that functions as the nominal predicate, its constituent order is the same as in juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions (see chapter 3, section 2.2. for a detailed discussion on juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions). As such, when the possessor is the first or second person singular pronominal possessor, the possessor follows the dedicated possessee pronoun. In all other instances, the possessor precedes the possessee pronoun. Witness the constituent order in the ‘mini-attributive constructions’ of the following constructions:

21. *enū́ kúlá zù tò*  
**enū́-á**            **kúlá**    **zù**            **é-tò**  
 thing-ART.DEF    all        become    PRO.3SG-PRO.PD  
 ‘Everything belongs to him’    (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1450.1)
22. *enū́ kúlá zù tò nyè*  
**enū́-á**            **kúlá**    **zù**            **tò-nyè**  
 thing-ART.DEF    all        become    PRO.PD-PRO.1SG  
 ‘Everything belongs to me’

Indeed, the mini attributive construction is a juxtaposed construction. Consequently, a modifier can occur between the two constituents; this

is why I consistently refer to it as a noun phrase. Witness how the first person plural possessor is further modified by the quantifying phrase **ame evè** ‘two people’ and the definite article in the example below.

23. *nūqúqú nyé mià mè viétò*  
**nūqúqú-á**      **nyé**      **mì**      **ame**      **evè-á**  
 food-ART.DEF    be      PRO.2PL    person    two-ART.DEF  
**-tò**  
 PRO.PD  
 ‘The food is for the two of you’

Finally, the double indexation of the possessee in these constructions has consequences on the meaning that is expressed by the construction: emphasis is placed on the possessee as compared to other constituents. Hence, in these constructions, the possessee can be focused; whereas the possessors cannot, but are backgrounded.

24. *egbɔ́ɔ́ nyé miétò*  
**egbɔ́-á-é**              **nyé**      **mié-tò**  
 goat-ART.DEF-FOC    be      PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
 ‘It is a goat that is ours’

25. \**miéé nyé egbɔ́ɔ́*  
**mié -é**              **nyé**      **egbɔ́-á-tò**  
 PRO.1PL-FOC    be      goat-ART.DEF-PRO.PD  
 ‘It is we that are the goat’s’

It should be noted however, that the ‘mini attributive possessive construction’ as a whole can be focused. When the mini-attributive construction is focused, the copular construction composed of the copula and the nominal predicate can be either conserved (26) or elided (27).

26. **mié-tò**              **-é**      **nyé**      **gbɔ**  
 PRO.1PL-PRO.PD    -FOC    be      goat  
 ‘Ours is a goat’

27. **mié-t̩**                      **-yó**  
 PRO.1PL-PRO.PD      -FOC  
 ‘it is ours’

Given the fact that this construction highlights the possessee and that the possessee pronoun of the mini-attributive possessive construction cross-references the possessee, it is no surprise that the mini-attributive possessive construction can be focused, but not the possessor alone.

## 2.2. Constructions with possessor suffix

In copular possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix, the possessor occurs in subject position while the possessee (which typically occurs with a determiner) occurs in the mini-attributive possessive construction (in which the possessor suffix occurs as well). The examples below illustrate the kind of construction that is under investigation in this section.

28. *Kofí nyé gbóótó*  
**Kofí-é**    **nyé**    **gbó-á-t̩**  
 Kofi-FOC   be    goat-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘Kofi is the owner of the goat’
29. *Kofí zù afiétó*  
**Kofí**    **zù**            **afē-á-t̩**  
 Kofi    become    house-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘Kofi now owns the house’

Possessors in these constructions can be nominal or pronominal. When the possessor is expressed by a noun and the copular **nyé** ‘be’ occurs in the COP slot, the possessor often occurs with the focus maker, as demonstrated below.

30. *edzì nyá nyìgbáátó*  
**edzì-é**    **nyé**    **anyìgbá-á-t̩**  
 Edzi-FOC   be    land-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘Edzi is the owner of the land’



More importantly, when the possessor is a pronominal and the copular is **nyé** ‘be’, although the possessor is in subject position, independent pronouns, instead of subject pronouns, occur as pronominal possessors (see Chapter 1, section 4.1.3. for details on pronouns in Tɔŋúgbe). Witness the following constructions:

31. *miáwó nyé zìkpíétóó*  
**miáwó**      **nyé**      **zìkpé-á-tó-wó**  
 PRO.IND.3PL    be      stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘It is we that own the stool’
32. *?mí nyé zìkpíétóó*  
**mí**              **nyé**      **zìkpi-á-tó-wó**  
 PRO.SBJ.3PL    be      stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘we own the stool’

On the other hand, when the possessor is a pronoun and the copula is the verb **zù** ‘become’, both subject and independent pronouns can occur as possessors.

33. *mí zù zìkpíétóó*  
**mí**              **zù**              **zìkpi-á-tó-wó**  
 PRO.SUBJ.1PL    become    stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘We now own the stool’
34. *miáwó zù zìkpíétóó*  
**miáwó**          **zù**              **zìkpi-á-tó-wó**  
 PRO.IND.1PL    become    stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘We own the stool now’

Concentrating on the mini-attributive possessive construction that occurs in nominal predicate position, it is composed of the possessee and a possessor suffix. Possesseees are nominal and are followed by the possessor suffix. Pronominal possesseees do not occur in the construction. As such, when a pronoun occurs in the ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’, the construction is interpreted as a construction of other Ewe dialects. Example (35) and (36) below, in which the third person singular pronoun occurs in the mini-attributive

possessive construction, is thus interpreted as a construction of other Ewe dialects and not a Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe construction.

35. **miáwó-é nyé é-tɔ́-wó**  
 PRO.1PL-FOC be PRO.3SG-father-PL  
 ‘We are his/her fathers’

36. **mí zù é-tɔ́-wó**  
 PRO.1PL become PRO.3SG-father-PL  
 ‘We are his/her fathers now’

In chapter 3 section 3.1, I demonstrated that there are three possessor suffixes in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, *viz.* **tɔ́**, **nɔ̀** and **sì**. In copular predicative possessive constructions, only the suffix **tɔ́** occurs in the mini-attributive possessive construction. Thus, when the other possessor suffixes occur, the constructions express property attribution (see section 2.3.2. below for details). Witness the following examples:

37. *mékàé nyá gbāá tóó?*  
**amekà -é nyé agbā-á-tɔ́-ó**  
 who FOC be bowl-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-Q  
 ‘Who does the bowl belong to?’

38. *mékàé nyá yènòó?*  
**amekà -é nyé ayè-nò-ó?**  
 who FOC be trickery-PRO.PR-Q  
 ‘Who is a fool?’

The possessor suffix **tɔ́** in the mini-attributive construction cross-references the possessor. Therefore, when the construction is paraphrased with a focused attributive construction, the possessive suffix is eliminated from the construction, *i.e.* the possessor suffix does not co-occur with the possessor in the paraphrased construction since the suffix is a reindexation of the possessor. Thus, example (39) below, can be paraphrased as (40).

39. **Améví zu agblè-á-tǔ**  
 Amevi become farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘Amevi has assumed ownership of the farm’
40. **Améví wó agblè yó**  
 Amevi POSS farm FOC  
 ‘It’s Amevi’s farm’

Finally, as in the case of constructions involving the dedicated possessee pronoun, the mini-attributive possessive construction in which the possessor suffix occurs, is a (grammaticalized) juxtaposed attributive possessive construction *i.e.* it is a suffixed attributive possessive construction (see chapter 3 section 3.1 for details on suffixed attributive possessive constructions) As such, modifiers and determiners occur between the possessee noun and the possessor suffix. When the definite article, for instance, is eliminated from the mini-attributive possessive construction, the construction is interpreted as a copulative sentence without a proper possessive meaning, as will be shown below in section (2.3.). Witness the following examples:

41. *miǔwóé nyé amiétǔǔ*  
**miáwó-é nyé ame-á-tǔ-wó**  
 PRO.1PL-FOC be person-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘Lit. We are the person’s owner’  
 ‘(We own the deceased)’
42. *miǔwóé nyé ametǔǔ*  
**miáwó-é nyé ame-tǔ-wó**  
 PRO.1PL-FOC be person-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘We are the chief mourners’

Concerning the meaning expressed by the construction, contrary to constructions with the dedicated possessee pronoun (which highlight the role of the possessee noun), constructions in which the possessor suffix is involved in the mini-attributive possessive constructions foreground the possessor. This is evidenced by the fact that, as

illustrated by example (41) above, in these constructions, the possessor can occur with a focus marker.

It should be noted however that, as is the case in constructions with the dedicated possessee pronoun, in constructions involving the verb **nyé** ‘be’, the mini-attributive possessive construction as a whole can be focused, but not any of its individual constituents. Witness the following constructions:

43. *Améví nyé agblèátó*  
**Améví-é**      **nyé**      **agblè-á-tó**  
 Amevi-FOC    be            farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘It is Amevi who owns the farm’
44. *agblèátóé nyá méví*  
**agblè-á-tó-é**                      **nyé**      **améví**  
 farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-FOC    be            Amevi  
 ‘The owner of the farm is Amevi’

### 2.3. Copular possessive constructions and copular constructions

In this section, I discuss the constructions surveyed up to this point in a larger framework of constructions that involve the same copulars. I first of all situate the constructions surveyed in general Ewe syntax (section 2.3.1); and then continue to isolate copular possessive constructions from other syntactically similar constructions (section 2.3.2)

#### 2.3.1. The variety of copular possessive constructions

Heine (1997: 124) observes that Ewe has one major copular possessive construction *viz.* the construction that occurs with the copular **nyé** ‘be’; and that this construction occurs with the dedicated possessee pronoun. He adds that this major construction expresses the idea of a ‘possessee belonging to a possessor’.

As I have demonstrated in the two preceding sections, copular possessive constructions are more diverse. First, besides the copula **nyé** ‘be’, another copular, **zù** ‘become’ can also occur in this



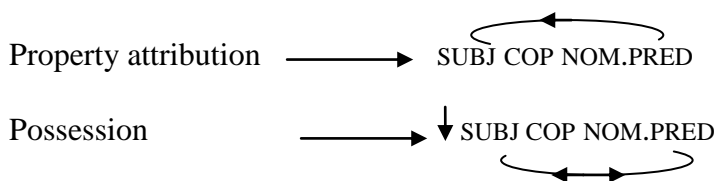
47. **gíyíé vá zù gǎ-tǔ**  
 DEM VENT become:PST big-PRO.PR  
 ‘This place became the bigger one’ (Flex\_Sto : Azi 72.1)

48. **wó zù evègbè-tǔ-wó**  
 PRO.3PL become ewe.language-PRO.PR-PL  
 ‘They became Ewes’

The discussions that follow deal with the distinction between these latter constructions and copular possessive constructions in which the possessor suffix occurs in the nominal predicate position.

The two constructions have the same constituent order, but express different relations between the subject and the nominal predicate. In the former constructions, the nominal predicate is conceived as a property that is attributed to the subject *i.e.* the nominal predicate gives more descriptive information about the nominal referent that occurs in subject position.

In the copular possessive construction, two referential entities are in a relationship (the fact that the possessee occurs with a determiner is testament to the fact that the possessee is referential. See section 2.2 for further details). Indeed, the difference between the relations expressed in property attributing copular constructions and copular possessive constructions can be represented as follows:



The difference in the relationship expressed in the two constructions can be made explicit through restatements. When the nominal predicate and the subject of property attributing constructions are restated within one noun phrase, they occur in an apposition in which the noun corresponding to the subject occurs as the head while the sequence “noun + possessor suffix” corresponding to the nominal predicate occurs as the appositive.

For instance, in Mepe (the community where I did fieldwork), at traditional gatherings, a couplet is often sung in order to incite people to give for worthy causes. Mostly, it is expected of the rich to give more while the poor give less. In order to coerce the rich to give; a praise song is sung by the master of ceremony. In this praise song, the name of the rich person is mentioned as a head of an apposition (the name of the rich person in the corresponding copular construction occurs in subject position). Example (49) illustrates the praise song, while example (51) illustrates the copular variant of the praise song.

49. **gà-tǔ**                      **gà-tǔ!**                      [**Kofi** **gà-tǔ**]  
 money-PRO.PR    money-PRO.PR    Kofi    money-PRO.PR  
 ‘Rich person, rich person! Kofi the rich person’
50. **?gà-tǔ**                      **gà-tǔ!**                      [**gà-tǔ**                      **Kofi**]  
 money-PRO.PR    money-PRO.PR    money-PRO.PR    Kofi  
 ‘Rich person, rich person! rich person Kofi’
51. **Kofi nyé**                      **gà-tǔ**  
 Kofi    be                      money-PRO.POSS  
 ‘Kofi is rich’

On the contrary, in copular possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix, when the nominal predicate and the subject are restated within one noun phrase, the sequence “noun + possessor suffix” corresponding to the nominal predicate occurs as the head while the noun corresponding to the subject occurs as the appositive. Witness the following examples:

52. **afē-tó**                      **Kofi**  
 house-PRO.PR    Kofi  
 ‘Lit. Home-owner Kofi’  
 ‘(Mister Kofi)’
53. **Kofi**                      **zù**                      **afē-tó**  
 Kofi    become    house-PRO.PR  
 ‘Kofi now owns a house’

A second distinction between the two constructions is that, in copular possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix, the nominal predicate is a syntactically processed unit *i.e.* it is a noun phrase, while the nominal predicate of property attributing copular constructions can be argued to be constructed in morphology *i.e.* it is a lexical unit. Consequently, while modifiers and determiners can occur in the nominal predicates of the possessive constructions (see section 2.2. above for further details), modifiers and determiners do not occur in the nominal predicate of the property attributing constructions.

Example (54) illustrates a copular possessive construction in which modifiers occur between the possessee and the possessor suffix, while example (55) shows how the property attributing copular construction involving the possessor suffix is incompatible with modifiers relating to the possessee noun contained in the nominal predicate.

54. **é zù [elā gǎ má tó ]**  
 PRO.3SG become animal big DEM PRO.PR  
 ‘He/She now owns that big animal’
55. **?é zù [gà gǎ má -tó]**  
 PRO.3SG become money many DEM PRO.PR  
 ‘He/She has become worthy’

Thus it can be considered that the fact that the mini-attributive possessive construction of copular possessive constructions is a syntactically constructed construction is critical to its possessive meaning.

#### 2.4. Copular possessive constructions and attributive possessive constructions

It has been shown in section 2.3 that in copular possessive constructions, the mini-attributive possessive construction in the nominal predicate slot is syntactically constructed. This is in contrast to property attributing copular constructions containing a possessor suffix in which the nominal predicate slot is occupied by a morphologically constructed unit. It can be tempting thence to consider that copular possessive constructions are clausal



instantiations of juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions (see chapter 3, section 2.2. for a discussion of juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions and the features that characterize them).

In this sub-section, I argue that although juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions and the mini-attributive possessive constructions of copular constructions share many features, they also exhibit differences, and so these two constructions cannot be assimilated to one another. I first present the similarities between both structures, and next their distinctive features.

- *The similarities*

Apart from the syntactic similarity mentioned above, *i.e.* in the mini-attributive possessive construction of copular possessive constructions and juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions, both construction types also have the same tone features. Given that possessees are replaced in constructions involving the dedicated possessee pronoun, and that possessor slots have no tone feature in these constructions, the construction types relevant for the tones that characterize both constructions are constructions in which the possessor suffix occurs.

In the mini attributive possessive construction of copular possessive constructions as well as juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix (see chapter 3, section 3.3. for details on the tone characteristic of attributive possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix), no specific tone characterizes the possessee slot. Therefore, every noun that occurs as possessee has the same tone in the possessive construction as it has when in isolation (see chapter 1, section 2.2. for details on the different tones of Tɔ̀nùgbe). Witness the tones on the possessee in example (56) and (57):

56. *enyà/ayí*      *enyèé nyé nyàátó/ayíétó*  
**enyà/ayí**      **enyè-é**      **nyé**      **enyà-á-tó/**  
 PRO.1SG-FOC      be      issue-ART.DEF- PRO.PR  
**ayí-á-tó**  
 bean-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘I own the case/beans’

57. *afē/gàsǔ enyèé nyá fīétó / gàsǔótó*  
**afē/gàsǔ enyè-é nyé afē-á-tó /**  
 PRO.1SG-FOC be house-ART.DEF- PRO.PR  
**gàsǔ-ǔ-tó**  
 bicycle-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘I own the house/bicycle’

- *The differences*

Besides the similarity in syntax and tone characteristics, the two constructions have distinctive features, with respect to the type of nouns that occur as possessives in both constructions: non-relational nouns and body-part terms are possible in both constructions, whereas the socio-culturally relational term **esrò** ‘spouse’ and the kinship term **evī** ‘child’ occur only in the attributive possessive construction, but not in the mini-attributive possessive construction of the copular possessive construction. When these nouns occur as possessives in the mini-attributive possessive construction, the construction expresses property attribution, as is illustrated in the examples (58) and (59).

58. **mè zù vī-tó**  
 PRO.1SG become child-PRO.PR  
 ‘I am a parent’

59. **esrò-tó mè nyé**  
 spouse-PRO.PR PRO.1SG be  
 ‘I am a married person’

Consequently, as is the case in copular constructions involving possessor suffixes that express property attribution, the examples (60) and (61) do not allow the insertion of modifiers and determiners between the noun and the possessor suffix in the nominal predicate position.

60. **?mè zù vī-é-tó**  
 PRO.1SG become child-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
 ‘I am a parent’

61. ?**esrò-ḡ-tó**                      **mè**              **nyé**  
 spouse-ART.DEF-PRO.PR    PRO.1SG    be  
 ‘I am a married person’

The misaligned distribution of the socio-culturally relational term **esrò** ‘spouse’ and the kinship term **evī** ‘child’, I suggest, is illustrative of the basic difference between copular possessive constructions and juxtaposed possessive constructions. The socio-culturally relational term and the kinship term do not occur in the copular possessive construction because the copular possessive construction conveys the explicit statement of a possessive relationship between two participants that are construed as independent, *i.e.* body-part terms and non-relational nouns (see chapter 3, section 2.4.2.1 for nouns that are systematically construed as conceptually independent of possessors; and nouns that are occasionally construed as such). In other words, in the copular possessive construction, this relation between possessor and possessee, established by the verbal predicate, is the very object of the assertion, whereas in the attributive possessive construction, the possessive relationship is presupposed (Stassen 2009: 26).

### 3. Locative possessive constructions

Locative possessive constructions mostly involve the locative predicate **lè/nò**. In these constructions, the possessee occurs in subject position while the possessor headed by an adposition occurs in complement position. Example (62) below illustrates a locative possessive construction in Tḡḡbe.

62. *ékié mé lé síò*  
**é-kié**              **mé**    **lè**              **é**              **sí**              **ò**  
 PRO.3SG-DEM    NEG    be.at              PRO.3SG    hand    NEG  
 ‘He/she does not have this’ (Flex\_Nar: Fam 74.1)

The locative predicate has two forms: **lè** ‘be.at:PRS’ or **nò** ‘be.at:PST’. The form **lè** ‘be.at:PRS’ occurs in constructions that associate possession with the feature of present tense; while the form **nò** ‘be.at:PST’ occurs in constructions that are non-present. Thus, the non-present variant of example (62) is example (63).

63. *ékié mé nò sí*  
**é-kié**            **mé**    **nò**            **é**            **sí**    **ò**  
 PRO.3SG-DEM    NEG    be.at:PST    PRO.3SG    hand    NEG  
 ‘He/she did not have this’

In addition to occurring in constructions that express non-present possession, the form **nò** ‘be.at:PST’ also occurs when some modal and aspectual markers occur in the verb phrase (see chapter 1, section 4.2. for details on aspectual and modal markers in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe). The markers concerned are any of the preverbal markers of the obligatory categories of the verb, *i.e.* the potential marker and the subjunctive marker (cf. Ameka 2008:141 for a useful discussion of such categories in Ewe) and post-verb modal-aspectual markers *i.e.* progressive, prospective and habitual markers. When these markers occur in the verb phrase, the form **nò** is used, instead of **lè**. Witness the following constructions in which the potential and habitual marker do not occur with the present form of the locative predicate, but rather with the past form of the locative predicate.

64. **ɔ̀sɛ́**    **á**lɛ́            (**\*là**)    **lè**            (**\*á**)    **wó**            **sí**  
 witness    ART.INDF    POT    be.at    HAB    PRO.3PL    hand  
 ‘They have a certain witness’    (=2)
65. **ɔ̀sɛ́**    **á**lɛ́            **là**            **nò**            **wó**            **sí**  
 witness    ART.INDF    POT    be.at:PST    PRO.3PL    hand  
 ‘They should have a witness’
66. *ɔ̀sɛ́ álɛ́ nòwó sí*  
**ɔ̀sɛ́**    **á**lɛ́            **nò-á**            **wó**            **sí**  
 witness    ART.INDF    be.at:PST-HAB    PRO.3PL    hand  
 ‘They always have a witness’

Concerning the complement of the locative predicate, it is composed of the possessor and an adposition (see chapter 1, section 4.3 for details on adpositions in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe). Possessors are prototypically

animate nouns<sup>31</sup>. However, in anthropomorphic usage, inanimate nouns can occur as possessors. Thus, where the inanimate noun is construed as an entity with human abilities, the construction is felicitous. In example (67) for instance, which is a common idiom that people that suffer injustices utter, the *egè* ‘beard’ is conceived of as a person who can have his personal experiences, but is unable to talk.

67. [enyà lè gè sǐ] káfé ló  
 issue be.at beard hand before PART  
 ‘The beard also has experiences’

The nature of the adposition that occurs with the possessor motivates a two-way grouping of locative possessive constructions. The adposition can be a postposition (67) or it can be a preposition, for instance the dative marker in example (68):

68. nyànú lè xò né dǒtsé  
 woman be.at room DAT Dotse  
 ‘Dotse has a woman in his room’

I will successively present constructions that involve postpositions (section 3.1) and constructions that involve prepositions (section 3.2).

### 3.1. Locative possessive constructions with postpositions

Locative possessive constructions with postpositions express stative possession. In these constructions, the possessee is construed as located in a space, which is referred to by the postpositional phrase. The postpositional phrase of a locative possessive construction therefore functions just as an adverbial of spatial location. It is known that although locative adverbials generally follow verbs of movement (69), they precede the verb in prospective constructions (70).

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<sup>31</sup> There are notable exceptions to this statement. For instance, in constructions involving *nyú* ‘skin’, inanimate nouns can occur as possessors.

69. *avūó v́á gámá*  
**avūá**                      **v́á**                      **gámá**  
 dog-ART.DEF      come:PST      DEM  
 ‘The dog came there’      (Flex\_Ext: Des 8.1)
70. *avūó lè gámá v́á gé*  
**avū-á**                      **lè**                      **gámá**      **v́á**      **gé**  
 dog-ART.DEF      COP      DEM      come      PROSP  
 ‘The dog will come there’

Similarly, the postpositional phrase of locative possessive constructions follows the locative predicate in example (71) but precedes the locative predicate in ingressive contexts (72).

71. *nàné nò sí*  
**nàné**                      **nò**                      **é**                      **sí**  
 something      be.at.PST      PRO.3SG      hand  
 ‘She had something’      (Flex\_Ext: Viv 3.1)
72. *nàné lé sí nò gé*  
**nàné**                      **lè**                      **é**                      **sí**      **nò**                      **gé**  
 something      COP      PRO.3SG      hand      be.at:PST      PROSP  
 ‘She will be having something’

Structurally, in locative possessive constructions with postpositions, the possessor is the dependent of a postpositional phrase that functions as the complement of the verb.

73. *[enyà lè gè sí] káfé ló*  
 issue      be.at      beard      hand      before      PART  
 ‘The beard also has its experiences’ (=67)

The possessor mostly precedes the postposition. However, when the possessor is a pronoun, the order of constituents is similar to what occurs in juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions in which pronouns occur as possessors (see chapter 3, section 2.2). As such, when the third person singular and plural pronouns occur as

possessors, the order of constituents is POSSESSOR-ADPOSITION. On the other hand, when the possessor is the first or second person singular, the order of constituents is ADPOSITION-POSSESSOR. Witness the order of constituents of the phrase that occurs in complement position in the following constructions:

74. *evī dèkǎ kǒ lèé sí*  
**evī** **dèkǎ** **ko-é** **lè** **é** **sí**  
 child one only-FOC be.at PRO.3SG hand  
 ‘She had only one child’ (Flex\_Ext: Viv 2.1)
75. **evī** **lè** **asī-wò**  
 child be.at hand-PRO.2SG  
 ‘You have a child’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 279.1)

Different postpositions occur in the locative possessive construction. The most frequent among these postpositions are **así** ‘hand’ **ɲú** ‘skin’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’, **dzi** ‘upper.surface/top’, and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’.

76. **evī** **lè** **kodzó** **sí**  
 child be.at Kodzo hand  
 ‘Kodzo has a child’
77. **egà** **lè** **míé** **ɲú**  
 money be.at PRO.1PL skin  
 ‘We have money (on us)’
78. **é** **lè** **gbò** **wò-à?**  
 PRO.3SG be.at vicinity PRO.2SG-Q  
 ‘Do you have it/is it with you?’
79. **edɔ** **lè** **dzi** **-nyè**  
 work be.at top PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have work (to do)’

80. *edzrè lè mié dòmé*  
**edzrè lè mié dòmè-é**  
 fight be.at PRO.1PL mid.section-PRO.3SG  
 ‘We have a fight (to pick)’

Below, I present the constructions with each of these postpositions. I attempt to describe the features that characterize constructions in which each of these postpositions occur, and also, attempt to capture subtle distinctions in the possessive meanings that they express.

### 3.1.1. Locative possessive constructions with así

Locative possessive constructions in which así ‘hand’ occurs as the postposition in the complement, are the most common in Tɔ̀ṅúgbe. An example is provided in (81).

81. *wó lè nyànūvié sí*  
**wó lè nyànūví-á sí**  
 PRO.3SG be.at girl-ART.DEF hand  
 ‘The girl has them’ (Flex\_Ext: Ven 7.1)

Although the postposition así ‘hand’ grammaticalized from the body-part term ‘hand’, the postposition does not signal the ‘hand area’ but rather ‘a space relative to the possessor’ because the source meaning has largely bleached out. Therefore, the postposition así ‘hand’ of locative possessive constructions, contrary to the body-part term ‘hand’, cannot occur in an attributive possessive construction involving the possessive connective (see chapter 3, section 2.1. for details on connective constructions). Witness the following examples.

82. *nyànūvié wá sí*  
**nyànūví-á wó así**  
 girl-ART.DEF POSS hand  
 ‘The girl’s hand’
83. *?wó lè nyànūvié wá sí*  
**wó lè nyànūví-á wó así**  
 PRO.3SG be.at girl-ART.DEF POSS hand  
 ‘They are at the hand of the girl’



This semantic erosion in the grammaticalization process from the body-part noun **así** to the adpositional **así**, as it is used in locative possessive constructions, goes along with phonetic erosion. Indeed, apart from instances where the possessor is either the first or the second person possessor, the residue noun prefix, **a**, is generally elided, in the locative possessive construction<sup>32</sup>. Witness the following examples:

84. **egà**    **lè**    **así-nyè**  
 money be.at hand-PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have money’
85. *evī dèkǎ lé sí*  
**evī**    **dèkǎ**    **lè**    **é**    **sí**  
 child one be.at PRO.3SG hand  
 ‘She has one child’

Since the adposition **así** ‘hand’ conveys the feature of possession, other verbs can occur in place of the locative predicative when the adpositional phrase in the construction is headed by **así** ‘hand’. Witness the example below:

86. *kòtokúú vá ká asì wò-à?*  
**kòtokú-á**    **vá**    **ká**    **así**    **wò-à?**  
 jute bag-ART.DEF VENT contact hand PRO.2SG-Q  
 ‘Have you received the jute bag?’  
 ‘(Do you have the jute bag?)’

The verbs that are involved are achievement verbs such as **ká** ‘contact’ (86), **sù** ‘suffixe’ (87) and **dó** ‘reach’ (88).

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<sup>32</sup> The inverse is what is expected. See chapter 1, section 2.3.1 for details on the elision processes that concern residue noun prefixes

87. **enū**    **yìé**    **dí**                      **mè**        **lè**        **sù**  
 thing    REL    look.for:PROG    PRO.1SG    COP    suffice  
**así**    **nyè**  
 hand    PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have what I am looking for’
88. *egà dō dèvīé sí vò tá é tá wòwí wòwó*  
**[egà**        **dó**        **dèvī-á**                      **sí]**        **vò**        **tá**  
 money        reach    child-ART.DEF        hand        finish    so  
**é**            **tá**        **wòwí**        **wòwó**  
 PRO.3SG    start    pomposity    do  
 ‘The guy now has money so he is being pompous’

Contrary to what pertains in constructions in which the locative predicate occurs *i.e.* these constructions expresses stative predicative possession, when these other verbs occur in lieu of the locative predicate with the postpositional phrase headed by **así** ‘hand’, possession is construed as being inchoative.

Because the adposition **así** ‘hand’ is a highly grammaticalized marker of possession, it plays the role of default expression of the possessor space in the locative possessive construction. Consequently, in contrast with the adposition **así** ‘hand’, when other adpositions occur in the locative possessive construction, the possessive meaning is either subject to contextual constraints or obtained by pragmatic inference. Thus, when other postpositions occur in the locative possessive construction, the construction is characterized by various constraints; and the meanings expressed are very restricted. Below, I present the features that characterize the locative possessive construction with the adpositions **ɲú** ‘skin’, **dzí** ‘upper.surface/top’, **gbó** ‘vicinity’ and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’.

### 3.1.2. Locative possessive constructions with **ɲú**

Locative possessive constructions in which **ɲú** ‘skin’ occurs as the head of the postpositional phrase in complement position are less common as compared to constructions with **así** ‘hand’. An example is given in (89).

89. *gódóó dzà etrè álé lé ηύ*  
**gódóó**            **dzà**    **etrè**    **ále**            **lè**  
 by.all.means    unless    deity    ART.INDEF    be.at  
**é**                    **ηύ**  
 PRO.3SG    skin  
 ‘It must have a deity’ (Flex\_Sto: Azi 1359.1)

The postposition **ηύ** ‘skin’ derives from the noun **ηύτί** ‘skin’ by a grammaticalization process, characterized by phonetic erosion and semantic bleaching (Hopper & Traugott 2003). With respect to its phonetic form, **ηύτί** ‘skin’ and **ηύ** ‘skin’ are in free variation in postpositional uses. Witness the following examples:

90. *tòdzó tètè lé ητί*  
**tòdzó**    **tètè**            **lé**    **é**            **ητί**  
 cat    draw.close    at    PRO.3SG    skin  
 ‘The cat drew closer to it’ (Flex\_Ext: Ven 11.1)
91. *tòdzó tètè lé ηύ*  
**tòdzó**    **tètè**            **lé**    **é**            **ηύ**  
 cat    draw.close    at    PRO.3SG    skin  
 ‘The cat drew closer to it’

However, the tendency is to use the reduced form **ηύ** ‘skin’ as a postposition whereas only the non-reduced form **ηύτί** ‘skin’ is used as a noun. Witness the following examples:

92. **ηύτί**    **fiè-m**  
 skin    itch-PRO.1SG  
 ‘My skin tched’
93. **\*ηύ**    **fiè-m**  
 skin    itch-PRO.1SG  
 ‘My skin itched’

As to its meaning, the grammaticalization process involves a transformation of the concrete lexical meaning ‘skin’ into a more abstract grammatical meaning: when the adposition **ηύ** ‘skin’ occurs

in the locative possessive construction, it signals the ‘total surface area’ of the possessor.

Thus, constructions in which **ɲú** ‘skin’ occurs, construe the possessee as being in the surface area of the possessor *i.e.* the possessee is in a part of the possessor. Consequently, locative possessive constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ express part-whole relations. Nouns that prototypically occur as possesseees are therefore body-part terms. In example (94) below, which is the ending of a famous folktale that tries to explain why the crab has no head, the possessee **etá** ‘head’ is in a part-whole relation with the possessor **agàlá** ‘crab’.

94. *enū yiétá etá mé lè agàlá ɲùò lá*  
**enū**    **yié-tá**        **etá**    **mé**    **lè**    **agàlá**  
 thing    DEM-head    head    NEG    be.at    crab  
**ɲú**    **ò**    **lá**  
 skin    NEG    PART  
 ‘This is the reason why the crab has no head’

Non-relational nouns can also occur in subject position of the locative possessive constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’, and their referent is then construed as being in a part of the possessor, which means that the construction induces the possessive meaning. However, it is to be noted that in such instances, the construction is ambiguous between a possessive and locative meaning. Therefore, example (95) below, can mean not only ‘I have money on me’, but also ‘some money is on me’.

95. **egà**        **lè**        **ɲū-nyè**  
 money    be.at    skin-PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have money on me’  
 ‘Money is on me’

Because of this ambiguity, the possession that is expressed by constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’, and in which a non-relational noun occurs as the possessee, can be negated. For instance, example (95) above can be negated as illustrated in (96) below.

96. **egà**    **lè**    **ḡū-nyè**    **gàkē**    **mé**    **nyé**  
 money    be.at    skin-PRO.1SG    but    PRO.3SG.NEG    be  
**tò-nyè**                    **yó**    **ò**  
 PRO.PD-PRO.1SG    FOC    NEG  
 ‘I have money on me, but it is not mine’

In other words, the construction does not inherently express possession but rather location. The possessive meaning can however be obtained by pragmatic inference (Traugott & Dasher 2002), either from the semantics of the noun in subject position, in the case of body-part terms, expressing a part-whole relation, or from the relationship of physical contiguity expressed by the postposition **ḡú** *i.e.* location in the surface area of the dependent of the postpositional phrase.

### 3.1.3. Locative possessive constructions with **dzí**

Constructions in which the postposition **dzí** ‘upper.surface/top’ occurs as the head of the adpositional phrase in complement position, and which express possession are also not very common in Tḡḡgbe. An example is provided in (97).

97. **ekū**    **lè**    **dzì**    **-nyè**  
 load    be.at    top    -PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have a funeral (responsibility)’

When these constructions express possession, they express the idea that the possessor has an obligation to perform a certain responsibility. Indeed, the meaning conveyed by the construction can be termed ‘task possession’. Consequently, the possessee is often an abstract noun evoking the task.

98. **edò**    **lè**    **mié**    **dzí**  
 work    be.at    PRO.1PL    top  
 ‘We have work (to do)’

However, it is possible that the possessed element is not the noun that occurs in subject position, but rather a task in relation to the noun in question. In this case, there is a further specification of the task by a dependent complementary clause. In example (99) for instance, in

which the noun **evī** ‘child’ occurs in possessee slot, the dependent clause **má kpó** ‘so I take care of’ provides further information on the task.

99. *evī lè dzìnyè má kpó*  
**evī** **lè** **dzì-nyè** **me-á** **kpó**  
 child be.at top-PRO.1SG PRO.1SG-SUBJ see  
 ‘I have a child to take care of’

The nouns that occur as possessives in locative possessive constructions with **dzí** are abstract nouns and kinship terms. When other noun types occur in the subject position, the construction expresses location, as illustrated in example (100) below.

100. *bólùs lè kplǎ́ dzí*  
**bólù-á** **lè** **kplǎ́-á** **dzí**  
 ball-ART.DEF be.at table-ART.DEF top  
 ‘The ball is on the table’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 6.1)

### 3.1.4. Locative possessive constructions with **gbó**

Constructions in which the postposition **gbó** ‘vicinity’ occurs as the head of the complement phrase, and which exclusively express possession are not common in Tɔ̀nùgbe. Even when some form of possession is expressed by such constructions, the meaning of the construction is ambiguous between a possessive and locative meaning. Witness the example below.

101. *nùdú alé lè gbò wò-à?*  
**nùdú** **alé** **lè** **gbò** **wò-à?**  
 food ART.INDF be.at vicinity PRO.2SG-Q  
 ‘Do you have some food?’  
 ‘Is some food at your end?’

Thus, as in the case of constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ in which non-relational terms occur in subject position, the possessive meaning is obtained by pragmatic inference. Possession is thus expressed as a result of the meaning of physical contiguity associated with the adposition **gbó**. Consequently, constructions involving **gbó** ‘vicinity’ express possession only in particular pragmatic contexts. For instance,

in Degome village, the youth used the construction in (102) to mean ‘do you have some food?’

102. **nàné**      **lè**      **gbò**      **wò-à?**  
 something be.at vicinity PRO.2SG-Q  
 ‘Lit. Is something with you?’  
 ‘(Do you have some food?)’

Also, when a visitor stays for long with a host, the host can use the construction in (103), which involves the adposition **gbó** ‘vicinity’ to express the idea that ‘he/she has a visitor’.

103. **amè**      **lè**      **gbó**      **nyè**  
 person be.at vicinity PRO.1SG  
 ‘Somebody is with me’  
 ‘(I have a visitor)’

### 3.1.5. Locative possessive constructions with **dòmè**

The last postposition that frequently occurs in locative possessive constructions is **dòmè** ‘mid-section’. Example (104) below illustrates a locative possessive construction in which **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ heads the postpositional phrase that occupies the complement position.

104. *edzrè lèó dómé*  
**edzrè**      **lè**      **-wó**      **dòmè**      **-é**  
 fight be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section -PRO.3SG  
 ‘They have a fight between them’

The form **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has distinct properties from all the other postpositions surveyed up to this point. First of all, it has interesting properties from a morphological point of view. Like **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’, *i.e.* an intrinsically spatial relation term, **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has a reduplicated form that functions as a locative adverbial. Witness the two forms in the following examples:

105. **é**            **lè**            **dzi~dzi**  
 PRO.3SG    be.at    RED~top  
 ‘It is up’
106. **é**            **lè**            **dòmè~dòmè**  
 PRO.3SG    be.at    RED~mid.section  
 ‘It is in the middle’

Moreover, **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has a special relationship with a body-part **dòdòmè** ‘epicranial aponeuroses’. The body-part **dòdòmè** ‘epicranial aponeurosis’, with which **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has morphological relationship, can be argued to have been constructed on the basis of a general morphological rule: **RED + verb + suffix = Noun**<sup>33</sup>, which operates in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. .

<b>dò</b> ‘get out’	————→	<b>dòdòmè</b>	‘epicranial aponeuroses’
<b>dzi</b> ‘procreate’	————→	<b>dzìdzìmè</b>	‘generation’
<b>gbò</b> ‘breath’	————→	<b>gbògbòmè</b>	‘spiritual realm’
<b>dzò</b> ‘happen’	————→	<b>dzòdzòmè</b>	‘nature’
<b>tsì</b> ‘grow’	————→	<b>tsìtsìmè</b>	‘old-age’

When the adposition **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ occurs in locative possessive constructions, it is also characterized by idiosyncratic features with respect to phonetic form and meaning. As can be observed from the example (107) below, it generally surfaces as **dòmé**, instead of the expected **dòmè**, in the locative possessive construction.

107. *edzrè lèṣ dómé*  
**edzrè**    **lè**        **wó**        **dòmè**        **-é**  
 fight    be.at    PRO.3PL    mid.section    -PRO.3SG  
 ‘They have a fight between them’ (=104)

The term surfaces as **dòmé** due to the fact that the last vowel of the spatial relational term, [e], merges with an underlying third person

<sup>33</sup> Note that the rule has a low tone feature



singular pronoun<sup>34</sup>, *é*, to occur as *é*. When the third person singular pronoun that merges with **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ is eliminated, the construction is odd.

108. *?edzrè lèś dòmè*  
**edzrè** **lè** **-wó** **dòmè**  
 fight be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section  
 ‘They have a fight between them’

The coalescence has direct consequences for the meaning expressed by constructions involving **dòmè** ‘mid.section’: the possessee is construed as located at an unidentified place, which is expressed by the third person pronoun that occurs after **dòmè** ‘mid.section’. Thus, the dummy third person pronoun that merges with the last vowel of **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ functions as an adverbial locating the possessee.

Evidence for this analysis comes from the fact that the third person dummy pronoun can be replaced by the form **dé** ‘ALL-PRO.3SG’ which can function as a locative adverbial. Example (109) illustrates **dé** ‘ALL-PRO.3SG’ functioning as a locative adverbial. Example (110) illustrates that when **dé** ‘ALL-PRO.3SG’ occurs after the postposition **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ in a locative possessive construction, the third person pronoun does not occur; indicating that the third person pronoun refers equally to the place where the possessee is located for the possessors.

109. *wó váyì fòò ahà dé*  
**wó** **váyì** **fò-á** **ahà** **dé-é**  
 PRO.3PL ALT beat-HAB drink ALL-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. They go and pour drink down’  
 ‘(Libation is poured)’ (Flex\_Sto: Nar 5.1)

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<sup>34</sup>The underlying third person singular object pronoun synchronically performs no syntactic role and may be qualified as a dummy pronoun. Ameka (2006) offers an extensive characterization of this pronoun in the Ewe language

110. *edzrè lèó dòmè d'è*  
**edzrè**    **lè**    **-wó**    **dòmè**    **d'è-é**  
 fight    be.at    -PRO.3PL    mid.section    ALL-PRO.3SG  
 'They have a fight'

Another important semantic feature of the locative possessive construction with **dòmè** 'mid.section' is related to the possessor: since the construction involves the idea that the possessee does not belong to one possessor but is shared, possessors in this construction are always plural. When a singular possessor is inserted in the possessor slot, the construction is infelicitous. Thus, when the plural possessor in example (110) above is replaced with a singular pronoun, the construction is odd.

111. \**evī lè nyè dómé*  
**evī**    **lè**    **-nyè**    **dómé**    **-é**  
 child    be.at    -PRO.1SG    mid.section    -PRO.3SG  
 'I have a child (between them)'

Finally, nouns that occur as possesseees in this construction type are kinship terms and abstract nouns that are the results of social interaction. The abstract nouns that occur as possesseees therefore include terms such as **edzrè** 'fight', **enyà** 'misunderstanding', **edzùgbè** 'foul language', etc.

### 3.1.6. Locative possessive constructions with allative and postpositions

The final type of locative possessive constructions involving postpositions is a construction in which two adpositions occur post-verbally: the allative marker and one of the postpositions that have been surveyed above. Witness an example of this construction below:

112. *agbèlì b'ó l'ó sí kò*  
**agbèlì**    **b'ó**    **l'ó**    **wó**    **sí**    **kò**  
 cassava    be.abundant    at    PRO.3PL    hand    INT  
 'They have a lot of cassava'

As in the other locative possessive constructions, the possessee occurs in subject position, whereas the possessor occurs as a dependent of an adpositional phrase. Verbs that occur in these constructions are however different: they convey the meaning of quantification of the subject, *e.g.* **sùgbò** ‘be numerous’ and **bó** ‘be abundant’. The following constructions illustrate both verbs occurring in these constructions.

113. **ebli**     **sùgbò**             **lé**     **adrú**     **sí**  
 maize    be.numerous    at    Adu    hand  
 ‘Adu has a lot of maize’
114. **dè**             **bó**             **lé**     **mié**     **sí**  
 FOC.3SG    be.abundant    at    PRO.1PL    hand  
 ‘We have a lot of it’

As shown above, this construction has the same order and syntactic configuration of possessee and possessor as the other locative possessive constructions with adposition *i.e.* possessee occurs in subject position, possessor occurs as a dependent of an adpositional phrase.

A second common feature shared by this construction with other locative possessive constructions involving postpositions concerns the conditions under which the various postpositions occur. The most frequent postposition is **así** ‘hand’; when the postposition **ɲú** ‘skin’ occurs, the possessee is a body-part term that is in a part-whole relation with the possessor. When the postposition **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ occurs, the possessee is an abstract noun, or a concrete noun which has its associated task profiled as possessee; when the postposition **gbó** ‘vicinity’ occurs, the construction is ambiguous between expressing possession and location, and possession is only evoked as a result of spatial contiguity; when the postposition **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ occurs, the form surfaces again as **dòmé**.

A third similarity between constructions involving the allative and postpositions and constructions involving only a postposition is their aspectual meaning. Similar to other locative possessive constructions

involving postpositions, possessive constructions in which both the allative and postpositions participate express the idea that the possessee is located at a space for the possessor *i.e.* they also express stative possession<sup>35</sup>. The constructions can therefore be paraphrased with constructions involving postpositions. Example (115) can therefore be paraphrased as (116), where a quantifier is added to the possessee noun in subject position.

115. **ebli**    **sùgbɔ**            **lé**    **adrú**    **sí**  
 maize    be.numerous    at    Adu    hand  
 ‘Adu has a lot of maize’    (=113)

116. **ebli**    **gbógbó**    **lè**    **adrú**    **sí**  
 maize    lot            be.at    Adu    hand  
 ‘Adu has a lot of maize’

It therefore appears that constructions involving the allative and postpositions are quantificational variants of locative possessive constructions involving adpositions. The argument I am putting across then is that, owing to the fact that locative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀ng̀be involve the meaning of location; and that the quantifying verbs that are involved in these constructions are not inherently locational; the allative occurs in order to situate the noun that functions as possessee at the space of the possessor.

Evidence for this assertion is provided by the fact that, instead of the allative, another preposition, the locative **le** can also occur in lieu of the allative in order to take up the task of locating the possessee. Thus, example (118) is understood as expressing the same meaning as example (117). In the same vein, example (119) is understood as expressing the same meaning as example (120).

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<sup>35</sup> Note that constructions with postpositions only, also express stative possession (see section 3.1.1); and the constructions that are typically used to express stative possession are constructions involving the postposition **así** ‘hand’.

117. *agbèlì bǔ ló' sí kò*  
**agbèlì** **bó** **lé** **wó** **sí** **kò**  
 cassava be.abundant at PRO.3PL hand INT  
 ‘They have a lot of cassava’ (=112)
118. *agbèlì bǔ leó sí kò*  
**agbèlì** **bó** **le** **wó** **sí** **kò**  
 cassava be.abundant at PRO.3PL hand INT  
 ‘They have a lot of cassava’
119. *enyì sùgbò lé mié sí*  
 cow be.numerous at PRO.1PL hand  
 ‘We have a lot of cattle’
120. *enyì sùgbò le mié sí*  
 cow be.numerous at PRO.1PL hand  
 ‘We have a lot of cattle’

### 3.2. Locative possessive constructions with prepositions

Locative possessive constructions that involve prepositions have a preposition as head of the prepositional phrase that contains the possessor. The preposition is the dative marker or the allative marker. The following examples illustrate a locative possessive construction involving respectively the dative (121), and the allative (122).

121. *aḍàḡù le ḡkúmè né*  
**aḍàḡù** **le** **ḡkú-mè** **ná** **-é**  
 creativity be.at eye-inside DAT -PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. She has creativity in her face’  
 ‘(She is very creative)’
122. *é lé lànú lá sì*  
**é** **lé** **lànú** **lé** **asì**  
 PRO.3SG catch weapon at hand  
 ‘He/she has a weapon’

I first of all present constructions involving the dative (section 3.2.1); and then continue to present constructions that involve the allative (section 3.2.2.).

### 3.2.1. Locative possessive constructions with dative

Locative possessive constructions involving the dative make use of the locative predicate **lè/nò** ‘be.at’. In these constructions, the possessee occurs in subject position and the possessor occurs as the dependent of the dative. Moreover, the locative predicate is followed by an adverbial complement. Witness the constituent order of the construction below:

123. **elā**      **lè**      **kpò-mè**      **né**      **Dǒtsé**  
 animal    be.at    wall-inside    DAT    Dotse  
 ‘Lit. Animal is in pen for Dotse’  
 ‘(Dotse has animal)’

The complement that immediately follows the locative predicate in the example above is a postpositional phrase that indicates the location of the possessee. Therefore, modifiers and/or determiners can occur in the form **kpò-mè** ‘room-inside’ for instance.

124. **elā**      **lè**      **kpò**      **álé**      **mè**      **né**      **Dǒtsé**  
 animal    be.at    wall    ART.INDF    inside    DAT    Dotse  
 ‘Dotse has animal in a certain pen’

A parallel can therefore be drawn between possessive constructions involving postpositions and constructions involving the dative of the type in example (123). As a reminder, in constructions involving postpositions, the postpositional phrase immediately follows the locative predicate, as is shown in the constructional patterns of the two construction types:

PD lè PR POSTP	→	POSTPOSITIONAL PHRASE
PD lè N POSTP    DAT PR	→	DATIVE PHRASE

Despite the parallels in the patterns of the two construction types, the possessive construction that involves the dative cannot be taken to be ‘an extension’ *i.e.* the benefactive extension, of the locative possessive

constructions involving only postpositions. This is because while the possessive meaning in constructions involving postpositions is lost when the postpositional phrase is replaced by the third person singular pronoun (*i.e.* the construction is understood as expressing existence), the postpositional phrase of constructions involving the dative can be replaced by the third person singular pronoun without any consequence on the possessive meaning (see chapter 6, section 6 for further discussion of this construction). Witness the following examples:

125. **exò lè asī-nyè**  
 house be.at hand-PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have a house’
126. *exò leé*  
**exò lè é**  
 house be.at PRO.3SG  
 ‘There are rooms available’
127. **tá-gbó mé lè é né mī-à ?**  
 head-side NEG be.at PRO.3SG DAT PRO.2PL-Q  
 ‘Lit. Do you not have your head-sides?’  
 ‘(Are you mad?)’

Hence, although some of the constructions involving the dative can bear structural resemblances to constructions involving postpositions, they are to be considered as being different from each other. Locative possessive constructions involving the dative come up for discussion in chapter 6, section 6.

### 3.2.2. Locative possessive constructions with allative

Locative possessive constructions in which the allative occurs differ structurally from all the construction types that have been discussed so far. In these constructions, the possessor occurs in subject position, and the possessee occurs as the object of the verb. In addition, the possessee is followed by a prepositional phrase that is composed of the allative marker and a body-part term. Witness the constituent order in the construction below:

128. *é tsó lànú lá sī*  
**é**            **tsó**            **lànú**            **lé**            **asī**  
 PRO.3SG    carry            weapon            at            hand  
 ‘He/she has a weapon’

Since the syntactic configuration of possessor and possessee is different, it comes as no surprise that these constructions have a different verbal predicate. The locative predicate does not occur. Instead, accomplishment verbs that evoke “transfer”, such as **lé** ‘catch’, **xò** ‘receive’ **tsó** ‘take’, **kó** ‘lift’, occur in the predicate slot. The following examples demonstrate constructions in which each of these verbs occurs.

129. **mè**            **lé/tsó/kó**            **vī**            **lé**            **asī**  
 PRO.1SG    catch/take/lift    child            at            hand  
 ‘I have a child (in hand)’

130. *mí xò vùó lá sī*  
**mí**            **xò**            **vù-á**            **lé**            **asī**  
 PRO.3PL    receive            vehicle-ART.DEF    at            hand  
 ‘We had the vehicle in our possession’

An exception is to be noted: the verb **kpó** ‘see’ occurs in this possessive construction. Possessive constructions in which **kpó** ‘see’ occurs have the same order: POSSESSOR – POSSESSEE. However, they do not contain the prepositional phrase (see Ameka 1991:230 for a useful discussion of this construction, since the construction in other dialects is the same as in Tɔ̀ṅúgbe). Witness the following examples of constructions in which **kpó** ‘see’ occurs and which expresses possession.

131. **mí**            **kpó**            **nyà**  
 PRO.1PL    see            issue  
 ‘We have an issue’  
 ‘(We are in trouble)’



132. **ʔmí** **kpó** **nyà** **lé** **así**  
 PRO.1PL see issue at hand  
 ‘We have an issue’  
 ‘(We are in trouble)’

The meanings of the verbs that occur in the possessive constructions that involve the allative evoke possession by pragmatic inference. When the prepositional phrase is eliminated, although possession is not explicit, it can be inferred. For instance, to carry a baby infers that one has the baby, albeit temporarily.

133. **mè** **tsó** **vī**  
 PRO.1SG take child  
 ‘I am carrying a baby’

Concentrating on the prepositional phrase that functions as a complement, it is composed of the allative marker and the dependent **así** ‘hand’. When other body-part terms occur as dependents of the allative, the constructions do not explicitly express possession but rather location. Witness the meaning expressed by the constructions below in which the body-part terms **etá** ‘head’ and **ñütí** ‘skin’ occur.

134. **mè** **tsó** **agbà** **lé** **tá**  
 PRO.1SG take load at head  
 ‘I carried a load on my head’
135. **mè** **lé** **hε-á** **lé** **ñütí**  
 PRO.1SG catch knife-ART.DEF at skin  
 ‘I took the knife along’

As a consequence, while constructions in which **así** ‘hand’ occurs as the allative dependent can be paraphrased with locative possessive constructions involving postpositions, this is not the case when other body-part terms occur as the allative dependent. Example (136) can therefore be paraphrased as (137). On the contrary, example (138) cannot be paraphrased as (139).

136. **mè**        **tsó**    **vī**    **lé**    **asī**  
 PRO.1SG    take    child    at    hand  
 ‘I have a child (in hand)’ (=129)
137.    **evī**    **lé**        **asī-nyè**  
 child    be.at    hand-PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have a child ’
138.    **mè**            **tsó**        **agbà**    **lé**        **tá**  
 PRO.1SG    take        load        at        head  
 ‘I carried a load on my head’ (= 134)
139.    **agbà**    **lè**        **asī-nyè**  
 load    be.at    hand-PRO.1SG  
 ‘I have a load ’

The prepositional phrase headed by the allative serves to mark the fact that the possessive relationship is only temporary. They express temporary possession *i.e.* the possessor holds the possessee in his hand for a determined period. The **asī** ‘hand’, which temporarily hosts the possessee is less grammaticalized than the postposition **asī** ‘hand’ in constructions in which possessee occurs in subject position. It is not a ‘space’ relative to possessor, but the body-part ‘hand’.

Consequently, as is the case for other nominal constituents of prepositional phrases, **asī** ‘hand’ in these constructions can be front-focused, while **asī** ‘space’ in constructions in which possessee occurs in subject position cannot. Example (140) illustrates front-focusing of nouns in prepositional phrases in Tɔ̀ṅúgbe. Example (141) illustrates front-focusing of **asī** ‘hand’ in a locative possessive construction involving the allative. Finally, example (142) shows the impossibility of front-focusing **asī** ‘hand’ in predicative possessive constructions involving adpositions.

140. a.    **mè**        **flè**        **agbàle**    **lé**    **gě**  
 PRO.1SG    buy        book        at    Accra  
 ‘I bought a book at Accra’

- b. **egě**      **mè**      **flè**      **agbàle**      **lá**  
 Accra      PRO.1SG      buy      book      PART  
 ‘It was at Accra that I bought a book’
141. a. **mè**      **lé**      **agbàle**      **lé**      **asī**  
 PRO.1SG      hold      book      at      hand  
 ‘I am holding a book’  
 ‘(I have a book in hand)’
- b. **asī**      **mè**      **lé**      **agbàle**      **lá**  
 hand      PRO.1SG      hold      book      PART  
 ‘It is in my hand that I have a book’
142. a. *avòó vá ká mié sí*  
**avò-á**      **vá**      **ká**      **mié**      **sí**  
 cloth-ART.DEF      VENT      reach      PRO.1PL      hand  
 ‘We have received the cloth’  
 ‘(We have the cloth)’
- b. **\*asī**      **avò-á**      **vá**      **ká**      **mié**  
 hand      cloth-ART.DEF      VENT      reach      PRO.1PL  
 ‘It was in hand we have cloth’

Thus, in these constructions, it is understood that the possessee is with the possessor for only a limited amount of time; and that the ‘real’ possessor will take back the possessee. Consequently, constructions involving the allative can be restated with constructions in which a dative-oblique specifies the ‘real’ possessor. Witness the following constructions.

143. *mí xò vùó lá sī*  
**mí**      **xò**      **vù-á**      **lé**      **asī**  
 PRO.3PL      receive      vehicle-ART.DEF      at      hand  
 ‘We had the vehicle in our possession’      (=130)

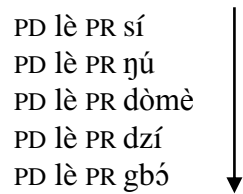
144. *mí xò vùó lá sī né*  
**mí**      **xò**      **vù-á**      **lé**      **así**  
 PRO.3PL receive vehicle-ART.DEF at hand  
**ná-é**  
 DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘We had the vehicle in our possession’

#### 4. Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with constructions in which possessors/possesseees are arguments of verbal predicates. It has surveyed the different syntactic types of constructions and sought to capture the meanings that the various construction types express. Two major categories of predicative possessive constructions were identified: copular possessive constructions and locative possessive constructions. Copular possessive constructions involve either the possessee pronoun or the possessor suffix. Depending on whichever of these forms occurs in the construction, possession is centered on the possessee and the possessor respectively.

Locative possessive constructions on the other hand involve prepositions and postpositions. The prepositions that are involved are the allative and the dative marker, while the postpositions that are involved are four: **así** ‘hand’, **ɲú** ‘skin’ **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’ and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’. Concerning locative possessive constructions involving the postpositions, given that the verbal predicate does not intrinsically express possession, the possessive meaning is either explicitly expressed by the postposition or is pragmatically inferred from various contextual features present in the construction. Constructions involving **así** ‘hand’ express possession explicitly given the possessive meaning invoked by the postposition; constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ explicitly express possession only when the relation encoded between possessee and possessor is a part-whole relation; constructions involving **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ express a relation that can be termed ‘tasked possession’; constructions involving **gbó** ‘vicinity’ express possession as a result of spatial contiguity; and constructions involving **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ express a sort of shared possession.

The different constructions (involving the locative predicate and adpositions heading the phrase that occurs in complement position) can be put on a scale according to the degree of explicitness of the possessive relationship expressed. This scale can be represented as follows:



The higher the construction on the scale, the more explicit the possession expressed; the lower the construction, the more dependent possessive meaning is on context/features. Thus, the higher the construction is up the scale, the more difficult it is for the possessive meaning that is expressed to be negated. In the example below, when the possession in the construction involving **así** ‘hand’, which is the highest on the scale is negated, the construction is odd.

145. **?egà**      **lè**      **así-nyè**      **gàkē**      **mé**      **nyé**  
 money      be.at      hand-PRO.1SG      but      3SG.NEG      be  
**nyè**      **gà**      **yó**      **ò**  
 PRO.1SG      money      FOC      NEG  
 ‘I have money, but the money is not mine’

For locative possessive constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ in which there is a part-whole relation, when the possession is negated, the negated construction is infelicitous. However, when the relation expressed is not a part-whole relation, possession can be negated without the construction being infelicitous. In example (146), the relation expressed is a part-whole relation. Therefore, when possession is negated, the construction is infelicitous. On the contrary, in example (147), the relation expressed is not a part-whole relation. Therefore, the relation can be negated without the construction being infelicitous.

146. *?táyà lè vùó ñú gàkē mé nyé vùó táyà yóò*  
**táyà lè vù-á ñú gàkē**  
 tyre be.at vehicle-ART.DEF skin but  
**mé nyé vù-á wó táyà**  
 3SG.NEG be vehicle-ART.DEF POSS tyre  
**yó ò**  
 FOC NEG  
 ‘The car has tyres, but the tyres are not the car’s’

147. *egà lè ñū-nyè gàkē mé nyé*  
 money be.at skin-PRO.1SG but 3SG.NEG be  
**nyè gà yó ò**  
 PRO.1SG money FOC NEG  
 ‘I have money on me, but it is not my money’

Possession in constructions involving **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ cannot be negated when the possessee is either a kinship term or an abstract noun that is the result of social interaction. The construction below is infelicitous due to the fact that the relation expressed is a kinship relation.

148. *\*evī lèó dómé gàkē mé nyó ví yóò*  
**evī lè -wó dòmè -é**  
 child be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section -PRO.3SG  
**gàkē mé nyé wó ví yó**  
 but 3SG.NEG be PRO. 3PL child FOC  
**ò**  
 NEG  
 ‘They have a child but the child is not their’s’

Finally, possession in constructions involving **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ and **gbó** ‘vicinity’ can be negated in all instances. Witness the following examples:

149. **egà**      **lè**      **gb̄-nyè**                      **gàkē**    **mé**  
 money    be.at    vicinity-PRO.1SG                      but    3SG.NEG  
**nyé**    **nyè**            **gà**            **yó**      **ò**  
 be    PRO.1SG    money    FOC    NEG  
 ‘I have money by my side, but the money is not mine’
150. **ed̄**      **lè**      **dzi-nyè;**            **mé**      **nyé**  
 work    be.at    top-PRO.1SG    3SG.NEG    be  
**nyè**      **dó**      **yó**      **hã**      **káfé**    **ò**      **ló**  
 PRO.1SG    work    FOC    also    before    NEG    PART  
 ‘I have work to do; it is not even my work’

It can thus be stated that, among the different locative possessive constructions with postpositions, locative possessive constructions involving **así** ‘hand’ are the most grammaticalized constructions for expressing possession. Constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’, with a possessee noun conveying body-part feature and kinship/social-interactive features respectively, are also unambiguous possessive constructions. However, constructions involving **dzi** ‘upper.section/top’ and **gb̄** ‘vicinity’ do not inherently express possession, but only do so given a particular pragmatic context.

The constructions surveyed are not without implications for the understanding of other constructions. In the first place, copular possessive constructions were argued to share similarities with other copular constructions that express property attribution, on the one hand, and with juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions, on the other hand. Secondly, the link between locative possessive constructions and locative and existential constructions has also been incidentally mentioned during the survey, but will be developed in chapter 6. Also, locative possessive constructions involving the dative can also be noted as sharing similarities with not only benefactive/malefactive dative constructions, but also with external possessor constructions.

Also, the constructions surveyed above are not without implications for constructions in other Ewe dialects. Indeed, the first and major

contribution of this work to the various studies on predicative possessive constructions in Ewe (Ameka 1991, Heine 1997) is that, it presents the details of a range of constructions that have hitherto not been analyzed in the available literature (*e.g.* copular possessive constructions with the possessor suffix; copular possessive constructions with the copula **zù** ‘become’). Moreover, even when the constructions have been described (copular constructions involving the verb **nyé** ‘be’ and, locative possessive constructions), the above study has presented them in detail in Tɔ̀húgbe and has sought to capture the subtle distinctions that characterize the meanings expressed by the constructions.



## EXTERNAL POSSESSOR CONSTRUCTIONS IN TŌŊÚGBE

**1. Introduction**

External possessor constructions are constructions in which the possessor and possessee occur in separate syntactic units, although the inferred possessive relation is of the form X's Y (cf. Payne & Barshi 1999). Example (1) below illustrates an external possessor construction in Tŏŋúgbè.

1. **Ama**    **ŋé**    **afò**    **né**    **Kofi**  
 Ama    break    leg    DAT    Kofi  
 'Ama has broken Kofi's leg'

In external possessor constructions, as in predicative possessive constructions, the possessor and possessee are encoded as arguments of the verb. However, unlike predicative possessive constructions, the meaning expressed by external possessor constructions is of the kind expressed in attributive possessive constructions. Thus, external possessor constructions of Tŏŋúgbè have a clausal syntax as illustrated in (1) above, but semantically, express an attributive relation.

Typically, in external possessor constructions of Tŏŋúgbè, the noun that functions as a possessee can occur as the internal argument of the verb or as a dependent of an allative preposition. The following examples illustrate the prototypical positions of the possessee in an external possessor construction

2. **vè-nā**    **hè**    **afò**    **né**    **Kofí**  
 two-mother    pull    leg    DAT    Kofi  
 'The mother of twins pulled Kofi's leg'
3. **Kofi**    **tró**    **kě**    **lé**    **dà-mè**    **né**    **Amí**  
 Kofi    pour    sand    at    hair-inside    DAT    Ami  
 'Kofi poured sand in Ami's hair'

According to the syntactic function of the possessee, external possessor constructions of Tŏŋúgbè exhibit two major patterns, which can be stated as follows:

- a. NP V N DAT NP
- b. NP V N ALL N DAT NP

I refer to constructions that instantiate the first pattern as object possessee constructions. I refer to constructions that instantiate the second pattern as allative possessee constructions. Each of these construction types is characterized by internal variation. This chapter consists of a morpho-syntactic description of these two major types of external possessor constructions, and the variation that can occur within them.

Semantically, external possessor constructions typically express part-whole relations. However, subtle variations characterize the part-whole relation expressed according to the structural type of external possessor construction, and the nouns that occur as possesseees in the construction. Thus, after carefully describing the different structures, I will continue by examining the subtle variations in the meaning expressed by the different structural types of the external possessor construction. I also attempt afterwards to understand the conceptualized relations expressed in the different constructions.

Following from this, I first present a morpho-syntactic characterization of external possessor constructions, starting with the object possessee constructions (section 2). I then continue to present the allative possessee constructions (section 3). I proceed to examine the relations expressed by external possessor construction in terms of the part-whole relations expressed (section 4.1) and in terms of the conceptualized relations expressed (section 4.2). Finally, I examine the external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀ṅúgbe vis-à-vis other syntactically similar constructions such as datives and transitive constructions (section 5).

## **2. Object possessee external possessor constructions**

Object possessee external possessor constructions instantiate the first pattern stated in section (1) above, *i.e.* NP V N DAT NP. Thus, in these constructions, nouns that occur in object position typically function as possesseees. Example (4) below illustrates this type of construction.

4. ..yédò tútú ñí né  
 ..yé wò tútú ñùtí ná-é  
 ..and PRO.3SG clean skin DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘..and she cleaned his/her body’

The verbs that occur in object possessee constructions can be simple predicates or complex predicates (see chapter 1 section 4.2. for details on the difference between the two types of predicates). Example (4) above illustrates an external possessor construction that involves a simple predicate. Example (5) below illustrates an external possessor construction that involves a complex predicate, in this case, an inherent complement verb **dé egà** ‘to chain’.

5. é dé gà sī né  
 é dé egà asī ná-é  
 PRO.3SG ICV metal hand DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. He/she put metal on his/her hand’  
 ‘(He/she chained him/her)’

## 2.1. Object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates

Object possessee constructions involving simple predicates are the most frequent external possessive construction types in Təṅúgbe; and they are described in this section according to the verb and argument structure of the construction (section 2.1.1), the possessor and possessee nouns (section 2.1.2) and the possibility of the reflexive occurring in place of the dative-oblique possessor (section 2.1.3).

### 2.1.1. Verb semantics and argument structure

The verbs that occur in object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates are verbs that convey the aspectual features of dynamicity and telicity. The verbs are therefore essentially, according to Vendler’s typology<sup>36</sup>, dynamic verbs that are telic (Comrie 1976), and that express a ‘change of state’. When the

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<sup>36</sup> By Vendler’s typology, I refer to Vendler (1957)’s classification of verbs into states, activities, accomplishments and achievements based on their lexical aspects.

verbs do not evoke any change of state (or conceived change of state), the construction expresses benefaction instead of possession.

In example (6) below, the verb *fò* ‘beat’ occurs in the object possessee external possessor construction. The verb, as used in the construction, evokes the idea that after ‘beating’ the ‘wound’, there should be a change in its look (it is expected to be treated). On the other hand, in example (7), the verb does not entail any ‘change in the state of the object ‘water’.

6. *yéó vá fò abìé né tòdzóó*  
**yé wó vá fò abì-á ná**  
 and PRO.3PL come beat injury-ART.DEF DAT  
**tòdzó-á**  
 cat-ART.DEF  
 ’Lit. and they come beat the injury for the cat’  
 ‘(And they treated the cat’s wound)’  
 (Flex\_Nar: Des 20.1)

7. *nyònnūvíé há vá lè tsi né avūó*  
**nyònnūví-á há vá le tsi ná**  
 girl-ART.DEF also VENT bath water DAT  
**avū-á**  
 dog-ART.DEF  
 ‘Lit. The girl also bathed water to the dog’  
 ‘(The girl also bathed the dog)’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 18.1)

Typically, in object possessee constructions, the entity that functions as possessee occurs in object position while the entity that functions as possessor occurs as a dependent of the dative-oblique (8). However, in some variants of this construction, the entity that occurs in subject position functions as the possessor and the dative-oblique is elided (9), while in others, the possessee occurs in subject position whereas the possessor occurs in object position (10).

8. **é qù asī né Ablá**  
 PRO.3SG eat hand DAT Ablá  
 ‘It/he/she bit Ablá’s hand’

9. **Ablá gbà ñkú**  
 Ablá destroy eye  
 ‘Abla has destroyed her eyes’  
 ‘(Abla is blind)’
10. **dòmè d̀̀ Ablá**  
 stomach eat Ablá  
 ‘Lit. Abla’s stomach ate her’  
 ‘(Abla had stomach ache)’

### 2.1.2. Possessee and possessor noun

The nouns that occur as possessives in object possessive constructions are body-part terms, nouns that are construed as being a part of the possessor *i.e.* nouns that belong to the possessor’s personal sphere (nouns such as ‘cloth’, ‘dress’, ‘sponge’ ‘towel’ etc), and kinship terms.

In constructions in which the possessive occurs in object position and the possessor is in the dative oblique, the three types of nouns can occur as possessive. In example (11) below, the body-part term **edà** ‘hair’ occurs as a possessive; in example (12), the non-relational term **awù** ‘dress’ occurs as possessive; and in example (12), the kinship term **evī** ‘child’ occurs as a possessive,.

11. *nàńěá vá` d̀̀ blà` né*  
**nàńě-á**                      **vá**      **lè**      **d̀̀**      **blá-m**  
 mother-ART.DEF      VENT      COP      hair      tie-PROG  
**ná-é**  
 DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Her mother plaited her hair’                      (Flex\_Nar: Des 23.1)
12. *Kofí ga vuvú awù ná mélé*  
**Kofí** **ga** **vuvú** **awù**      **ná**      **amè**      **ádé**  
 Kofí    REP    tear    clothing    DAT    person    INDEF  
 ‘Kofí has torn someone’s dress again’

13. *wó wù wī ná ma*  
**wó wù wī né Ama**  
 PRO.3PL kill child DAT Ama  
 ‘They have killed a child belonging to Ama’

When body-part terms and non-relational nouns that are construed as belonging to the possessor’s personal sphere occur as possessives, the dative-oblique possessor phrase can be eliminated when the referent of the possessor is the same as the subject of the clause; thus resulting in the second sub-type of these constructions.

In example (14) and (15) below, the possessors are the same as the referent of subject of the clause; therefore, the dative possessor phrase is eliminated *i.e.* the possessive relationship is not marked morphologically, but it is induced by the relation between the subject noun (possessor) and the object (possessee).

14. *Kofi ná fɔ*  
**Kofi ɲé afɔ**  
 Kofi break leg  
 ‘Kofi has broken his leg’
15. **Kofí ga vúvú awù**  
 Kofi REP tear clothing  
 ‘Kofi has torn his dress again’

When kinship terms occur as possessives, the dative oblique cannot be elided. When the dative-oblique is eliminated, the construction is interpreted as a transitive construction, especially when there is no preceding context that specifies the possessive relation between the subject and the object. Witness the example below:

16. *Ama wù wī*  
**Ama wù wī**  
 Ama kill child  
 ‘Ama killed a child’

Also, when the noun that functions as a possessee is a body-part term, and the verb that occurs in the construction is an experiencer verb, the construction assumes the third constituent order elaborated in section 2.1.1 above *i.e.* the possessee noun occurs in subject position while the possessor noun occurs in object position, and the dative-oblique is elided. Witness the positions of possessor and possessee in the following constructions:

17. dò-mè                      vé-é  
 stomach-inside      pain-PRO.3SG  
 ‘His stomach pained him’  
 ‘(He got angry)’                      (Flex\_Ext: Fok 23.1)
18. ?é                      vé                      dò-mè  
 PRO.3SG      pain      stomach-inside  
 ‘He/she pained stomach’
19. *ηkú fièè*  
ηkú      fiè-é  
 eye      itch-PRO.3SG  
 ‘His eyes itched him’
20. ?é                      fiè                      ηkú  
 PRO.3SG      itch                      eye  
 ‘she itch eye’

### 2.1.3. Expression of reflexivity

In constructions in which the dative-oblique possessor is identical to the subject, and in which the noun that functions as a possessee is a body-part term, the dative possessor can also be replaced by the reflexive as illustrated in example (21) below.

21. *Kofi ná fɔ né dokoéé*  
**Kofi**      **ηé**                      **afɔ**      **ná**                      **é-dókoé-á**  
 Kofi      break      leg      DAT      PRO.3SG-REFL-ART.DEF  
 ‘Kofi has broken his leg (for himself)’

To summarize, in external possessor constructions involving simple predicates and in which the possessee occurs in object position, the possessor is either encoded in the dative-oblique or it is elided when the possessor is co-referential with the subject of the construction, in which case the constituent order can be the same POSSESSOR-VERB-POSSESSEE or POSSESSEE-VERB-POSSESSOR when the verb that occurs in the construction is an experiencer verb.

When the possessor is co-referential with the subject and the dative-oblique is elided, only body-part terms and non-relational nouns that are conceived as being part of the possessor occur as possesseees. However, when the dative-oblique is not elided, nouns that can occur as possesseees are body-part terms, kinship terms and some non-relational nouns *i.e.* nouns that are conceived as constituting an extension of the part of the possessor (see section 3.4 for further discussion).

## **2.2. Object possessee external possessor constructions involving inherent complement verbs**

Object possessee external possessor constructions involving inherent complement verbs occur less frequently as compared to object possessee constructions involving simple predicates. As in the preceding section, I describe these constructions as well according to the verb and argument structure (section 2.2.1), the possessee and possessor noun (section 2.2.2), and the ability of the reflexive to occur as the dative-oblique possessor (section 2.2.3)

### **2.2.1. Verb semantics and argument structure**

As mentioned in chapter 1, section 4.2, inherent complement verbs are semantically generic verbs that rely on their complements to express a complete event. When inherent complement verbs occur in object possessee external possessor constructions, two nouns occur postverbally *i.e.* the inherent complement, and an indirect complement. Witness the nouns that occur post-verbally in the construction below:



22. *mè dó afò afò-tá né mì*  
**mè**      **dó**      **afò**      **afò-tá**      **ná**      **mì**  
 PRO.1SG    ICV    leg    leg-head    DAT    PRO.2PL  
 ‘Lit. I put my leg on your legtops’  
 ‘(I call on you to have patience)’

Given this rather idiosyncratic structural order, possessee and possessor roles in object possessee constructions are complex. Two role alignments can be noted in these constructions: on the one hand, the entity that occurs in subject position functions as the possessor while the inherent complement functions as the possessee (first relation); on the other hand, the dependent of the dative-oblique functions as the possessor while the indirect complement functions as the possessee (second relation).

For instance, in example (23) below, the noun **asī** ‘hand’, which is the inherent object of the verb **kplá**, functions as a possessee of the third person singular that occurs in subject position (first relation). On the other hand, the noun **ekò** ‘neck’ which occurs in the indirect complement position functions as a possessee of the dependent of the dative-oblique **nàně-á** ‘her mother’ (second relation).

23. *é kplá asī kò né nàně-á*  
 PRO.3SG    ICV    hand    neck    DAT    mother-ART.DEF  
 ‘She put her hand on her mother’s neck’

When the subject of the construction (possessor in first relation) is co-referential with the possessor of the indirect complement (possessor in second relation), the dative-oblique phrase is eliminated *i.e.* the second possessive relation is not morphologically marked, but it is induced. For instance, **Amí** hit her **asī** ‘palm’ on her own **enú** ‘mouth’, so the dative-oblique in example (24) below is elided.

24. *Amí fú asī nú*  
 Amí    ICV    hand    mouth  
 ‘Amí hit her palm over her mouth’  
 ‘(Amí called for help)’

**2.2.2. Possessee and possessor noun**

Nouns that occur as possessee in object possessee constructions involving inherent complement verbs are body-part terms. Thus, both the noun that functions as the possessee in the first relation *i.e.* the inherent complement, and the noun that functions as the possessee in the second relation *i.e.* the indirect complement, are body-part terms. Witness the following constructions

25. **é**            **qó** **asī**    **glì**  
 PRO.3SG    ICV    hand    wall  
 ‘He/she placed his/her hand on a wall’

26. *é tù kò nú né Kúdzò*  
**é**            **tù**    **ekò**    **nú**        **ná**        **Kúdzò**  
 PRO.3SG    ICV    blow    mouth    DAT    Kudzo  
 ‘Lit. He hit a blow on Kudzo’s mouth  
 ( He threw a blow at Kudzo’s mouth)

However, ascension kinship terms (see chapter 3, section 2.4.1 for details on ascension kinship terms) can also occur as possessee of the dative-oblique possessor *i.e.* possessee of second relation. When this is the case, the dative-oblique is elided. In example (27) for instance, the ascension kinship term **tòdè** ‘uncle’ occurs in complement position. The dative-oblique possessor is elided.

27. **é**            **mìè**    **asī**    **tòdè**  
 PRO.3SG    ICV    hand    uncle  
 ‘Lit. He signed his hand uncle’  
 ‘(He called on our uncle)’

**2.2.3. Expression of reflexivity**

Contrary to what occurs in object possessee constructions in which simple predicates occur, when the subject is co-referential with the possessor in the second relation *i.e.* the dependent of the dative-oblique, the elided dative-oblique possessor cannot be replaced with the reflexive. When the reflexive is inserted into the dative-oblique, the construction is odd.

28. ?*Amí fú asī nú né dokoéé*

**Amí fú asī nú ná é-dokoé-á**  
 Ami ICV hand mouth DAT PRO.3SG-REFL-ART.DEF  
 ‘Ami hit her palm over her own mouth’

In sum, in external possessor constructions in which inherent complement verbs occur, the possessors can be the subject of the construction or the dependent in the dative oblique phrase. Possesseees on the other hand occur as inherent complements or indirect complements of the verb.

### 3. Allative possessee external possessor constructions

As mentioned earlier in the introduction, in allative possessee external possessor constructions, the possessee is headed by the allative **lé**, whereas the possessor occurs as a dative-oblique. Thus, these constructions instantiate the second pattern listed in section 1 above, *i.e.* NP V N ALL N DAT NP. I survey some of the properties of these constructions according to the verb and argument structure (section 3.1), the possessee and possessor noun (section 3.2), and the ability of the reflexive to occur as the dative-oblique possessor (section 3.3).

#### 3.1. Verb semantics and argument structure

Verbs in these constructions are also dynamic verbs. However, they do not necessarily evoke a change of state. Thus a verb such as **dè** ‘remove’ which does not typically evoke a (direct) change of state can occur in this construction.

29. *é dè gà lé kotokúmè né mì*

**é dè gà lé kotokú-mè ná**  
 PRO.3SG remove money at pocket-inside DAT  
**mì**  
 PRO.2PL  
 ‘He/she has taken money from your pockets’

With respect to argument structure, as already mentioned, both the possessee and possessor are expressed by means of adpositional phrases in this type of construction. In example (30) below, for instance, the possessee noun **ali-dzi** ‘waist-top’ occurs in a prepositional phrase headed by the allative **lé**, while the third person

singular pronoun that functions as the possessor occurs in the dative-oblique.

30. *é dà asī lá lì-dzì né*  
**é**            **dà**   **asī**   **lé**   **alì-dzì**   **ná-é**  
 PRO.3SG   put   hand   at   waist-top   DAT.PRO.3SG  
 ‘He/she<sub>i</sub> put his/her<sub>i</sub> hand on his/her<sub>j</sub> waist’

In these constructions as well, the dative oblique can be elided when the possessor is identical to the subject of the construction. As such, if the subject in example (30) above is the same as the possessor of ‘waist-top’, then the dative-oblique can be elided as illustrated in example (31) below.

31. *é dà asī lá lì-dzì*  
**é**            **dà**   **asī**   **lé**   **alì-dzì**  
 PRO.3SG   put   hand   at   waist-top  
 ‘He/she<sub>i</sub> put his/her<sub>i</sub> hand on his/her<sub>i</sub> waist’

### 3.2. Possessee and possessor noun

Nouns that occur as possessee in the prepositional phrases are mostly compounds composed of a body-part term and an adposition. The adposition specifies the region of the body part that is being referred to. Witness the possessee nouns that occur in the prepositional phrases in the examples below and how each possessee involves a specification of the region of **etá** ‘head’ that is being referenced *i.e.* by the ‘head’ in example (32), and in the ‘head’ in example (33).

32. *mí lé yò lé tágbó né*  
**mí**            **lé**            **eyò**   **lé**   **tá- gbó**            **ná**  
 PRO.1PL   catch   lice   at   head-vicinity   DAT  
**-é**  
 -PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. We caught lice by his/her head’  
 ‘(We caught lice on his/her head)’

33. *mí lé yò lé tá-mè né*

**mí**      **lé**      **eyò**   **lé**   **tá-mè**      **ná**  
 PRO.1PL catch lice at head-inside DAT  
**-é**

-PRO.3SG

‘Lit We caught lice in his/her head’

‘(We caught lice in his/her hair)’

The compounded forms that function as possessives in this construction types are indeed complex lexemes rather than phrases; as modifiers/determiners do not occur within the forms, when they occur as possessives in the construction. Thus, when the definite article for instance is inserted between the possessive noun **támè** ‘head-inside’ in example (34), the construction is infelicitous.

34. *?mí lé yò lé tá-á-mè né*

**mí**      **lé**      **eyò**   **lé**   **tá-á-mè**      **ná**  
 PRO.1PL catch lice at head-ART.DEF-inside DAT  
**-é**

-PRO.3SG

‘We caught lice in the his/her hair’

### 3.3. Expression of reflexivity

As is the case in object possessive constructions involving inherent complement objects, when the possessive is identical to the subject of the construction in allative possessive constructions, typically, the reflexive does not occur in the dative-oblique. When the reflexive is inserted into example (35) for instance, the construction is odd.

35. *?é dà asī lá lì-dzī né dókóéé*

**é**      **dà**      **asī**   **lé**   **alì-dzī**      **ná**  
 PRO.3SG throw hand at waist-top DAT

**é-dókóé-á**

PRO.3SG-REFL-ART.DEF

‘He/she<sub>i</sub> put his/her<sub>i</sub> hand on his/her<sub>i</sub> waist’

The different structural types of external possessor constructions surveyed, and the features that are specific to each of them can be summarized in the table below:

*Table 10: Summary of structural types of external possessor constructions in Tɔ̀húgbe*

<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>VERB</b>	<b>PD NOUN</b>	<b>REFLEXIVE PR</b>
<b>OBJECT POSSESSEE</b>			
- <b>Simple predicate</b>	C.O.S <sup>37</sup>	BP P/evī-KIN P-S nouns A-KIN	possible
- <b>Complex predicate</b>	ICV	BP	Not possible
<b>ALLATIVE POSSESSEE</b>	Any	BP	Not possible

With this diversity, it is possible to identify some features that can be termed typical of some of the sub-types of external possessor constructions:

- The object possessee construction with a simple predicate, besides being the most frequent external possessor construction type, is also the most flexible, insofar as it admits a larger array of lexical types of nouns in the possessee slot and allows the expression of the possessor under the form of a reflexive pronoun.
- The possessee slot is typically occupied by a body-part term as the paragon of the part-whole relationship with the possessor. When other types of nouns occupy this slot, they will be reinterpreted in terms of a part-whole relationship. Among other things, I explore in the sections below this latter relationship *i.e* non-body part terms that function as possessee in the external possessor construction and their reinterpretation as existing in part whole relations, in the larger framework of the meanings that are expressed by the different external possessor construction sub-types.

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<sup>37</sup> C.O.S=Dynamic verbs that express change of state; ICV=inherent complement verbs; BP=Body-part term; P-S=Personal sphere nouns; P/evī-KIN= Parental kinship terms and the term evī ‘child’ A-KIN= Ascension kinship terms.

#### 4. Relations in external possessor constructions

The term relation as used in attributive possessive relations makes reference to three different interpretations (Lichtenberk 2009). The first interpretation to which the term refers is the binary nature of possession *i.e.* the relationship between one noun, *viz.* a possessor, and another noun *viz.* a possessee (Seiler 2001).

The second interpretation that is referred to by the term ‘relation’ is the core possessive meaning that is expressed by the binary relationship between a possessor and a possessee, *i.e.* ownership, part-whole and kinship relations (see chapter 2 section 1 for details on the core meanings expressed by possessor-possessee associations).

The third interpretation that is referenced by the term ‘relation’ is the manner in which each constituent in the possessor-possessee relationship is conceptualized. Concerning this latter interpretation, in chapter 3, section 2.4.2.1, I have argued that in Təŋúgbe, the possessor and possessee are either conceived as either in an intimate relationship or in a non-intimate relationship *i.e.* the alienable/inalienable opposition.

The first sense in which the term ‘relation’ is used *viz.* binary nature of possession, served as the basis on which the external possessive constructions of Təŋúgbe have been identified and described. Therefore, I shall not be concerned with such a relation here. Instead, I shall be concerned with the second *viz.* the core possessive meaning and third *viz.* conceptualization of the relation, here. I start with the core possessive meaning (section 4.1) and then continue with the conceptualized relations (section 4.2).

##### 4.1. Part-whole meaning in external possessor constructions

The possessive relation between the possessed entity (possessee) and the possessor in Təŋúgbe external possessor constructions is essentially a part-whole relation. Consequently, it is of little surprise that body-part terms mainly occur as possesseees. However, other nouns, *i.e.* kinship terms and compounded terms can also occur as possesseees. The effect of this latter phenomenon is that the conception of the expressed part-whole relation can vary in the different construction types surveyed. Below, I study the variation that

characterizes the meaning (the part-whole relation) expressed according to the structural types of constructions surveyed (section 4.1.1), and according to the noun that occurs as possessee (section 4.1.2).

#### 4.1.1. Part-whole meaning and argument structures

As a reminder, two structural types of external possessor constructions have been identified: object possessee constructions and allative possessee constructions. The two construction types are illustrated by the following examples respectively:

36. *Kofi ná fɔ nú*  
**Kofi**    **ɲé**        **afɔ**        **ná-m**  
 Kofi    break    leg        DAT-PRO.1SG  
 ‘Kofi has broken my leg’
37. *mè kló ɖì lé tágbó né*  
**mè**            **kló**        **ɖì**        **lé**        **tá-gbó**  
 PRO.1SG    wash    dirt    at        head-vicinity  
**ná**            **-é**  
 DAT            PRO.3SG  
 ‘I washed the dirt off his head’

In both construction types, the dative-oblique possessor can be elided when the subject is identical to the possessor. The result is an opposition between dative-possessor elided constructions and non-dative possessor elided constructions.

However, while in simple predicate direct object possessee dative elided constructions the dative possessor can be replaced by the reflexive, in inherent complement verb object possessee dative elided constructions and allative possessee dative elided constructions, the reflexive does not replace the dative possessor. This syntactic conditioning of the occurrence of the reflexive also has incidence on the meaning expressed by the various construction types.

The discussions below focus on the meaning variation that characterizes these two structural oppositions. I start with the first opposition (dative elided versus non-dative elided), and then continue



to investigate the second opposition (reflexive in dative-oblique versus no reflexive in dative-oblique)

*Case 1: Dative elided versus non-dative elided*

Constructions in which the dative-oblique is elided manifest some variability in relation to the prototypical part-whole meaning stated for external possessive constructions. The core possessive meaning expressed by constructions in which the dative-oblique is elided involves some pragmatic effect. Indeed, in the meaning expressed by these construction types, the event is expressed from the point of view of the possessor who is at the same time the subject of the clause. Thus the meaning expressed by example (38) is not only ‘We have broken our legs’, but also, ‘our legs, ours, have broken’.

38. *mí* *ɲá* *fɔ̀*  
**mí**            **ɲé**            **áfɔ̀**  
 PRO.1PL    break    leg  
 ‘We have broken our legs’

Evidence for this assertion comes from the fact that, in the attributive variant of the construction the possessor is reindexed. Thus, example (39) is the adequate attributive variant for example (38) above.

39. **mí**            **ɲé**            **míé**            **afɔ̀**  
 PRO.1PL    break    PRO.1PL    leg  
 ‘We have broken our legs’

The suggestion I am putting across is that, when the dative-oblique is elided in the external possessor construction, the meaning expressed by the construction is such that the events affecting the possessor is viewed from the point of view of the possessor. The fact that the possessor in these constructions coincides with the subject only facilitates highlighting the possessor, and viewing the meaning from its point of view. Such cognitive activities *i.e.* viewing events from the point of view of one of the constituents of a construction are not rare typologically (cf. Velázquez-Castillo 1999).

*Case 2: Reflexive in dative-oblique versus no reflexive in dative-oblique*

The meaning expressed by constructions in which the possessor is replaced by the reflexive is subtly different from constructions in which the dative-oblique is elided. It seems that constructions in which the dative-oblique possessor is replaced with the reflexive express the idea that the possessor, by his very actions, triggered the events expressed in the verb unto the possessee, while in the meanings expressed by constructions in which the dative-oblique possessor is not replaced by the reflexive the role of the possessor in triggering the events expressed in the verb unto the possessee is minimal<sup>38</sup>.

To illustrate this subtle difference in meaning, I consider examples (40) and (41). While the meaning of example (40) below, in which the reflexive occurs in the dative oblique, can be stated as ‘Kofi, through his own actions, triggered his eye being destroyed’, the meaning of example (41) can be glossed as ‘Kofi’s eye is destroyed (without specification of the role Kofi played in triggering the action)’.

40. *Kofi gbà ñkú né dokoéé*  
**Kofi gbà ñkú ná é-dókoé-á**  
 Kofi destroy eye DAT PRO.3SG-REFL-ART.DEF  
 ‘Lit. Kofi has destroyed eye for himself’  
 ‘(Kofi got himself blind)’
41. **Kofi gbà ñkú**  
 Kofi destroy eye  
 ‘Kofi has destroyed eye’  
 ‘(Kofi has lost the use of his eyes)’

Thus, it can be said that the construction adds to the lexical meaning of the verb, the feature of ‘intention/volition’. Therefore, the verb **dó**, which expresses the idea of ‘intentionality or volition’, can occur with

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<sup>38</sup> I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dzodzi Tsikata of the African studies centre, University of Ghana, who being a native Tɔŋɔgbɛ speaker herself, took time off her busy schedule to share her insights on this very subtle variation in the meaning of these constructions with me.

the verbs in constructions in which the possessor is replaced with the reflexive in order to reinforce the idea that the subject provokes (somehow intentionally) the event expressed by the verb. Witness the example below:

42. *Kofi d́o gbà ñkú né d́okoéé*  
**Kofi d́o gbà ñkú ná**  
 Kofi intention destroy eye DAT  
**é-d́okoé-á**  
 PRO.3SG-REFL-ART.DEF  
 ‘Lit. Kofi has intentionally destroyed eye for himself’  
 ‘(Kofi intentionally got himself blind)’

On the contrary, when the verb **d́o** is inserted into constructions in which the possessor is not replaced with a reflexive, the construction can be odd, as is illustrated in the example below:

43. **?Kofi d́o gbà ñkú**  
 Kofi intention destroy eye  
 ‘Kofi has intentionally destroyed his eye’  
 ‘(Kofi intentionally lost the use of his eyes)’

#### 4.1.2. Part-whole meaning and possessee noun type

Nouns that occur as possesseees in external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe are predominantly body-part terms and non-relational terms construed as being part of the possessor (see section 2 and 3 above for details on nouns that can occur as possesseees in the various external possessive construction types). However, other noun types can occur as possesseees in the various constructions *i.e.* kinship terms and compounded nouns. I start with a study of the relationship between the part-whole meanings expressed by external possessor constructions involving kinship term possesseees. I then continue to study how compounded noun possesseees reconcile with part-whole meanings.

##### *Case 1: kinship term possesseees in part-whole relation*

In sub-sections 2.1.2 and 2.2.2, it was observed that kinship terms can also occur as possesseees in external possessor constructions *i.e.* object

possessee constructions with simple predicates, and object possessee constructions involving inherent complement verbs respectively. The following examples show that kinship terms occur as possessives in external possessive constructions.

44. *wó wù vī ná ma*  
**wó wù vī né Ama**  
 PRO.3PL kill child DAT Ama  
 ‘They have killed a child belonging to Ama (=13)

45. *é mǐ̀ asī tǒdé*  
 PRO.3SG ICV hand uncle  
 ‘He signed his hand our uncle’ (=27)

Starting with the constructions involving simple predicates, when kinship terms occur as possessives in this construction, it seems that reference is not made to a specific individual; instead, reference is made to any ‘player of a kinship role’ and hence has a type interpretation or, put differently, corresponds to a role. For instance, one of the roles of a mother is to educate, take care of, and support emotionally and financially her child. Therefore, when a child uses the construction (46) in which **nǎnǎ** ‘mother’ occurs as a possessee, reference is not made to a specific ‘mother’, but rather, to ‘anybody who has played/plays the roles associated with motherhood’. Consequently, the meaning of the construction can be stated as ‘he/she has killed a woman who played the role of a mother in my life’.

46. *é wù nǎnǎ nǎ-m*  
**é wù nǎnǎ ná-m**  
 PRO.3SG kill mother DAT-PRO.1SG  
 ‘He/she has killed a mother of mine’

It can be stated then that although the kinship relation between the possessor and possessee is not entirely lost, emphasis is placed on the roles associated with the possessee kinship term as opposed to the person it references. The roles that are referenced by the kinship terms when they occur in this construction are construed as being a part of the possessor. Thus, a speaker who uses the construction in (46)

recognizes that the ‘mother role’ played by the **nàñě** ‘mother’ has helped to shape his present situation.

Evidence for this observation comes from the kinship terms that function as possessives in external possessor constructions *viz* parental terms, and the term **evī** ‘child’, which are archetypical kinship relation terms. Thus, when the term **nòdè** ‘younger sister of mother’ occurs as the possessee of example (46) above, the construction is odd.

47. ?wó wù nòdè nũ  
**wó**        **wù**    **nòdè**    **ná-m**  
 PRO.3PL    kill    aunt    DAT-PRO.1SG  
 ‘They have killed an aunt of mine’

The hypothesis put forward here is that, even when kinship terms occur as possessives in object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates, some part-whole relation is invoked: the kinship role is conceived as being part of the possessor.

Concerning constructions involving inherent complement verbs in which kinship terms occur as possessives, when kinship terms occur as possessives in this construction, the possessor is part of a collective of possessors. Thus, the **tògbé** ‘grandfather’ that is referred to in example (48) is not just Yao’s grandfather, but rather ‘our’ grandfather (Yao is part of us).

48. **Yao**    **mìè**    **asī**    **tògbé**  
 Yao    ICV    hand    grandfather  
 ‘Lit. He signed his hand our grandfather’  
 ‘(He called on our grandfather)’

Thus, similar to kinship term possessives in object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates, when kinship terms occur in object possessee external possessor constructions, there is some idea of a part-whole relationship. However, in this latter case, the part-whole relation is not between the possessor and the possessee, but rather, between the overtly expressed possessor (the clausal subject), and a covert unexpressed plural possessor of which the overt possessor is a part.

In sum, it can be advanced that when kinship terms occur as possessives in external possessor constructions some part-whole relation is invoked; and that the part-whole relation invoked when kinship terms occur as possessives in object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates is not the same as the part-whole invoked when kinship terms occur as possessives in object possessee external possessor constructions involving inherent complement verbs.

*Case 2: Compounded forms in part-whole relation*

Compounded forms occur as possessives in allative possessee constructions. The forms involved in the compounded forms are body-part terms and postpositions. When these compounded forms occur as possessives, as characteristic of external possessor constructions, the part-whole relation is not lost. Instead, there is only a specification of the part that is involved in the relation. Indeed, when the speaker does not want to specify a region of the part, the body-part term can occur without the postposition component as illustrated in the example below:

49. *é dà asī lá lì(dzì)*  
       é           dà       asī     lé     alì     (dzì)  
       PRO.3SG   throw   hand   at   waist   (top)  
       ‘He/she<sub>i</sub> put his/her hand on his/her<sub>i</sub> waist’ (=31)

In sum, as in the case of kinship terms in object external possessor constructions, although compounded terms are not always entirely composed of body-part terms, when they occur as possessives in external possessive constructions, they are involved in part-whole relations. Thus, it can be stated that, more than the noun type, the part-whole relation between the possessor and the possessee primes over the semantic type of nouns that fill the possessee slot of the construction.

#### **4.2. Conceptualized relations in external possessor constructions**

The second ‘relation’ to be investigated is the conceptualized relation. In Tɔ̀nùgbe external possessor constructions, the possessor and the

possessee are conceptualized as not in an intimate relationship, although the core possessive meaning expressed is a part-whole relation<sup>39</sup>. This conceptualized distance is reflected in the fact that possessor and possessee are encoded in different syntactic positions. The possessee functions as the undergoer of the event with the possessor only indirectly concerned (Ameka 1995: 817-818). The consequence of such a configuration is that the conceptualized closeness between the possessor and possessee (in a part-whole relation) is weakened.

Evidence for this hypothesis comes from the attributive variants that can be generated for the various external possessor constructions investigated. Indeed, the different external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀ṣúgbe can be reformulated with constructions in which the possessor is not encoded in the dative-oblique, but rather as a dependent in an attributive possessive noun phrase. Example (50) illustrates an object possessee external possessor construction involving a simple predicate (a) and its attributive restatement (b); example (51) illustrates an object possessee external possessor construction with a simple predicate in which the dative is elided (a) and its attributive variant (b); Example (52) illustrates an object possessee external possessor construction involving an inherent complement verb (a) and its attributive variant (b); and example (53) illustrates an allative possessee external possessor construction (a) and its attributive variant (b).

50. a. *Kofí gbà ṣkú ná ma*  
**Kofí gbà ṣkú ná Ama**  
 Kofi destroy eye DAT Ama  
 ‘Kofi destroyed Ama’s eye’

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<sup>39</sup> This assertion can sound counter-intuitive when it is considered that the ‘self’ is not independent of the ‘body’ (in which case body-parts will be considered as being in inherently intimate relations). However, the analysis above is consistent with what occurs in Tɔ̀ṣúgbe attributive possessive constructions in which body-part terms are encoded in constructions that construe the possessor and possessee as being in a non-intimate relation *i.e.* body-part terms occur in connective constructions (see chapter 3, section 2.4.2.1 for details).

- b. **Kofi gbà Amá wó nkú**  
 Kofi destroy Ama POSS eye  
 ‘Kofi destroyed Ama’s eye’
51. a. **Kofi gbà nkú**  
 Kofi destroy eye  
 ‘Kofi destroyed his eyes’  
 ‘(Kofi is blind)’
- b. **Kofi gbà wó nkú**  
 Kofi destroy POSS eye  
 ‘Kofi destroyed his eyes’  
 ‘(Kofi is blind)’
52. a. **mè fú asī nú**  
 PRO.1SG ICV hand mouth  
 ‘I hit my mouth with my hand’
- b. **mè fú nyè asī nyè nú**  
 PRO.1SG ICV PRO.1SG hand PRO.1SG mouth  
 ‘I hit my mouth with my hand’
53. a. **é dà sī lá li né**  
**é dà asī lé alì ná**  
 PRO.3SG throw hand at waist DAT  
**-é**  
 PRO.3SG  
 ‘He placed his hand on his/her waist’
- b. **é dà sī lé wá li**  
**é dà asī lé wó alì**  
 PRO.3SG throw hand at POSS waist  
 ‘He placed his hand on his/her waist’

As can be observed in the examples, when the possessor is not the first or second person singular, the construction involves a connective attributive possessive construction *i.e.* constructions in which there is a conceptual distance between possessee and possessor (they are



alienable constructions) (see chapter 2, section 2.5 for further details). This supports the argument that the possessor and possessee in external possessor constructions are conceptualized as not in an intimate relationship.

One last comment will have to be made about the conceptualized relation between possessor and possessee in external possessor constructions. This comment concerns the relation between individuation and conceptual independence in object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates in which the dative-oblique is not elided; and its syntactic consequence.

Indeed, as has been observed for these constructions in Tə̀nù̀gbe, in northern Ewe dialects as well, the possessor and possessee in object possessee external possessor constructions that involve simple predicates and in which the dative-oblique is not elided are conceptualized as not in an intimate relationship. Ameka (1995: 821) opines that, as a result of this conceptual relation, the possessee in these constructions can be individuated. Thus, the possessee in the external possessor construction can be modified. Ameka (1995) gives example (54) as evidence for this process.

54. **ka**    **blá**    **afɔ**    **(néné    lá)**    **ná**  
cord    tie    leg    (broken    ART.DEF)    DAT  
**alé-á**  
sheep-ART.DEF  
‘The broken leg of the sheep is entangled by the rope’  
(Ameka 1995: 817)

This syntactic feature holds true for northern Ewe dialects, but not entirely for Tə̀nù̀gbe. Possessee in the external possessor construction of Tə̀nù̀gbe, typically, do not occur with determiners or modifiers<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> I do not presume that this syntactic feature of the possessee slot in Tə̀nù̀gbe object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates in which the dative-oblique is not elided incites interpreting the possessee as a “type”. Following from Haspelmath and König (1997:535), I assume that the pragmatic context within which the possessive construction occurs defines to a large extent the possessee. As such, the possessee slot in the Tə̀nù̀gbe external possessor construction exploits this redundancy.

Any attempt to insert a determiner or modifier into the possessee slot of the Tɔ̀ngugbe construction yields an odd construction. Witness the example below, which is a translation of the northern Ewe dialect example in (54) above into Tɔ̀ngugbe:

55. *ekà blá fɔ̀ (?ɲéɲié) ná lié*  
**ekà**    **blá**    **afɔ̀**    (**ɲéɲé-á**)            **ná**  
 cord    tie    leg    (broken-ART.DEF)    DAT  
**alé-á**  
 sheep-ART.DEF  
 ‘The broken leg of the sheep is entangled by the rope’

Should the inanimate subject of the construction in (55) be replaced with an animated subject, and the modifier and determiner be maintained in the object phrase, the construction will be perfectly grammatical; but again, it can be odd to the native speaker. Moreover, instead of the expected possessive interpretation, the construction is interpreted as a dative benefactive instead.

56. *(?)Kofi blá fɔ̀ ɲéɲié ná lié*  
**Kofi**    **blá**    **afɔ̀**    (**?ɲéɲé-á**)            **ná**  
 Kofi    tie    leg    (broken-ART.DEF)    DAT  
**alé-á**  
 sheep-ART.DEF  
 ‘Kofi tied the broken leg for the sheep (to carry)’

Thus, while in the northern dialects the possessee can occur with modifiers and determiners, in Tɔ̀ngugbe, to a certain extent, this is not the case.

### 5. External possessor constructions and syntactically similar constructions.

All external possessor constructions have been noted as expressing a part-whole relation. This feature is critical for the distinction between external possessor constructions and other constructions that bear syntactic semblance to them *i.e.* benefactive constructions and transitive constructions (including constructions that involve inherent complement verbs). I begin with the distinction between external

possessor constructions and dative benefactive constructions (section 5.1.). I then continue with the distinction between ‘normal’ transitive constructions and external possessor constructions (section 5.2).

### 5.1. External possessor constructions without dative ellipsis and dative constructions

Dative benefactive constructions have the same structure as object possessee external possessor constructions with a simple predicate and allative possessee external possessor constructions, insofar as there is no ellipsis of the dative oblique. Example (57) and (58) are benefactive and object possessee external possessor constructions respectively; but both constructions have the same constituent order. Example (59) and (60) are also benefactive and allative possessee external possessor constructions respectively; but again, both constructions have the same constituent order.

57. *é wà túú né Kofi*

é            wò atúú    ná    Kofi  
 PRO.3SG    do    hug    DAT    Kofi  
 ‘Lit. She did a hug to Kofi’  
 ‘(She hugged Kofi)’

58. *é wò asī né Kofi*

é            wò asī    ná    Kofi  
 PRO.3SG    do    hand    DAT    Kofi  
 ‘Lit. It did Kofi’s hand’  
 ‘(It affected Kofi’s hand)’

59. *Amá    tù        xò        lé    gē        né    Kpòdó*

Ama    build    house    at    Accra    DAT    Kpodo  
 ‘Ama has built a house in Accra for Kpodo’

60. *Amá    tútú    òì    lé    tá-gbó        né*

Ama    clean    dirt    at    head-vicinity    DAT

**Kpodó**

Kpodo

‘Ama cleaned dirt from Kpodo’s head’

The major difference between the two construction types *i.e.* benefactive and external possessor construction, is triggered by the relationship that the noun that precedes the dative-oblique entertains with the dependent noun phrase in the dative-oblique: in the external possessor constructions, they are in part-whole relation; in the benefactive constructions, they are entities in a benefactor relation.

Indeed, as has been observed multiple times in the description of the various constructions, the part-whole relation is so fundamental that the nouns that function as possessives in the external possessor constructions do not necessarily have to be body-part terms. It can be any other noun, given that this latter noun is conceived as being a part of the referent of the noun phrase headed by the dative marker. Let us take example (61) below, for instance (this example is a popular explanation given whenever the Dzoxonú clan of Mepe comes in any position but first in the annual regatta competition):

61. *Dzòxò-é tò vù né mí*  
**Dzòxò-é tò vù né mí**  
 DZOXOR-FOC sink vehicle DAT PRO.1PL  
 ‘It’s Dzoxor who drowned our canoe’  
 ‘It’s Dzoxor who drowned the canoe for us’

The construction can be interpreted as either an external possessor construction or a dative benefactive construction depending on whether the **evù** ‘vehicle’ is construed as part of the possessor ‘us’ or as an instrument for **mí** ‘us’. On the one hand, when one of the paddlers of the canoe gives example (61) as an explanation, the construction is understood as ‘Dzoxor drowned our canoe’ *i.e.* he was in the canoe, paddling it, and so, the canoe is construed as being part of him. On the other hand, when a supporter of the Dzoxornu clan explains to another supporter of the Dzoxornu clan who was not present at the regatta, the reason for their not winning the race, using example (61), the construction is rather understood as ‘Dzoxor drowned the canoe for us’ *i.e.* the instrument that was meant to help us achieve an aim was drowned.

### 5.2. External possessor constructions with dative ellipsis and transitive constructions

The part-whole relation between possessor and possessee in external possessor constructions distinguishes them from ordinary transitive constructions. Example (62) is a ‘normal’ transitive construction; example (63) is an external possessive construction involving a simple verb in which the dative-oblique is elided.

62. *avùs dà tī* (Transitive)  
**avù-á**            **dà**    **atī**  
 dog-ART.DEF    throw    tree  
 ‘The dog threw a stick’ (Flex\_Dzi 4.1)

63. **mè**            **dòlī**        **afò** (Possessive)  
 PRO.1SG    change    leg  
 ‘Lit. I changed my legs’  
 ‘(I have sprained my ankle)’

As can be observed, the difference in interpretation between the two constructions is motivated by the fact that in the external possessor construction, the object of the verb is a body-part term *viz.* **afò** ‘leg’ that is in a part-whole relation with the subject of the construction, while in the normal transitive construction, the object of the verb is a non-relational noun **atī** ‘tree’ which fulfills the patient role.

The examples (62) and (63) above contain simple verbal predicates. In constructions involving inherent complement verbs as well, the difference between the possessive variant of the constructions and ordinary constructions involving inherent complement verbs comes from the fact that in the possessive constructions, nouns that are in part-whole relations with other arguments of the verb occur after the inherent complement to function as indirect complements, while in ordinary constructions, the relationship is not so. Witness the following examples:

64. **mè**            **dà**    **tū**        **dà-á** (ICV normal)  
 PRO.1SG    ICV    gun    snake-ART.DEF  
 ‘I shot the snake’

65. **mè**            **fú**   **asī**    **nú**                            (*ICV Possessive*)  
          PRO.1SG    ICV   hand   mouth  
          ‘Lit. I hit my mouth with my hand’  
          ‘I called for help’

## 6. Conclusion

This chapter has offered a detailed description and analysis of the different structural types of external possessor constructions in Tɔ̀ŋúgbè. It has provided a succinct appreciation of the meanings evoked by the different structural types of external possessor constructions, and their relations with other constructions.

External possessor constructions of Tɔ̀ŋúgbè have been identified to be of two major types: constructions in which the possessee is the object of the verb, and constructions in which the possessee is the dependent of a prepositional phrase. The former construction types can further be sub-divided into constructions in which simple verbs occur and constructions in which complex verbs (*i.e.* inherent complement verbs) occur. These different types of external possessor constructions have a common feature: they all express part-whole relations, although nouns that occur as possesseees can be nouns other than body-part terms.

Also, I have advanced that in external possessor constructions, the possessee is conceptualized as independently undergoing events expressed in the verb, and that they are construed as not in an intimate relationship with the possessor. I supported this argument with the attributive restatements of the external possessor constructions. Despite this fact, I have shown that the grammatical features that are associated with independently conceptualized nouns *i.e.* ability to individuate, are not characteristic of the possessee in Tɔ̀ŋúgbè object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates and in which the dative-oblique is not elided, contrary to what I observed in the counterpart constructions in northern colloquial dialects of the Ewe language. As a consequence, possesseees in this construction of Tɔ̀ŋúgbè do not take determiners or modifiers,

whereas possessives in this construction of inland dialects can have determiners or modifiers.

Interestingly, with respect to this opposition, the Aṅlò dialect (coastal) represents an intermediate case: possessives in the object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple predicates and in which the dative-oblique is not elided in the Aṅlò dialect (coastal) for instance, can take determiners or modifiers, but only with specific verbs such as **dzù** ‘insult’ (Essegbey James<sup>41</sup>: personal communication). Witness the following examples below of an external possessive construction in Aṅlògbe:

66. **?wó**      **ṣé**      **afò**      **legbe-á**      **ná**  
 PRO.3PL    break    leg    long-ART.DEF    DAT  
**ḍeví-á**  
 child-ART.DEF  
 ‘They broke the child’s long legs’

67. **wó**            **dzù**      **mò**      **glòbuí**      **má**      **ná**  
 PRO.3PL      insult    face    pointed    DEM    DAT  
**ḍeví-á**  
 child-ART.DEF  
 ‘They insulted the child’s pointed face’

Thus, the possessee slot of Tṣṣṣgbe object possessee external possessor constructions involving a simple predicate and in which the dative-oblique is not elided consists of a non modifiable noun; the possessee slot of the counterpart construction in northern colloquial dialects consists of a phrasal unit; and the possessee slot of the counterpart construction of coastal dialects is modifiable in certain contexts but not in others. Thus, simple predicate object possessee external possessor constructions without dative-oblique elipsis in the three dialects can be represented as follows:

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<sup>41</sup> I want to express my gratitude to Dr. James Essegbey of the University of Florida who took time off his busy schedule to give me his thoughts about the external possessor construction in the Aṅlò dialect.

Tɔ̀ŋúgbe	→	SUBJ V OBJ DAT NP OBJ= N
Àŋlógbe	→	SUBJ V OBJ DAT NP OBJ= N(P)
Evedomegbe	→	SUBJ V OBJ DAT NP OBJ= NP

Following from the above observations, it can be said that, at least at the schematic level, simple predicate object possessee external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀ŋúgbe in which the dative-oblique is not elided are representatives of a stratum of a higher construction in Ewe language. It can be postulated thence that the Ewe language has an archi-constructional schema, with each dialect instantiating variants of the archi-constructional schema.

The link between alienability and external possessor constructions was also not lost in this chapter. It has been argued that, similar to what occurs in attributive possessive constructions, relations, instead of inherent properties of nouns, motivate the occurrence of possesseees in one construction or the other. As such, even when non-relational terms, and kinship terms occur as possesseees in the different structural types of the external possessor constructions, part-whole relations are expressed.

Also, again, spatial orientation terms, although having mostly grammaticalized from body-parts, do not occur in positions where body-parts occur (they are absent from external possessor constructions as well as connective attributive constructions). This thus confirms Ameka's (1991:243, 1995:828) observation that the divergence that arises between spatial orientation terms (that have grammaticalized from body-parts) and body-parts is not only resolved by assignation of different semantic values. In this instance, they also are characterized by a difference in their distribution as possesseees.



POSSESSIVE, EXISTENTIAL AND LOCATIVE  
CONSTRUCTIONS

### 1. Introduction

Possessive, locative and existential constructions of Tɔ̀húgbe manifest various relationships. As mentioned in the introduction of this work, locative possessive constructions, locative constructions and existential constructions of Ewe can involve the same verb: the locative predicate *i.e.* **lè/nɔ̀**. As shown in the the following examples, this is also the case in the corresponding Tɔ̀húgbe constructions:

Possessive

1. **tòdzó** **lè** **é** **sí**  
 cat be.at PRO.3SG hand  
 ‘She has a cat’ (Flex\_Ext: Fok 4.1)

Locative

2. *bólùs* *lè anyìgbá*  
**bólù-á** **lè** **anyìgbá**  
 bottle-ART.DEF be.at ground  
 ‘The ball is on the ground’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 2.1)

Existential

3. *wó lé*  
**wó** **lè** **é**  
 PRO.3PL be.at PRO.3SG  
 ‘They existed’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 2.1)

Beside its predicative uses, the locative predicate has two other uses: it can be used as a copular in marking the progressive and prospective, and it can be used as a locative preposition (Ameka 1995).

The following examples illustrate these latter two uses of the form. Example (4) illustrates the form occurring as part of the progressive marker; example (5) illustrates the form occurring as part of the prospective marker; and example (6) illustrates the form occurring as a locative preposition.

4. *wó vá lè é nyã*  
**wó**      **vá**      **lè**      **é**      **nyà-m**  
 PRO.3PL    VENT    COP    PRO.3SG    wash-PROG  
 ‘They are washing it’ (Flex\_Ext:Dzi 77.1)
5. *avùò bé eyè mè lè lólò gèò*  
**avù-á**      **bé**      **eyè**      **mè**      **lè**      **lólò**  
 dog-ART.DEF    QUOT    PRO.3SG    NEG    COP    agree  
**gè**      **ò**  
 PROSP    NEG  
 ‘The dog<sub>i</sub> said he<sub>i</sub> was not going to accept’  
 (Flex\_Ext:Viv 19.1)
6. *tòdzó tètè lé ñtí kò hlé bà le é ñtí*  
**tòdzó**    **tètè**      **lé-é**      **ñtí**    **kò**      **hlé**  
 cat      get.close    at-PRO.3SG    skin    then    spread  
**ebà**    **le**      **é**      **ñtí**  
 mud    at      PRO.3SG    skin  
 ‘The cat got closer to it and shook some mud on it’  
 (Flex\_Ext:Ven 11.1)

In this chapter, I shall be concerned with the verbal use of the form *i.e.* the set of examples in (1)-(3). This chapter is devoted to the complex relationships that accompany this shared morpho-syntactic feature. In the first two sections, a description is offered of the existential construction (section 2) and of the locative constructions (section 3) in Tɔ̀ṅúgbè. The following section (section 4) explores relationships between the existential construction and the different locative constructions surveyed. Section 5 offers a study of the complex relationships between locative possessive constructions, the existential construction, and the different locative constructions. The final section, section 6, investigates the complex relationships between possessive constructions, the existential construction and the different locative constructions, when all these constructions have a clause-final dative-oblique.

## 2. Existential construction of Tə̀́úgbè

The existential construction of Tə̀́úgbè affirms the presence of an entity (a **figure**) somewhere (a **ground**). The figure in the existential construction occurs in subject position while the ground occurs in complement position.

Example (7) below (which is the introduction of the recorded folktale) illustrates an instance of an existential construction in Tə̀́úgbè. In this example, the figure is **mí** ‘we’ and the ground is the third person singular.

7. *mí vá lé*

<b><u>mí</u></b>	<b>vá</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>é</b>
PRO.1PL	VENT	be.at	PRO.3SG
‘We existed’		(Flex_Sto: Maw 10.1)	

Two features are to be noted with respect to the existential construction in Tə̀́úgbè:

- The verbal predicate is invariably the locative predicate **lè** ‘be.at’ or its non-present variant **nò**.
- The ground of the existential construction is always the third person singular pronoun, and, phonetically, it is assimilated to the vowel of the locative predicate.

In addition, it is important to note that the entity that occurs in the subject position of the existential construction can occur with or without modifiers and determiners. Following from these features, the existential construction corresponds to the following pattern:

Role:	FIGURE	PREDICATE	GROUND
Function:	SUBJ	V	COMPL
Morpho-synt:	NP	lè-	PRO.3SG

It may be tempting to assume that the construction (as illustrated in example (7)) has no complement and that the third person object singular pronoun does not occur.

Evidence for the claim that the locative predicate is followed by a third person singular object pronoun comes from the fact that, the locative predicate, which has a low tone, is realized with a high tone in the existential construction. The high tone, it can be argued, is the high tone of the third person singular that occurs as the complement of the locative predicate. The high tone then docks on the vowel of the locative predicate during the assimilation process. Witness the tone on the locative predicate in the example below:

8. *dɔ́fɛ́ mé lé ò*  
**dɔ́fɛ́**            **mé**        **lè**            **-é**            **ò**  
 place.of.sleep NEG    be.at    -PRO.3SG    NEG  
 ‘There is no place to rest’            (Flex\_Sto: Maw 48.1)

The third person singular pronoun of the existential construction references an unspecified ground. Evidence for this assertion comes from the non-present variant of the construction, in which the non-present variant of the locative predicate, *viz.* **nò** occurs. In this case, the third person singular complement can be replaced by the noun **anyī** ‘ground’. Hence, the non-past variant of example (8) above can be either (9) or (10).

9. *dɔ́fɛ́ mé nòé ò*  
**dɔ́fɛ́**            **mé**        **nò**            **-é**            **ò**  
 place.of.sleep NEG    be.at:PST    -PRO.3SG    NEG  
 ‘There was no place to rest’
10. **dɔ́fɛ́**            **mé**        **nò**            **anyī**        **ò**  
 place.of.sleep NEG    be.at:PST    ground    NEG  
 ‘There was no place to rest’

Following from this, it can be said that existential meaning in Tɔ̀ng̀be is as a result of the location of an entity at an unspecified place, referenced by the assimilated third person singular that occurs in complement position. That third person singular references an unspecified ground in an existential construction is not rare cross-linguistically *e.g.* French *il y a*, German *da sind*, Dutch *er is*.

### 3. Locative constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe

In locative constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe, as is the case in the existential construction, an entity, the **figure**, is located at a place, the **ground**. In example (11) below, for instance, **atùkpáá** ‘the bottle’ functions as the figure, whereas **ekpè dzí** ‘stone top’, functions as the ground.

11. *atùkpáá tsá tìtrè lé ekpe dzí*  
**atùkpá-á**      **tsí**      **atìtrè**      **lé**      **ekpe**      **dzí**  
 bottle-ART.DEF    remain    upright    at      stone    top  
 ‘The bottle is upright on a stone’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 22.1)

The figure in the locative construction in (11) is encoded as the clausal subject whereas the ground occurs in complement position. Witness also the position of **agbèliés** ‘the cassavas’ and **kùsíè mè** ‘inside the basket’ vis-à-vis the locative predicate.

12. *agbèliés lè kùsíè mè*  
**agbèli-á-wó**      **lè**      **kùsí-á**      **mè**  
 cassava-ART.DEF-PL    be.at    basket-ART.DEF    inside  
 ‘The cassavas are in the basket’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 49.1)

Two features are to be noted with respect to the locative construction in Tɔ̀nùgbe which distinguish it from the existential construction:

- The verbal predicate can be the locative predicate **lè** ‘be.at’ and its non-present variant, or other verbs.
- The ground of the locative construction can be a noun phrase or an adpositional phrase.

Below, I explore these features of Tɔ̀nùgbe locative constructions. I first of all survey the verbal predicates that occur in Tɔ̀nùgbe locative constructions and the oppositions that these engender (section 3.1). I then continue to present the different units that function as grounds in Tɔ̀nùgbe locative constructions and the different roles associated with their constituent parts (3.2).

### 3.1. Verbs in locative constructions

Locative constructions can involve other verbs apart from the locative predicate, as is also the case in other dialects of Ewe<sup>42</sup>. The following examples illustrate the verbs **xíxá** ‘stick’ and **dzò** ‘be straight’ occurring in locative constructions:

13. *bólùó xíxá lé atīé álònú*  
**bólù-á**            **xíxá**      **lé**            **atī-á**            **wó**  
 ball-ART.DEF      stick      at            tree-ART.DEF      POSS  
**alò-nú**  
 wrist-mouth  
 ‘The ball is stuck on the branch of the tree’  
 (Flex\_Loc: Dav 12.1)

14. *agbèlitié dzò lá tīkpóó ñú*  
**agbèlì-tí-á**            **dzò**            **lé**            **tīkpó-á**  
 cassava-tree-ART.DEF      be.straight      ALL      wood-ART.DEF  
**ñú**  
 skin  
 ‘The cassava stick is standing by the wood’  
 (Flex\_Loc: Dav 117.1)

I refer to locative constructions that involve the locative predicate as the Basic locative construction and to locative constructions that involve other verbs as non-basic locative constructions.

#### 3.1.1. Basic and non-basic locative constructions

Basic locative constructions respond to the question ‘Where is X?’, whereas non-basic locative constructions offer a more complex information<sup>43</sup>.

Further distinctions are to be noted in the meanings expressed by basic locative constructions and non-basic locative constructions. To

<sup>42</sup> For more details on the different verbs that occur to encode location in Ewe, cf. Ameka 1995, and Ameka 2006

<sup>43</sup> For an extensive discussion of basic locative constructions in typology, see Fortis 2010.

understand the meanings expressed by both types of locative constructions, two parameters need to be taken into consideration:

- The role of the verbal predicate: expressing the relation between figure and ground.
- The role of the constitutive parts of the ground: the ground information in Tə̀ng̀be locative constructions is indicated by a reference object (typically the dependent noun phrase of an adpositional phrase), and a search domain particle that indicates the part of the reference object where the figure is located (typically carried out by a postposition).

The functions performed by the various categories that occur in locative constructions of Tə̀ng̀be are illustrated below:

FIGURE	RELATION	REF. OBJECT	S. DOMAIN
15. <i>ayíéó lè kplǒó dzí</i>			
<b>ayí-á-wó</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>kplǒ-á</b>	<b>dzí</b>
beans-ART.DEF-PL	be.at	table-ART.DEF	top
‘The beans are on the table’		(Flex_Loc: Dav 20.1)	

In basic locative constructions, *i.e.* locative constructions in which the locative predicate occurs, reference is made to only the relation between the figure and the ground; In non-basic locative constructions, *i.e.* locative constructions in which other verbs occur, the relation includes a specification of the configuration of the figure vis-à-vis the ground (Ameka 2006).

In other words, while the non-basic locative construction states how the figure is situated, the basic-locative construction does not. For example, in the construction below, in which the posture verb **xátsá** ‘tie’ occurs, apart from stating the relation between the figure and ground, the information included in the meaning of **xátsá** involves the fact that the figure is tied around the ground.

16. <i>ekàá xátsá lé kpḗé ɲú</i>				
<b>ekà-á</b>	<b>xátsá</b>	<b>lé</b>	<b>kpē-á</b>	<b>ɲú</b>
rope-ART.DEF	tie	at	stone-ART.DEF	skin
‘The rope is tied around the stone’				

Non-basic locative constructions can further be sub-divided into internal locative constructions and external locative constructions according to the role the events described by the verb play in the location relation.

### 3.1.2. Internal and external non-basic locative constructions

In internal non-basic locative constructions, the events expressed by the verb are internal to the locative description. In external non-basic locative constructions, the events expressed by the verb are external to the locative description.

Example (17) is an example of an internal non-basic locative construction. Therefore, the events expressed by the verb **mló** ‘lie’ are internal to the locative description, *i.e.* the verb specifies the relation between the figure and the ground.

17. *avū́s kplí tòdzóó há wó mló anyi leó gbó*  
avū-á            kplí    tòdzó-á    há    wó    mló  
 dog-ART.DEF    and    cat-ART.DEF    also    PRO.3PL    lie  
anyī    le    wó    gbó  
 ground    at    PRO.3PL    vicinity  
 ‘The dog and the cat are lying by them’ (Flex\_Ext:Dzi 82.1)

Example (18) is an example of an external non-basic locative construction. Therefore, the events expressed by the verb **dà** ‘throw’ do not specify the relation between the figure **tá ví álé** ‘a small head’ and the ground **ezìē dzí** ‘the surface of the chair’.

18. *é gá dà tá ví álé lé ezìē dzí*  
é            gá    dà    tá    ví    álé    lé  
 PRO.3SG    REP    throw    head    small    ART.INDF    at  
ezì-á            dzí  
 chair-ART.DEF    top  
 ‘Lit. He again threw his head on the chair small’  
 ‘(He slept on the chair for a while)’ (Flex\_Nar: Afi 14.1)

The discussions that follow in this chapter mainly concern internal non-basic locative constructions although sporadic references are



made to external non-basic locative constructions. I therefore continue to detail the features of the verbs that occur in internal non-basic locative constructions.

### 3.1.3. Internal non-basic locative constructions

Verbs that occur in internal non-basic locative constructions are posture verbs. These verbs include **simple verbs** such as **mló** ‘lie’ **dì** ‘bury’; and **inherent complement verbs** (see chapter 1 section 4.2 for details on inherent complement verbs) such as **tsí atìtrè** ‘stay stand’ **tsò agā** ‘cut place’. The following examples illustrate these verbs in locative constructions.

19. *ekàá mló atīé wá lè dzí*  
**ekàá**            **mló**    **atī-á**            **wó**    **alò**    **dzí**  
 rope-ART.DEF    lie    tree-ART.DEF    POSS    wrist    top  
 ‘The rope is lying on the branch of the tree’  
 (Flex\_Loc: Dav 113.1)
20. *atīé dī lá nyīgbá mè*  
**atī**    **dī**    **lé**    **nyīgbá**    **mè**  
 tree    bury    at    ground    inside  
 ‘The stick is buried in the ground’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 129.1)
21. *atùkpáá tsá tìtrè lé ekpè dzí*  
**atùkpá-á**            **tsí**    **atìtrè**    **lé**    **ekpè**    **dzí**  
 bottle-ART.DEF    remain    upright    at    stone    top  
 ‘The bottle is upright on a stone’ (=11)
22. *atùkpáá tsò agā le kùsìé mè*  
**atùkpá-á**            **tsò**    **agā**    **le**    **kùsì-á**  
 bottle-ART.DEF    cut    place    at    basket-ART.DEF  
**mè**  
 inside  
 ‘The bottle cuts across the basket’

When the simple verbs occur in internal non-basic locative constructions, the relation can be stated by the verb or can be stated by a combination of the verb and a preposition. In the latter case, the

postposition of the phrase that references the ground can occur or it can be elided.

In example (23), the configurational relation is stated by the verb. In example (24), the configurational relation is stated by the combination of the verb **kàkà** ‘spread’ and the allative preposition (the postposition is elided). In example (25), the configurational relation is stated by the combination of the verb **gbà** ‘cover’ and the allative preposition (the postposition is not elided).

23. *atīé mló ekplṣ́ó dzí*

**atī-á**                      **mló**    **ekplṣ́-á**                      **dzí**  
tree-ART.DEF            lie    table-ART.DEF            top  
‘The stick is lying on the table’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 119.1)

24. *ayíéó kàkà lá nyīgbá*

**ayí-á-wó**                      **kàkà**    **lé**                      **anyīgbá**  
bean-ART.DEF-PL    spread    at                      ground  
‘The beans are spread on the ground’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 18.1)

25. *avòó gba lé ekplṣ́ó dzí*

**avò-á**                      **gba**                      **lé**                      **ekplṣ́-á**                      **dzí**  
cloth-ART.DEF            cover    at                      table-ART.DEF            top  
‘The cloth covers the table’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 79.1)

On the other hand, when inherent complement verbs occur in non-basic internal locative constructions, the verb, together with a preposition, indicates the configurational relation. In example (26), the verb **tsò agā** ‘cut place’ in combination with the locative preposition states the configurational relation of the locative relation. Example (27) is odd because the locative preposition is elided.

26. *atīé tsò agā le atīkpóó nù*

**atī-á**                      **tsò**    **agā**    **le**                      **atīkpó-á**                      **nù**  
tree-ART.DEF            cut    place    at                      wood-ART.DEF            skin  
‘The stick cuts across the side of the wood’  
(Flex\_Loc: Dav 131.1)

27. *?atīé tsò agā atīkpó-á ńú*

**atī-á**            **tsò**    **agā**    **atīkpó-á**            **ńú**  
tree-ART.DEF    cut    place    wood-ART.DEF    skin  
‘The stick cuts across the side of the wood’

(Flex\_Loc: Dav 131.1)

In sum, locative constructions of Tə̀ńúgbe can be divided into two main types: the basic locative construction and the non-basic locative construction. The non-basic locative construction can further be subdivided into internal non-basic locative constructions and non-internal locative constructions. The divisions within locative constructions can be summarized in the table below:

Table 11: Sub-divisions of Tə̀ńúgbe locative constructions according to verbal predicate

	Verb	Relation	Loc. description
<b>Basic locative</b>	Loc.pred	-configuration	+internal
<b>Non-basic locative</b>			
<b>Internal</b>	posture	+configuration	+internal
<b>External</b>	transitive	+configuration	-internal

### 3.2. Grounds in locative constructions

The ground in Tə̀ńúgbe locative constructions can be a noun phrase (an adverbial of place) or an adpositional phrase. In example (28) for instance, the ground is the noun phrase adverbial **gíyíé** ‘this place’, while in example (29) the ground is the postpositional phrase **kplṣ́ dzí** ‘top of the table’.

28. *mì lè gíyíé*

**mì**                    **lè**                    **gā-yíé**  
PRO.2PL            be.at                    place-DEM  
‘Lit. You are at this place’  
‘(You are here)’ (Flex\_Sto:Azi 284:1)

29. *bólù-á lè kplṣ́ dzí*

**bólù-á**            **lè**                    **kplṣ́-á**            **dzí**  
ball-ART.DEF    be.at                    table-ART.DEF    top  
‘The ball is on the table’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 6.1)

In addition to this, the complement of locative constructions of Tɔ̀ngúgbè can also involve prepositions. The prepositions that are involved are the allative *viz.* **lé** and the locative *i.e.* **le**. They can occur as the head of a prepositional phrase that functions as the complement of the verb or they occur as the head of the adpositional phrase (involving a dependent postpositional phrase) that functions as complement (cf. Aboh & Essegbey 2009).

In example (30) for instance, the preposition phrase **lá nyīgbá** ‘at ground’ occurs to function as the complement of the verb. In example (31) the adpositional phrase **lè kùsìé mè** ‘in the basket’, of which the locative is part, occurs to function as the complement of the verb.

30. *ayíéó kàkà lá nyīgbá*  
**ayí-á-wó**            **kàkà**    **lé**        **anyīgbá**  
 bean-ART.DEF-PL    spread    at        ground  
 ‘The beans are spread on the ground’ (=24)

31. *atùkpáá tsò agā le kùsìé mè*  
**atùkpá-á**        **tsò**    **agā**        **le**        **kùsì-á**  
 bottle-ART.DEF    cut        place        at        basket-ART.DEF  
**mè**  
 inside  
 ‘The bottle cuts across the basket’ (Flex\_Loc: Dav 24.1)

As mentioned earlier in section 3.1.1 with respect to the adpositional phrase, the adposition functions as a search domain indicator while the dependent of the adpositional phrase *i.e.* the noun phrase, functions as the reference object; in the prepositional phrase, the preposition, coupled with the verb, indicates the locative relation, while the dependent of the prepositional phrase *i.e.* the noun phrase, functions as the reference object.

The different locative constructions noted in section 3.1.3 above, coupled with the different grounds and the roles that the constituent parts perform, can be summarized below:

Basic Locative Construction

FIGURE	RELATION	GROUND	
<b>Figure</b>	<b>Relation</b>	<b>[Ref. Obj</b>	<b>S. domain]</b>
SUBJ	PREDICATE		COMPL
i. NP	LOC.PRED	NP	
ii. NP	LOC.PRED	NP	POSTP

Non-Basic Locative Construction

<i>internal</i>			
FIGURE	CONF. RELAT.	GROUND	
<b>Figure</b>	<b>Conf. Relat.</b>	<b>[Ref.Obj</b>	<b>S.domain]</b>
SUBJ	PREDICATE		COMPL
NP	V	NP	POSTP

FIGURE	RELATION		GROUND	
<b>Figure</b>	<b>[Conf. Relat.</b>	<b>Relat.]</b>	<b>[Ref.Obj</b>	<b>S. domain]</b>
SUBJ	PREDICATE		COMPL	
i. NP	V	PREP	NP	
ii. NP	V	PREP	NP	POSTP

<i>External</i>					
FIGURE	RELATION			GROUND	
<b>Figure</b>	<b>[Conf. Relat.</b>	<b>Relat]</b>	<b>[Ref.Obj</b>	<b>S.domain]</b>	
SUBJ	PREDICATE	OBJ		COMPL	
NP	V	N	PREP	NP	POSTP

---

**4. The existential construction and locative constructions**

As has been mentioned in section 2, the existential construction corresponds to the following pattern:

FIGURE	PREDICATE	GROUND
SUBJ	V	COMPL
NP	lè-	PRO.3SG

Following from section (3) above, the pattern of the existential construction and the first two patterns of locative constructions

demonstrate some similarities, insofar as they involve the locative predicate. However, this similarity is neutralized in the ground that occurs in both constructions.

Thus, while the existential construction has the third person singular as its complement, the locative constructions have either a noun phrase or a postpositional phrase as a complement of the locative predicate. The morphosyntactic pattern, *i.e.* the low-level representation of the constructions that have the locative predicate in both the existential and the locative constructions (the differences are in bold) are as follows:

EXISTENTIAL	—————>	NP LOC.PRED <b>PRO.3SG</b>
LOCATIVE	—————>	NP LOC.PRED <b>NP</b>
LOCATIVE	—————>	NP LOC.PRED <b>NP POSTP</b>

Consequently, when the third person singular pronoun complement of the existential construction is replaced with either a noun phrase (that functions as an adverbial of place) or a postpositional phrase, the construction expresses location as demonstrated in the following examples.

32. *mí vá lé* *Existential*  
**mí**      **vá**      **lè**      **é**  
 PRO.1PL    VENT    be.at    PRO.3SG  
 ‘We existed’                    (=7)
33. *mí vá lè gámá* *Locative*  
**mí**      **vá**      **lè**      **gā-má**  
 PRO.1PL    VENT    be.at    place-DEM  
 ‘Lit. We are at that place’  
 ‘(We are there)’
34. **mí**      **vá**      **lè**      **Kofí** **gbó** *Locative*  
 PRO.1PL    VENT    be.at    Kofi    vicinity  
 ‘Lit. We are at Kofi’s end’  
 ‘(We are with Kofi)’

It can therefore be stated that while existential constructions express the idea that something is located at an undefined spatial location, locative constructions express the idea that something is located at a defined place: in locative constructions with a noun phrase complement, the noun phrase (alone) has a ground function; in locative constructions with adpositional phrase complements, there is a sort of division of labor among the constituents of the adpositional phrase *i.e.* whereas the noun functions as a reference object, the adposition functions as a search domain entity (Ameka 1995: 141), and locates the area or the part of the reference object where the figure is located. In example (35) below for instance, the noun **atíkpo** ‘wood’ functions as the reference object. The postposition **dzi** ‘top’ locates the relevant area of the reference object.

35. *agbèlìé lè atíkpoó dzi*  
**agbèlì-á**            **lè**            **atíkpo-á**            **dzi**  
 cassava-ART.DEF    be.at    wood-ART.DEF    top  
 ‘The cassava is **on top of the stump**’  
 (Flex\_Loc : Dav 51.1)

Consequently, while the meaning expressed by locative constructions with noun phrase complements can be glossed as ‘something is located at a specific place’; the meaning expressed by locative constructions with adpositional phrase complements corresponds to ‘something is located at a particular area of a specific entity’.

## 5. Possessive, Existential and Locative constructions

In the preceding sub-subsections, I have detailed the existential construction and the different locative constructions of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbɛ that are under consideration. I have also investigated the morpho-syntactic and semantic relationships that exist between Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbɛ locative constructions and the existential construction. This section explores the relationships between existential and locative constructions on one hand, and possessive constructions, on the other hand.

### 5.1. Initial remarks on the complex relationships

Possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbɛ can be either adnominal (the attributive possessive construction) or clausal (the predicative possessive construction and the external possessor construction).

Since the locative and existential constructions are clausal in nature, their relationship with attributive possessive constructions does not feature prominently in the discussions. Nevertheless, attributive possessive constructions do demonstrate some relationships with existential and locative constructions.

I will therefore show that attributive possessive constructions can be integrated into either existential or locative constructions (section 5.2). I will show next the relationships between locative possessive, existential and locative constructions (section 5.3).

### 5.2. Attributive possessive constructions in existential and locative constructions

Attributive possessive constructions can occur as the figure in both existential and locative constructions. Witness the following examples in which attributive possessive constructions occur as the figure in an existential construction (36) and a locative construction (37).

36. *wó kplí wó nàné wó lé*  
wó      kplí    wó    nàné    wó  
 PRO.3PL    and    POSS    mother    PRO.3PL  
*lè-é*  
 be.at-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. They and her mother they exist’  
 ‘(They stayed together with her mother)’ (Flex\_Ext: Des 2.1)
37. *mì kplí dada-wò mì lè gíyíé*  
 PRO.2PL    and    sister-PRO.2SG    PRO.2PL    be.at    here  
 ‘Lit. You and your elder sister you are here’  
 ‘(You stay here with your elder sister)’  
 (Flex\_Sto: Azi 284.1)

Attributive possessive constructions can also serve as the reference object in locative constructions. If the possessee of a juxtaposed attributive possessive construction grammaticalizes into an adposition marking a spatial relationship, it becomes with respect to the possessor a grammatical marker highlighting the relevant area. In spatial terms, the possessor becomes the ground or reference object,



and the possessee, converted into a spatial designation term, specifies the area of the reference object relevant for the location, *i. e.* it has the role of a search domain designator. Hence, in example (38) below, the ground **egbè gòmè** ‘grass under’ is basically the lower section of grass.

38. **tòdzó váyì nò egbè gòmè**  
 cat ALT be.at:PST grass below.section  
 ‘Lit. Cat went to be at the bottom of grass’  
 ‘(The cat sat under grass)’ (Flex\_Sto: Viv 82.1)

### 5.3. Locative possessive constructions, existential construction and locative constructions

Two kinds of predicative possessive constructions were identified in Tṛnùgbe: copular possessive constructions and locative possessive constructions (see chapter 4). The following discussions involve only locative possessive constructions, illustrated by example (39) below.

39. **nàné nò sí**  
**nàné nò é sí**  
 something be.at:PST PRO.3SG hand  
 ‘He/she had something’

The relationship between locative possessive constructions, the existential construction and locative constructions is most obvious in the case where the three constructions involve the locative predicate (section 5.3.1). However, some parallels can also be drawn between these constructions when other verbal predicates are involved (section 5.3.2).

#### 5.3.1. Relationships characterized by the locative predicate

- *Locative predicate and constituent order*

The presence of the locative predicate in the three constructions has consequence on the constituent order of the three constructions. Indeed, in the three constructions, generally, word order is: SUBJECT-LOCATIVE PREDICATE-COMPLEMENT. Witness the word order in the three constructions below:

## Possessive

	SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT	
	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Adposition</u>
40.	<b>tòdzó</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>é</b>	<b>sí</b>
	cat	be.at	PRO.3SG	hand
	'She has a cat'			(=1)

## Locative

	SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT	
	<u>Noun phrase</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Noun</u>	
41.	<i>bólùs lè anyìgbá</i>			
	<b>bólù-á</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>anyìgbá</b>	
	bottle-ART.DEF	be.at	ground	
	'The ball is on the ground'			(=2)

## Existential

	SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT	
	<u>Noun</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Pronoun</u>	
42.	<i>wó lé</i>			
	<b>wó</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>é</b>	
	PRO.3PL	be.at	PRO.3SG	
	'They existed'			(=3)

- *Locative predicate and syntactic construction of the nominal arguments*

There are however some slight differences with respect to argument structure. Firstly, while the locative (basic) and existential construction can have a nominal complement, locative possessive constructions with the locative predicate require an adpositional phrase.

Secondly, while the locative construction and the locative possessive construction can have a postpositional phrase as their complement, this is not the case for the existential construction. The table below summarizes these syntactic differences between the three constructions.

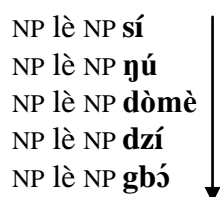
Table 12: Preliminary structural differences between possessive, locative and existential constructions

	Nominal Compl.	PostP. Phr. Compl.
<b>Possessive</b>		*
<b>Locative</b>	*	*
<b>Existential</b>	*	

- *The conditions of use of postpositions in locative and locative possessive constructions*

With respect to the postpositions heading the complement of locative and locative possessive constructions, there is a large overlap. Interestingly, however, a more fine-grained comparison of their conditions of use reveals opposite tendencies.

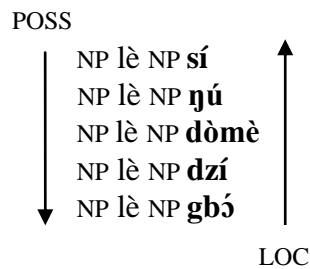
In chapter 4, section 3.1.1, I argued that locative possessive constructions involving the postposition **así** ‘hand’ are the default constructions used to express stative predicative possession, because **así** ‘hand’ has grammaticalized in this construction into a marker of possession. Concerning the other postpositions that occur in locative possessive constructions, I noted that the construction in which they are used takes on a possessive meaning only when particular (pragmatic, syntactic and semantic) conditions are satisfied. On the basis of their propensity to enter into a locative possessive construction, I proposed, in the conclusion of chapter 4, the following scale:



The higher a postposition is on this scale, the more appropriate it is for expressing possession; the lower the postposition is on the scale, the less appropriate it is for expressing possession.

It turns out that the inverse scale is valid for locative constructions as well. As such, the lower a postposition is on the scale above, the more

appropriate it is for expressing location, and the higher the postposition is on the scale, the less appropriate it is for expressing location. Thus, the occurrence of postpositions in either construction can be represented as follows:



It has to be observed that some postpositions that occur in locative constructions seldom occur in locative possessive constructions. This is the case of postpositions such as **nú** ‘entry’ **gòmè** ‘under’ **tá** ‘top’ **xá** ‘side’ **tó** ‘edge’ etc.

- *Spatial location as the common semantic feature of the three constructions*

The meanings expressed by the existential construction, locative constructions and locative possessive constructions, all involve location. While in the existential construction the figure exists somewhere (see section 2 above), in locative constructions the figure exists at a specific place or at a specific area of a specific place (see section 3 above). The location meaning in locative possessive constructions on the other hand, needs some explanation.

In chapter 4 section 3.1 it was noted that locative possessive constructions typically construe the possessee as located in a space that is relative to the possessor. Thus, the possessee, expressed by the subject in these constructions, functions like the figure in both existential and locative constructions, while the possessor, expressed by the adpositional phrase, functions in a comparable way to the ground in locative constructions: the possessor functions as the reference object, and the adposition functions as the search domain indicator. The functions fulfilled by the categories in the locative possessive construction can be represented as follows:

FIGURE	RELATION	GROUND	
<u>figure</u>	<u>relation</u>	<u>ref.object</u>	<u>search domain</u>
possessee	relation	possessor	postposition
43. <i>nàné nò sí</i>			
<b>nàné</b>	<b>nò</b>	<b>é</b>	<b>sí</b>
something	be.at.PST	PRO.3SG	hand
‘He/she had something’			

• *Definiteness in locative and locative possessive constructions*

Ameka (1991:209-210) argues that, possessive constructions are interpreted by native speakers as locational when the noun that functions as possessee is construed as definite. He provides as evidence the ability to paraphrase locative possessive constructions (that have a definite marker with the possessee) with locative constructions. The following examples illustrate his point *i.e.* example (45) is a paraphrase of example (44):

44. **ga**      **lá**              **le**      **Kofí**      **sí**  
 money ART.DEF    be.at    Kofi      hand  
 ‘The money is with Kofi’
45. **ga**      **lá**              **le**      **Kofí**      **gbó**  
 money ART.DEF    be.at    Kofi      side  
 ‘The money is with Kofi’ (Ameka 1991: 210)

Although Ameka’s (1991) arguments are based on data from standard Ewe, his arguments equally hold true in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. Therefore, when the possessee in locative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe is construed as definite, the meaning of the construction is interpreted as locative. Thus, the possessive construction can be paraphrased with a locative construction. Example (46) and its paraphrase in example (47) below:

46. *avū́ó lè Kofí sí*  
**avū-á**              **lè**      **Kofí**      **sí**  
 dog-ART.DEF    be.at    Kofi      hand  
 ‘Kofi has the dog’

47. *avū́s lè Kofi gbó*  
**avū́-á**      **lè**      **Kofi**   **gbó**  
 dog-ART.DEF   be.at   Kofi   vicinity  
 ‘The dog is with Kofi’

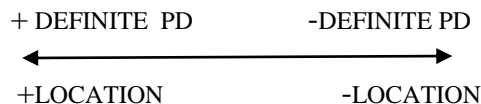
However, locative possessive constructions in which the possessee is not construed as being definite cannot be paraphrased with the locative construction. Example (48) cannot therefore be adequately paraphrased as (49).

48. *evī dèkǎ kǒ lèé sí*  
**evī**    **dèkǎ**   **ko-é**    **lè**    **é**        **sí**  
 child   one   only-FOC   be.at   PRO.3SG   hand  
 ‘She had only one child’

49. *evī dèkǎ kǒ lèé gbó*  
**evī**    **dèkǎ**   **ko-é**    **lè**    **é**        **gbó**  
 child   one   only-FOC   be.at   PRO.3SG   vicinity  
 ‘She has only one child in her care’

Given that definite nouns are known members of a class; and indefinite nouns (and by extension bare nouns) are unknown or ‘certain’ members of a known class (see chapter 1 section 4.1.5 for details on articles in Tɔ̀ngugbe), it can be stated that location is prominent in possessive meaning when the possessee is a known entity.

On the other hand, location is implicit in possessive meaning when the possessee is an unknown or a certain member of class. The degree of location in possessive meaning and its correlation to definiteness of possessee in locative possessive constructions can thus be represented as follows:



A final comment is worth making before bringing the discussion on location meaning in locative possessive constructions and its interrelatedness with definiteness to an end. It may be tempting to assume that the above observations are evidence of the fact that possessive constructions are underlying locative constructions, transformable by a ( $\pm$ ) feature on the possessee (cf. Freeze 1992). Although the idea is not without merit, it should be noted that, locative possessive constructions involve more than location and definiteness (cf. chapter 4, section 3.1 for a survey of the various contexts, meanings etc. associated with the different locative possessive constructions).

More importantly, formally marked definiteness does not always result in the asymmetry represented above (that is why I employed the word ‘construe’). Thus, it could be the case that the definite article for instance occurs with a noun that functions as possessee, but the construction cannot be interpreted as locative when a dependent clause that follows the possessive construction expresses the ‘refusal to use possessed entity’.

I illustrate this with examples (50) and (51) below. Contrary to what pertains in examples (48) and (49) above, example (50), although with a definite article on the noun that functions as possessee, cannot be paraphrased as a locative construction due to the dependent clause that expresses the ‘refusal to use possessed entity’.

50. *awùó lè sí (gàkē é gbé dodo)*

<b>[awù-á</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>é</b>	<b>sí]</b>	<b>(gàkē</b>	<b>é</b>
dress-ART.DEF	be.at	PRO.3SG	hand	but	PRO.3SG
<b>gbé</b>	<b>dódó)</b>				
refuse	wear				

‘He has the dress (one of it), but he has refused to wear it’

51. *awùs lè gbó gākē é gbé dódó*  
 [awù-á lè é gbó] gākē  
 dress-ART.DEF be.at PRO.3SG vicinity but  
 é gbé dódó  
 PRO.3SG refuse wear  
 ‘The dress is with him, but he has refused to wear it’

The suggestion I am putting across then is that a formal ( $\pm$ ) definite feature on the noun that occurs in subject position is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition to obtain a locative. So, the locative possessive construction cannot be reduced to an underlying locative construction based on this formal feature.

The different relationships between the locative possessive, the existential and the different locative constructions that are characterized by the locative predicate can therefore be summarized as follows:

*Table 13: relationships between locative possessive, existential and locative constructions*

	<b>Possessive</b>	<b>Locative</b>	<b>Existential</b>
Meaning	+LOCATION	+LOCATION	+LOCATION
Sem. Roles	FIG GR PD PR	FIG GR	FIG GR
Synt. Function	S V COMPL	S V COMPL	S V COMPL
Compl. category	Post. phrase	Post.phrase nominal	Nominal(PRO)
S. definiteness	(-)Definite	(+)Definite	Indifferent

### 5.3.2. Relationships characterized by other verbal predicates

- *Verbal predicates: lexical variation*

The possessive and locative constructions are again in opposition to the existential construction concerning the range of verbs that can participate in the construction. While the possessive and locative constructions can involve other verbs, the existential construction involves only the locative predicate. Below is a summary of the verbs that occur in both construction types.



	POSSESSIVE	LOCATIVE	EXISTENTIAL
VERB	+quantifying	+posture	+locative predicate
TYPE	+transfer +loc.predicate	+loc.predicate	

The locative construction, as demonstrated in section 3 above, can occur with posture verbs in non-basic locative constructions. As noted in chapter 4, section 3, locative possessive constructions can involve verbs of transfer of possession such as **ká** ‘contact’ **sù** ‘suffice’ **ḡó** ‘reach’, and quantifying variants of the locative predicate instantiated by verbs such as **sùgbō** ‘be plenty’, **bó** ‘be abundant’, **gbàgō** ‘be overflowing’ etc.

• **Other verbal predicates and constituent order**

When verbs of transfer of possession or quantifying verbs occur in the possessive construction, the construction involves both prepositions and postpositions. These constructions exhibit syntactic parallels (but not semantic parallels) with internal non-basic locative constructions (see section 3.1.3 above for details on internal non-basic locative constructions) that equally involve both prepositions and adpositions *i.e.* the third configuration of non-basic possessive constructions as presented in section (4) above. The following examples illustrate the similarity in constituent order in the possessive (52) and internal non-basic locative construction (53).

	FIGURE	RELATION		GROUND	
	<b>Figure</b>	<b>Conf.rel</b>	<b>Relat.</b>	<b>Ref.object</b>	<b>Se. domain</b>
	<u>Possessee</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Prep.</u>	<u>Possessor</u>	<u>Postposition</u>
52.	<i>agbèlì bǒ ló' sí kò</i>				
	<b>agbèlì</b>	<b>bó</b>	<b>lé</b>	<b>wó</b>	<b>sí</b>
	cassava	be.abundant	at	PRO.3PL	hand
	‘They have a lot of cassava’				

	FIGURE	RELATION		GROUND	
	<b>Figure</b>	<b>C.relat.</b>	<b>Relat.</b>	<b>Ref. object</b>	<b>Se. dom.</b>
	<u>Noun phrase</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Prep</u>	<u>Noun phrase</u>	<u>Postpos.</u>
53.	<i>avòó gba lé ekplǎ́ǎ́ dzí</i>				
	<b>avò-á</b>	<b>gba</b>	<b>lé</b>	<b>ekplǎ́-á</b>	<b>dzí</b>
	cloth-ART.DEF	cover	at	table-ART.DEF	top
	‘The cloth covers the table’			(=25)	

However, for some other possessive constructions that involve other verbal predicates, no such parallelism in constituent order can be established with basic or ‘internal’ non-basic locative constructions. For instance, possessive constructions that involve the allative (see chapter 4, section 3.2.2), *viz.* example (54) below, do not find parallels in basic and internal non-basic locative constructions.

54.	<i>é tsó lànú lá sí</i>				
	<b>é</b>	<b>tsó</b>	<b>lànú</b>	<b>lé</b>	<b>así</b>
	PRO.3SG	carry	weapon	at	hand
	‘He/she has a weapon’				

## 6. Relationships between clause final dative-oblique constructions

As detailed in chapter 5, external possessor constructions are constructions in which although there is semantically a possessive relationship involving the dependency of the possessor with respect to the possessee, both the possessor and the possessee are encoded as autonomous arguments of the verb. Witness an external possessor construction of Tɔ̀nùgbe below:

70.	<b>Ama</b>	<b>ɲé</b>	<b>afò</b>	<b>né</b>	<b>Kofí</b>
	Ama	break	leg	DAT	Kofi
	‘Ama has broken Kofi’s leg’				

The major pattern of the external possessive construction in Tɔ̀nùgbe is characterized by the presence of a dative-oblique, which is left unexpressed when coreferential with the subject of the construction, while the possessee generally occurs as the object of the verb. The

discussions that follow concern this type of external possessor constructions *i.e.* object possessee external possessor constructions in which the predicate is a simple predicate, and in which the dative-oblique is expressed (see chapter 5, section 2 for details on this construction).

The dative-oblique participates in other constructions that express possession. Example (71) illustrates one such construction.

71. **nyànú** **lè** **xò-nú** **né** **Dǒtsé**  
 woman be.at room-mouth DAT Dotse  
 ‘Lit. A woman is at home for Dotse’  
 ‘(Dotse has a wife)’

A critical observation of the construction in example (71) above shows that the construction is composed of a basic locative construction “NP+be.at+NP+**DATIVE-OBLIQUE**”. Moreover, this construction allows instead of the postpositional phrase, the third person singular pronoun, without loss of the possessive meaning. Witness an instance of such a construction below:

72. **tá-gbó** **mé** **lè** **é** **né**  
 head-vicinity NEG be.at PRO.3SG DAT  
**mì-à?**  
 PRO.2PL-Q  
 ‘Lit. Do you not have your head-sides?’  
 ‘(Are you mad?)’

A critical observation of the construction in (72) shows that it is composed of an existential construction “NP+be.at+PRO.3SG+**DATIVE-OBLIQUE**”.

From the above illustrations, it can be said that, the dative-oblique triggers a possessive interpretation when it occurs with locative and existential constructions. The ability of the dative-oblique possessor to trigger a possessive meaning in locative constructions is not to be restricted to only the basic locative construction. When the dative-oblique possessor is added to a non-basic locative construction, the

construction equally expresses possession. Witness the construction below:

73. *atīé mló kpló dzi nú*  
**atī-á mló ekpló dzi ná-m**  
 tree-ART.DEF lie table top DAT-PRO.1SG  
 ‘The tree is lying across my table’

Typically, when the dative-oblique possessor occurs clause-finally of either locative or existential constructions, the possessive meaning that is expressed can be glossed as X’s Y. Nouns that function as possessees are prototypically body part terms or nouns that are conceived as belonging to the personal sphere of the possessor. Witness the possessive meaning expressed by the construction in example (74).

74. *dèví lè akó né Do*  
 child be.at bossom DAT Doe  
 ‘Lit. A child is in Doe’s bossom’  
 ‘(Doe is carrying a child)’

This sub-section attempts to account for the different slots of the locative+dative-oblique and existential +dative-oblique that function as possessees.

### 6.1. Syntactic function of the possessee in clause-final dative-oblique constructions

When the dative-oblique occurs clause-finally in the existential construction or in locative constructions, the possessive relation can hold not only between the noun that occurs as the complement of the locative predicate and the dependent noun phrase of the dative oblique, but also between the subject of the construction and the dependent of the dative-oblique.

In example (75), the possessee is the noun that occurs in complement position while the possessor occurs as a dependent of the dative. In example (76), the possessee occurs as the subject of the construction while the possessor occurs in the dative-oblique.

75. **adà**    **lè**    **ηkúmè**    **né**    **adèlǎ**  
 anger    be.at    face    DAT    hunter  
 ‘Lit. Anger is in the hunter’s face  
 ‘(The hunter is not calm)’

76. *asī lé né mì*  
**asī**    **lè-é**    **ná-mì**  
 hands    be.at-PRO.3SG    DAT-PRO.2PL  
 ‘You have your hands’

When the dative-oblique occurs clause-finally of the existential construction, the subject functions as possessee (as illustrated by example 72 above). When the dative-oblique occurs clause-finally of locative constructions, there are three possibilities: the noun that occurs in subject position can function as the possessee; the noun that occurs in complement position can function as the possessee; both subject and complements can function as possessee of the dative possessor. The discussions that follow therefore concern exclusively locative constructions +dative-oblique.

The examples below are all locative construction +dative-oblique constructions. In example (77), the possessee noun **asī** ‘hand’ occurs in subject position; In example (78), the possessee noun **etá** ‘head’ occurs in complement position; Finally, in example (79), both **asī** ‘hand’, in subject position and **akòtá** ‘chest’, in complement position can at first sight be analyzed as possessee.

77. *asī né nò yámè né mì*  
**asī**    **né**    **nò**    **eyá-mè**    **né**    **mì**  
 hands    IMP    be.at:PST    air-inside    DAT    PRO.2PL  
 ‘Lit. Your hands be in the air for you’  
 ‘(Put your hands up)’

78. *é lè tá nû*  
**é**    **lè**    **tá**    **ná**    **m̂**  
 PRO.3SG    be.at    head    DAT    -PRO.1SG  
 ‘It’s on my head’

79. *asī là kòtá ná mesíáme*

**asī**    **lè**    **akòtá**    **ná**    **amesiáme**  
 hand   be.at   chest   DAT   everyone  
 ‘Everyone has his hand on his chest’

A more thorough analysis of the third binary relation *i.e.* where both subject and complement noun (which are both body-part terms) of the erstwhile locative construction function as possessors of the dative-oblique, seems however to show two constraints as to the noun that should be interpreted as the possessee of the dative-oblique possessor:

- Semantic constraint: nouns that occur in subject and complement position must be body-part terms.
- Syntactic constraint: complements have priority over subjects in the possessive relationship.

The second constraint *i.e.* the syntactic constraint needs some clarification. Indeed, the noun that functions as a complement of the locative predicate seems to have precedence on the subject to be interpreted as the possessee of the dative-oblique possessor. Consequently, the interpretation of the subject as a possessee of the dative-oblique possessor is context-dependent, whereas the interpretation of the complement noun as a possessee of the dative-oblique possessor is not. Consider example (80) below:

80. *asī nò kòtá né*

**asī**    **nò**    **akòtá**    **ná**    **é**  
 hand   be.at:PST   chest   DAT   PRO.3SG  
 ‘He/she has his hand on his chest’  
 ‘A hand was on his/her chest’

In Ghanaian public elementary schools, the tradition is to have a morning assembly where all students line up before marching into the classroom. Among the activities carried out during morning assemblies is the singing of the Ghanaian national anthem and the recitation of the national pledge. During the recitation of the national pledge, in many schools, it is the duty of the school prefect to make sure that all students have their hands on their chests. Often, the names

of students who refuse to have their hands on their chests are noted down, and punishment is given to them after the morning assembly. If a student feels that his/her name has been unjustifiably noted, the school prefect and his assistant are called to confirm or infirm the assertion of the student. Thus, the school prefect or his assistant can utter example (80) above to mean the student had his hands on his chest, and that his name being noted is an error.

On the other hand, if a picture in which a doctor puts his hand on the chest of patient is given to a participant for description; and the participant is instructed to narrate what he has seen in the past tense, the participant will produce example (80) above to mean ‘a hand was on his/her chest’.

It can then be said that while the possessive relation between the complement noun and the dative-possessor in locative+dative-oblique constructions in which two body-part terms occur in subject and complement position is not context-dependent, but constructionally coded, the possessive relation between the subject and the dative-possessor is context-dependent.

The point I am seeking to make then is that, in constructions where there are two possesseees, syntax seems to favor one relational interpretation over another: the (body-part term ) entity that is closer to the dative-oblique (the complement noun) is automatically a possessee of the dative-oblique possessor, while the (body-part term) entity that is further away from the dative-oblique possessor (the subject) depends on context to specify the possessive relation between the subject (possessee) and the dative-oblique possessor.

## **6.2. Possessee slot as bare or modifiable nouns in clause-final dative-oblique constructions**

The noun that functions as possessee in existential +dative-oblique constructions is a bare noun, without determiner or modifier, as exemplified by example (81) below.

81. ?asī́ lé né mì

asī́-á                      lè      é                      né      mì  
 hands-ART.DEF   be.at   PRO.3SG      DAT      PRO.1PL  
 ‘The hands are there for you’

The noun that functions as possessee in locative +dative-oblique is a bare noun only when the locative predicate complement functions as possessee. Witness the example below:

82. ?é lè tá gá má nú

é                      lè      [tá      gá      má]      ná      -m  
 PRO.3SG      be.at      head      big      DEM      DAT      -PRO.1SG  
 ‘Lit. It’s at that big head of mine’

However, when a subject and a complement function as possessives in locative +dative-oblique, the noun in subject position can be followed by a modifier or a determiner, but the noun that occurs as the complement of the locative predicate does not occur with modifiers or determiners. Witness the example below:

83. asī́ dèkǎ nò kòtá(\*á) né

asī́      dèkǎ      nò                      akòtá(\*á)      ná      é  
 hand      one      be.at:PST      chest                      DAT      PRO.3SG  
 ‘He/she has one of his hands on his chest’  
 ‘A single hand was on his/her chest’

This constraint on the complement and the lack of constraint on the subject confirms the hypothesis mentioned above: the possessive relation between the complement noun and the dative-possessor in locative+dative-oblique constructions in which two body-part terms occur in subject and complement position is constructionally coded, whereas the possessive relation between the subject and the dative-possessor is not.



### 6.3. Semantic features of the possessee in clause-final dative-oblique constructions

Nouns that typically occur as possessives in these constructions are body-part terms. However, there is a particular set of nouns that occur in complement positions to function as possessives that need some clarification. These nouns are either body-parts nouns or container nouns combined with spatial relational terms. These combined forms specify an area of the part (or a part of a noun construed as involved in the possessor's personal sphere) of the possessor. Witness the following examples:

84. *adàṅù le ḡkú-mè né*  
**adàṅù le ḡkú-mè ná -é**  
 creativity be.at eye-inside DAT -PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. Creativity is at her face inside’  
 ‘(She is very creative)’

85. *egà lè kòtokú-mè né*  
**egà lè kòtokú-mè ná-é**  
 money be.at pocket-inside DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘He/she has money in his/her pocket’

These complex lexemes are lexical units. As such, when modifiers/determiners are introduced into the combined form, the construction is unnatural (86) or it expresses another meaning, for instance in (87) a benefactive meaning.

86. *?adàṅù le ḡkú má mè né*  
**adàṅù le [ḡkú má mè] ná -é**  
 creativity be.at eye DEM inside DAT -PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. Creativity is at that her eye inside’
87. *egà lè kòtokú-á mè né*  
**egà lè [kòtokú-á mè] ná-é**  
 money be.at jute.bag-ART.DEF inside DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Money is in the jute bag for him’

#### 6.4. Dative-oblique existential/locative constructions and syntactically similar constructions

The above survey presented two constructional schemas: existential+dative-oblique and locative+dative-oblique. Both constructions express possessive relations that are of the form X's Y. In the existential+dative-oblique construction, it has been noted that the subject noun functions as the possessee. In locative+dative-oblique construction, the subject, or the complement can function as the possessee. The different constructions and the possessee-possessor relations can be summarized as follows:

##### EXISTENTIAL +DATIVE OBLIQUE

PD				PR
-----				
SUBJ	V	COMPL	DAT	NP
NP	lè	PRO.3SG	ná	NP

##### LOCATIVE+DATIVE OBLIQUE

i.	PD			PR	
ii.		PD		PR	
iii.	PD	PD		PR	
	SUBJ	V	COMPL	DAT	NP
	NP	lè	N	ná	NP

In this section, I explore the similarities and differences that characterize the “existential+dative-oblique” and “locative+dative-oblique” constructions on one hand, and syntactically similar constructions. I start with the similarity and differences between these constructions and the simple predicate object possessee external possessor construction in which the dative-oblique is not elided (section 6.4.1). I continue with the similarity and differences between the existential+dative-oblique and locative+dative-oblique constructions and constructions that I call dative-oblique locative possessive (section 6.4.2).

### 6.4.1. Dative-oblique existential/locative and external possessor constructions

#### 1) *Parallels*

The structural parallel between the features noted for the existential +dative-oblique and locative + dative-oblique constructions and object possessee external possessor constructions that involve simple predicates (and in which the dative-oblique is not elided) is undeniable.

In chapter 5, it was observed that simple predicate object possessee external possessor constructions in which the dative-oblique is not elided essentially express part-whole relations of the form X's Y; and that the possessee slot is necessarily occupied by a bare noun, without determiner or modifier. The following semi-schematic structure was proposed as the constructional pattern of the non-elided dative-oblique simple predicate object possessee external possessor construction in Tɔ̀ŋúgbɛ.

ROLES:				<u>PD</u>	<u>PR</u>
FUNCTIONS:	SUBJ	V		OBJ DAT	NP
MORPHO-SYNTAX:	NP	V		N ná	NP

The first similarity that characterizes the three constructions concerns constituent order. At the lower representational level of the three constructions<sup>44</sup>, the verb is followed by a noun, which is then followed by the dative-oblique.

Secondly, although the post-verbal noun performs different syntactic functions in the three constructions (it is a complement of the locative predicate in the locative and existential constructions; it is a direct object in the object possessee external possessor construction), it has in all the constructions a common feature: it does not occur with modifiers or determiners. Consequently, the constructions are odd when a determiner or modifier occurs with the post-verbal noun (or pronominal). Witness the following constructions:

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<sup>44</sup> This analysis deals with bare locative+dative-oblique and existential+ dative-oblique. It therefore does not take into account instances where the verb is followed by a prepositional phrase.

88. *tá-gbó lé (\*má) né mì*  
**tá-gbó**      **lè**      **é**      **(\*má)**      **né**      **mì**  
 head-side    be.at    PRO.3SG    DEM      DAT      PRO.2PL  
 ‘Lit. You have (that) your head-sides’  
 ‘(You are intelligent)’
89. *adànù le nkú (\*má) m̀è ńé*  
**adànù**      **lè**      **[nkú (\*má) m̀è]**      **ná**      **-é**  
 creativity    be.at    eye    DEM    inside    DAT    -PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. Creativity is at (that) her/his eye inside’  
 ‘(He/she is creative)’
90. *m̀è d̀lī af̀ò (\*má) né kofí*  
**m̀è**      **d̀lī**      **af̀ò**      **(\*má)**      **ná**      **Kofí**  
 PRO.1SG    change    leg    DEM      DAT      Kofi  
 ‘Lit. I changed (that) Kofi’s leg’  
 ‘(I have sprained Kofi’s ankle)’

Thirdly, the nouns that occur as possessives in the three constructions are the same: they are typically body-part terms, nouns that are conceived as belonging to the possessor’s personal sphere or complex lexemes that are in a part-whole relation with the possessor.

## 2) Differences

Despite the above mentioned similarities, the three constructions also differ in many ways. The first difference concerns the verbs that occur in the three constructions. While in object possessee external possessor constructions involving simple verbs (in which the dative-oblique is not elided) the verbs are aspectually telic and express a change of state, in existential + dative-oblique and locative + dative-oblique, the verbs are either the locative predicate or posture verbs.

Consequently, while possessives of external possessor constructions are with respect to their semantic role patients undergoing the change of state, possessives of existential + dative-oblique and locative + dative-oblique constructions have the role of theme. Witness the verbs in the following constructions:

Locative+dative-oblique

91. *é xìxà lé tōmè nǔ́*  
       **é**            **xìxà**    **lé**    **tō-mè**        **ná-m**  
       PRO.3SG    stick    at    ear-inside    DAT-PRO.1SG  
       ‘It is stuck in my ear’

Object possessee external possessor

92. *é fò tōmè nǔ́*  
       **é**            **fò**        **tō-mè**        **ná-m**  
       PRO.3SG    beat    ear-inside    DAT-PRO.1SG  
       ‘Lit. He/she beat my ear inside’  
       ‘(He/she slapped me)’

The similarities and differences between locative+dative-oblique and existential +dative-oblique, and simple predicate object possessor external possessor constructions in which the dative-oblique is not elided can be summarized as follows in the table below:

*Table 14: dative-oblique existential/locative constructions and object possessee external possessor constructions*

	<b>LOC/EXIS+DAT-OBL</b>	<b>EXTERNAL PR</b>
<b>Constituent order</b>	S V CPL DAT-OBL NP V (PREP) N ná NP	S V OBJ DAT-OBL NP V N ná NP
<b>Complement</b>	bare noun	bare noun
<b>Possessee</b>	+meronymic	+meronymic
<b>Verb</b>	locative predicate posture verb	Telic Change of state verb

#### 6.4.2. Dative-oblique locative and dative-oblique locative possessive

##### 1) *Parallels*

A second construction which demonstrates structural parallel to existential +dative-oblique and locative + dative-oblique constructions are dative-oblique locative constructions, constructions that I briefly evoked in chapter 4 section 3.2. Example (93) below illustrates the construction type that I am referring to as the dative-oblique locative possessive construction.

93. *exò lè gɛ né*  
**exò**      **lè**      **gɛ**      **ná-é**  
 house    be.at    Accra    DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘He has a house at Accra’

As can be observed from the example above, locative possessive constructions involving the dative-oblique have exactly the same constituent order as locative+dative-oblique constructions *i.e.* SUBJECT-LOCATIVE PREDICATE-COMPLEMENT-DATIVE-OBLIQUE.

## 2) Differences

The **first** major difference that characterizes the two construction types concerns the forms that occur as complements of the locative predicate. Contrary to what pertains in the locative + dative-oblique construction (the form that functions as possessee does not occur with a modifier or a determiner. See section 6.4.1 above for details), in the locative possessive construction, the possessee slot is filled by a noun phrase. As such, the possessee **exò** ‘house’ in example (93) above, can occur with the definite article for instance as demonstrated in the example below.

94. *exò lè gɛ né*  
**exò**      **-á**      **lè**      **gɛ**      **ná-é**  
 house    ART.DEF    be.at    Accra    DAT-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. The house is in Accra for him’  
 ‘(He has the house in Accra)’

**Secondly**, the nouns that occur as possesseees in both construction types are different. Nouns that occur as possesseees in the dative-oblique locative possessive construction do not occur in the locative + dative-oblique construction. While body-parts and personal sphere nouns occur as possesseees in locative + dative-oblique constructions, kinship terms, socio-culturally relational terms, and other non-relational nouns occur in the dative-oblique locative possessive construction. In example (95) below for instance, the kinship term **dzilá** ‘parent’ occurs as the possessee in the dative-oblique locative possessive construction.

95. **kpò-lá dzilá-wó le dzìgbé né mì!**  
 see-PART parent-PL be.at diaspora DAT PRO.2PL  
 ‘Look, You have parents in the diaspora!’

**Thirdly**, and critically, the possessive relationship that is expressed by both constructions is different. The possessive meaning of the dative-oblique locative possessive constructions can be glossed by a predicative possessive meaning (which motivates why they have been dealt with in chapter 4); the possessive meaning of the locative + dative-oblique is attributive (possession of the form X’s Y).

Consequently, the dative-oblique locative possessive construction can be paraphrased with a locative possessive construction involving **asī** ‘hand’ (and a prepositional phrase), whereas the locative + dative-oblique constructions cannot. Thus, example (96), a dative-oblique locative possessive construction can be paraphrased as (97), a locative possessive construction. However, example (98), a locative+dative-oblique construction cannot be paraphrased as (99), a locative possessive construction.

96. **kpò-lá [dzilá-wó le dzìgbé né mì!]**  
 see-PART parent-PL be.at diaspora DAT PRO.2PL  
 ‘Look, you have parents in the diaspora!’ (=95)
97. **kpò-lá [dzilá -wó le mìè sí] lé**  
 see-PART parent-PL be.at. PRO.2PL hand at  
**dzìgbé**  
 diaspora  
 ‘Look, You have parents in the diaspora!’
98. **asī lè yá-mè né mí**  
 hands be.at air-inside DAT PRO.1PL  
 ‘Our hands are in the air’
99. **\*asī lè míé sí lé yá-mè**  
 hands be.at PRO.1PL hand be.at air-inside  
 ‘Our hands are in the air’

The similarities and differences noted for the two construction types can be summarized in the table below:

*Table 15: dative-oblique locative construction and dative-oblique locative possessive*

	<b>LOC+DAT-OBL</b>	<b>DAT-OBL LOC.POSS</b>
<b>Constituent order</b>	S V CPL DAT-OBL	S V CPL DAT-OBL
<b>Complement</b>	bare noun	modifiable noun
<b>Possessee</b>	+meronymic	-meronymic
<b>poss. meaning</b>	attributive	predicative

In sum, although existential +dative-oblique and locative + dative-oblique constructions share structural similarities with external possessor constructions involving simple predicates (and in which the dative-oblique is not elided) and dative-oblique locative possessive constructions, the constructions cannot be assimilated to any of the former constructions, since they exhibit distinct constructional patterns that correlate to specific meanings. Thus, one construction cannot be reduced to another.

## 7. Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the relationship between possessive constructions, locative constructions and the existential construction. The existential construction contains three elements, a figure, expressed in subject position, a verbal predicate, and a ground. The only possible verbal predicate is the locative predicate *lè* ‘be at’, whereas the ground is instantiated by an unspecific location, expressed by the third personal pronoun.

The locative construction involves the same three elements. However, other verbal predicates, besides the locative predicate, are possible and the ground refers to a specific location. Locative constructions that involve the locative predicate are the basic locative constructions. Locative constructions that involve other verbs can be of two types: internal non-basic locative constructions and external non-basic locative constructions. The discussions concerned only internal non-basic locative constructions.



In locative constructions, it was noted that a figure is located at a specific ground. The ground reference is however made up of a reference object, typically expressed by a noun phrase, and possibly by a search domain indicator which designates the part or the area of the reference object where the figure is located. The search domain indicator is typically an adposition.

Two investigations were carried out. The first investigation concerned a comparison between locative possessive constructions, the existential construction and the locative constructions. The relationships were investigated based on whether they are characterized by the locative predicate or by other predicates. The second investigation was a comparison between locative and existential constructions+dative-oblique and other syntactically similar constructions (external possessor constructions involving simple predicates in which the dative-oblique is not elided, and dative-oblique locative possessive constructions). The results of both investigations show that although the different constructions share similarities, they also share differences that are not only syntactic, but also semantic.

In the survey of the linguistics of possession in chapter 2 of this work, it was observed that according to some schools of thought, the three constructions *i.e.* predicative possessive constructions, locative constructions and existential constructions can be argued for as reducible to a common locative construction (Lyons 1964, Bach 1964, Freeze 1992). This hypothesis, largely formulated on the basis of observations of Indo-European languages should even be more convincing for a language like Ewe in which the same predicate can be used to encode the three constructions.

However, as shows the analysis of the three constructions in Tɔŋúgbe, syntactically, at least at a less schematic level, the three constructions cannot be said to be reducible to a single construction (even in the instances where the same verbal predicate is involved). On the functional level as well, the argument has been that the three constructions have a 'locational base' (Heine 1997, Koch 2012, Ameka 1991 etc.). As I have demonstrated in this chapter, the 'location base' is not the same in the three constructions. The subtle

differences in the locational meanings, coupled with syntactic differences should incite to consider the three constructions (at least at a synchronic level) independent of each other, although they are in relationships similar to the inheritance links postulated in constructional grammar (cf. Hilpert 2014).

This thesis is devoted to the description and analysis of possessive constructions in Tɔ̀nùgbe. It is based on empirical data, transcribed and annotated, which can be obtained in ELAN, FLEX and DOC. formats from the DANS online platform. This volume, has attempted to understand the relationship that exists between possessive constructions, on the one hand, and locative and existential constructions on the other hand. In addition to this, a sketch grammar of Tɔ̀nùgbe is provided. Consequently, the work has been divided into six chapters.

Chapter 1 presents the sketch grammar of Tɔ̀nùgbe. The sketch grammar offers a survey of the phonetics, morphology and syntax of Tɔ̀nùgbe. It highlighted, especially, the aspects of Tɔ̀nùgbe that distinguish it from other dialects of the Ewe language. With respect to phonetics, it was observed that the vowel and consonant sounds of Tɔ̀nùgbe are the same as the vowel and consonant sounds of other Ewe dialects. The tones of Tɔ̀nùgbe, however, are rather peculiar. As is the case in other Ewe dialects, Tɔ̀nùgbe has three level tones, and one contour tone. But unlike other Ewe dialects, the duration of the mid-tone in root nouns of Tɔ̀nùgbe is longer; and the low tone of root nouns is distinguished from the mid-tone by the duration contrast. On the morphological level, it was observed that some of the morphological processes that operate in Tɔ̀nùgbe are reduplication, composition and affixation. Finally, on the syntactic level, it was observed that the noun and verb phrase structure of Tɔ̀nùgbe are the same as the noun and verb phrase structure in other Ewe dialects. However, Tɔ̀nùgbe differs from the other dialects as to the forms that occupy the slots of the phrase structures. The categories that were surveyed in this respect were intensifiers, articles, demonstratives, tense/aspect/modal particles, adpositions and focus markers.

It appears from the survey of the grammar of Tɔ̀nùgbe that the properties of the dialect are a mix of the two big dialect groups of the Ewe language: inland and coastal dialects. Thus, Tɔ̀nùgbe assembles forms that are peculiar to each of these two dialect groups, and constructs paradigms based on them. This process is at work at all levels of the grammar of Tɔ̀nùgbe. On the phonetic level for instance,

Tɔ̀nùgbe tones can be grouped into three (likewise inland dialects); but the superhigh tone of coastal dialects is present in Tɔ̀nùgbe (see Kpoglu & Patin (2018) for details on the superhigh tone in Tɔ̀nùgbe). Another example is the demonstrative paradigm of Tɔ̀nùgbe, in which forms from both northern and coastal dialects are assembled into a new paradigm; and then new forms constructed based on the novel paradigm. This mixture can be traced to the heterogeneous origins of the Tɔ̀nù people.

This attribute of mixing forms from other dialects and then constructing new systems based on the mixture is not restricted to the grammatical categories but also extends to syntactic constructions such as the possessive constructions. After presenting a typology of possessive constructions, and the relationships that they have with locative and existential constructions, possessive constructions were extensively discussed. In order to grasp the nature of the possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe, the features that characterize possessive constructions were extensively detailed at all levels: morphological, phrasal, and clausal levels. The meanings that are expressed at each level are carefully spelled out; and the subtlest of variations that occur at both syntactic and semantic levels were identified. The constructions were surveyed under three major groupings: attributive possessive constructions (chapter 3), predicative possessive constructions (chapter 4) and external possessor constructions (chapter 5). A sixth chapter, dedicated to understanding the relationship between possessive constructions, locative constructions and existential constructions closes the volume.

Attributive possessive constructions were grouped into constructions constructed in syntax and constructions constructed either at the interface between syntax and morphology or simply in morphology. Constructions constructed in syntax are of two types: constructions involving a connective, and constructions involving juxtaposition. It was observed that the possessees in both constructions involving a connective and juxtaposed constructions have only high and low tones; that the units involved in these constructions are phrasal units; and that each construction expresses a particular conceptualized relation between the possessee and possessor. I showed that while

constructions involving the connective construe the possessee as independent of the possessor, juxtaposed constructions express an intimate relationship between the possessor and the possessee. Grounding this in observations made on alienability splits in the typological literature, I argued that the data from Tɔ̀húgbe syntactic attributive possessive constructions support the assertion that alienability splits are motivated by conceptualized relations.

Constructions processed at the syntax/morphology interface (or simply constructed in morphology) are also constructions in which the connective does not occur. They were divided into two: suffixed possessive constructions, and compound possessive constructions. I showed that suffixed possessive constructions are correlates of juxtaposed possessive constructions; that the suffixes that occur to denote the possessor, have grammaticalized from lexical items denoting ‘father’, ‘mother’ and ‘female partner’; and that suffixed possessive constructions are processed at the interface between syntax and morphology. Compound constructions on the other hand, I demonstrated, are characterized by high tones on the possessee, and are constructed in morphology.

Predicative possessive constructions are defined as constructions in which the possessor and possessee occur in argument slots of the verb. I noted two large types of predicative possessive constructions in Tɔ̀húgbe: constructions involving copulars and constructions involving the locative predicate. I labeled the former constructions copular possessive constructions and the latter locative possessive constructions.

Copular possessive constructions involve either the possessee pronoun or the possessor suffix. When the possessee pronoun is involved, possessive meaning is centered on the possessee. When the possessor suffix is involved, possession is centered on the possessor. Also, these forms occur with other nouns to result in forms that function as attributes of the subject. I therefore distinguished between the property attributing constructions and the possessive form of the constructions. To this end, it was demonstrated that in the possessive constructions, the form in which the possessee pronoun and the possessor suffix participate are complex noun phrases while in the property attributing

constructions, the forms in which the possessor suffix participate are compounded forms.

Locative possessive constructions involve the locative predicate. However, various verbs also enter the construction to express particular relations. Thus, locative possessive constructions capture a large group of constructions which I divided into three groups: constructions involving postpositions, constructions involving adpositions and constructions involving prepositions.

Constructions involving postpositions involve five main postpositions: **así** ‘hand’ **ɲú** ‘skin’ **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ **dzí** ‘top’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’. It was observed that constructions involving **así** ‘hand’ are the most common and default locative possessive constructions. Indeed **así** has grammaticalized to express possession, to a point where verbs of transfer of possession such as **ká** ‘contact’, **sù** ‘suffice’ and **dó** ‘reach’ can replace the locative predicate so that the construction expresses inchoative possession. Constructions involving the other postpositions either need particular discursive contexts (**gbó** ‘vicinity’), or particular types of nouns in subject position (**ɲú** ‘skin’ **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ **dzí** ‘top’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’) in order to express possession. Indeed, they express specific possessive meanings.

Another type of locative possessive constructions surveyed consists of constructions that involve both prepositions and postpositions. These constructions involve quantifying verbs such as **sùgbó** ‘be.numerous’ and **bó** ‘be.abundant’. They have been analyzed as quantificational variants of locative possessive constructions involving postpositions; and they express the abundance of the possessee.

Finally, locative possessive constructions involving only prepositions were also surveyed. The prepositions that are involved in these constructions are the allative and the dative. When the constructions involve prepositions, other verbs apart from the locative predicate occur in the construction. While constructions that involve the allative express temporal possession, constructions that involve the dative express the idea that the possessor controls the possessee. Concerning this latter type of constructions, the dative-oblique triggers the possessive meaning that the constructions evoke. Dative obliques in

another type of clausal possessive construction *i.e.* external possessor constructions were the subject of chapter 5.

External possessor constructions are constructions that express the relation X's Y, but have clausal syntax. It was noted that in Tɔ̀nùgbe, external possessor constructions express essentially part-whole relations despite the variation that can occur at the structural level. Different structural types of external possessor constructions were surveyed.

The first structural type of external possessor constructions surveyed consists of constructions in which the possessee occurs as the object of the verb, and the possessor as the dependent of a dative-oblique. In these constructions, the dative-oblique can be elided when the dative-oblique possessor co-references the subject. On the other hand, the dative-oblique possessor can be replaced by a reflexive. In addition, when the verb that occurs in the construction is an experience verb, the possessee occurs in subject position while the possessor occurs in object position. These structural differences that characterize the subtypes of the constructions, I argued, correspond to subtle semantic differences. As such, when the dative-oblique is elided, the relation expressed is viewed from the point of view of the possessor; when the reflexive replaces the dative-oblique possessor, the subject possessor is construed as having played a role in the events that affect the possessee.

The second structural type of external possessor constructions consists of constructions in which the possessee is a dependent of a prepositional phrase. In this construction as well, the dative oblique can be elided when the dative-oblique possessor is the same as the subject of the construction. However, as is the case in object possessee constructions involving inherent complement verbs, the reflexive does not occur in this construction. This is because the verbs in these constructions do not entail a change of state. It was also pointed out that there are subtle distinctions in the meanings expressed by each of these structural types of constructions.

More importantly, it was observed that the conceptualized relations in the external possessor constructions are such that the possessee is

construed as independently undergoing events expressed in the verb. Thus, although body-part terms typically occur as possessees (and when other noun types occur the relation expressed is a part-whole relation), as in attributive possessive construction in which body-part terms occur in connective constructions *i.e.* constructions in which the possessor and possessee are construed as independent of each other, in external possessor constructions as well, the possessor and possessee are not in an intimate relationship.

In chapter 6, it was observed that clausal possessive constructions (predicative and external possessor), exhibit special relationships with locative and existential constructions. Thus, in this chapter, I first of all presented the existential construction, the locative constructions and the relationships that exist between both constructions. Concerning existential constructions, I noted that it has one constructional schema, and the construction expresses the idea that something exists somewhere.

Locative constructions on the other hand are much more diverse. They are grouped into two categories: basic locative constructions, and non-basic locative constructions. While the basic locative construction involves the locative predicate, non-basic locative constructions involve other predicates. Non-basic locative constructions are then sub-divided into internal non-basic locative constructions and external non-basic locative constructions, which are not concerned by the various discussions that are undertaken in the chapter.

Having described the existential and locative constructions, I then continued to examine the relationships that both constructions, on one hand, demonstrate *vis-à-vis* clausal possessive constructions (predicative possessive constructions and external possessor constructions). I showed that the relationships between the four constructions hold on two levels: relationships characterized by the locative predicate; and relationships characterized by the dative-oblique. I carefully spelt out the morpho-syntactic similarities and differences that are observable on these two levels across the four constructions and come to the conclusion that despite the observable similarities, there exists enough semantic and syntactic differences



between the constructions to warrant their being considered as independent of each other synchronically.

Although the work in this volume concerns Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, the findings are not without implications for other Ewe dialects. In the first place, the sketch grammar presents novel data on the Ewe language, which should enrich further discussions on Ewe, and Gbe phonology, morphology and syntax. The data should encourage a new generation of Ewe linguists who will seek to document the grammar of the various dialects of the Ewe language. It should also inspire discussions in Gbe, and should motivate various linguists working on Gbe languages to want to examine the relationships that can be identified between dialects of the various Gbe languages. Indeed, towards the end of this work, I got into contact with researchers working on other Ewe dialects (and Gbe languages); and the preliminary discussions seem to suggest that Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe tones, demonstratives and TAM particles could have a lot in common with the categories in these other dialects (and languages), to the point where the similarity between the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe forms and the forms in these dialects (and languages) can be described as closer than the similarity between the Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe forms and the forms of the Ewe dialects that are geographically closer.

The discussions on possessive constructions also make major contributions to Ewe linguistics. This work presents a detail of a range of constructions that have hitherto not been captured in the available literature (e.g. the tone features of attributive constructions, the peculiar properties of kinship terms, copular predicative possessive constructions, the localized interpretations of some of the predicative possessive constructions, the intricacies examined in external possessor constructions etc.). Indeed, even when the constructions have been captured (copular constructions involving the verb **nyé** ‘be’ and, locative possessive constructions, for instance), the above study has presented detailed aspects (the features, subtle semantic distinctions) that were not captured in the data available. This work also opens a new page for Ewe comparative syntax as it was revealed with the external possessor constructions.

Typologically, the data and analysis presented in the present volume are relevant to all aspects of linguistics. For instance, the preliminary findings of the tones of Tɔ̀nùgbe have already triggered many discussions with specialists in phonetics and phonology. The various paradigms, especially the demonstrative paradigm, have also inspired discussions with many working in typological linguistics while the TAM markers have been the subject of fruitful discussions with various members of faculties of the laboratories in which I stayed. Concerning the possessive constructions, the data and analysis presented in this volume supports the idea that the configurations of attributive possessive constructions are motivated by conceptual considerations; and that the alienability split observed in Tɔ̀nùgbe is isomorphic to conceived distance between possessor and possessee. The observations in the external possessor constructions support the view that despite the multiplicity of structures, external possessor constructions, fundamentally, express part-whole relations, and this distinguishes them from other similar constructions. Finally, although clausal possessive constructions, locative constructions and the existential construction share various morphological, syntactic, and semantic similarities, the view that is supported is that, synchronically, the different constructions are not reducible to a single structure.

### 1. Introduction

Ce travail s'inscrit dans le cadre de la théorie de la linguistique fondamentale de Dixon (2010). Il concerne la description détaillée des constructions syntaxiques et leurs significations correspondantes. Toutefois, pour expliquer certains des phénomènes rencontrés dans ce travail, les analyses s'appuient pour la plupart sur des arguments fournis par des approches fonctionnelles d'analyse linguistique. Des arguments tels l'iconicité et l'égoцентриté sont donc importants dans les discussions.

Dans cette thèse, il s'agit principalement de la description des constructions possessives en Tɔ̀ŋúgbe, un dialecte de l'éwé, du point de vue syntaxique et sémantique. Ce travail, fait à base des données recueillies sur le terrain, représente une première étude de la variation micro syntaxique en éwé et devrait être le premier à tenter de mettre en avant ce dialecte qui a longtemps été assimilé soit à d'autres dialectes, soit à la langue standard.

Le travail a été divisé en six chapitres différents. Le premier chapitre présente l'esquisse de la grammaire de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe. Le deuxième chapitre présente la typologie des constructions possessives et leurs relations avec les constructions locatives et existentielles. Les chapitres trois à cinq présentent successivement les constructions possessives attributives, les constructions possessives prédicatives et les constructions à possesseur externe en Tɔ̀ŋúgbe. Le sixième chapitre présente les relations entre les constructions possessives, les constructions locatives et les constructions existentielles de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe.

### 2. Premier chapitre : Esquisse de la grammaire de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe

L'esquisse de la grammaire offre une aperçue des propriétés phonétiques, morphologiques et syntaxiques de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe. Elle met en avant les aspects de la grammaire de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe qui manifestent des différences par rapport à la grammaire des autres dialectes de la langue éwé.

Au niveau phonétique, les sons vocaliques et consonantiques de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe sont les mêmes que les sons vocaliques et consonantiques des autres dialectes de l'éwé. Les tons de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe manifestent des

différences importantes vis-à-vis les tons des autres dialectes de l'éwé. Tɔ̀ṅúgbe a trois tons ponctuels et un ton modulé. Les trois tons ponctuels sont le ton haut, le ton moyen et le ton bas. Le ton modulé est le ton montant. La différence qui caractérise les tons de Tɔ̀ṅúgbe en comparaison aux tons des autres dialectes de l'éwé concerne le ton ponctuel moyen lorsque celui-ci apparaît sur les noms de base (root nouns). En effet, le ton moyen en Tɔ̀ṅúgbe est marqué par une durée plus importante. Plus étonnant encore, le contraste de durée sert à distinguer entre le ton moyen et le ton bas, car le registre du ton bas et le ton moyen des noms de base de Tɔ̀ṅúgbe se situe au même niveau.

Les dernières propriétés phonétiques concernent les processus phonologiques qui se manifestent au niveau de la syllabe. Les processus phonologiques étudiés sont l'élision, la coalescence et l'assimilation. Suite à l'importance de ces processus en Tɔ̀ṅúgbe, une glosse à trois niveaux a été adoptée pour les exemples cités. Le premier niveau présente l'exemple comme il est énoncé par le locuteur ; le deuxième niveau présente l'exemple libre de tout processus phonologique ; le troisième niveau présente une glosse inter-morphémique ; enfin, le quatrième niveau présente la traduction libre en anglais. L'exemple (1) démontre la glosse à trois niveaux.

1. *asīṅgé*  
 asī    ṅ    -gà    -é  
 main    LIG    métal    -DIM  
 'Anneau'

Au niveau des propriétés morphologiques, l'éwé est une langue isolante ; mais avec quelques propriétés agglutinantes. Par conséquent, certains des procédés morphologiques présentent en Tɔ̀ṅúgbe sont la reduplication, la composition et l'affixation. Certains de ces processus morphologiques s'accompagnent des processus phonologiques au niveau segmental et au niveau suprasegmental.

En ce qui concerne la syntaxe de Tɔ̀ṅúgbe, le dialecte a les mêmes types de propositions que les autres dialectes de l'éwé. Les syntagmes nominaux, les syntagmes verbaux et les syntagmes circonstanciels de Tɔ̀ṅúgbe ont fondamentalement les mêmes structures que les syntagmes nominaux, les syntagmes verbaux et les syntagmes

circonstanciels des autres dialectes de l'éwé. Les différences entre les syntagmes en Tɔ̀húgbe et les syntagmes dans les autres dialectes de l'éwé s'observent au niveau des unités atomiques qui s'insèrent dans les positions des structures fondamentales. Dans cette sous-section, l'accent a été mis sur les unités catégorielles de Tɔ̀húgbe manifestant le plus de différence par rapport à ce qui se manifeste dans les autres dialectes de l'éwé.

Le premier syntagme à être présenté est le syntagme nominal. Le syntagme nominal peut avoir comme tête syntaxique un nom, un pronom ou un quantifieur. Certains noms, tels ceux appelés par Westermann (1930) des noms locatifs, font référence à des relations spatiales. Ces noms sont pertinents pour les études menées dans les chapitres suivants, car ils participent dans la plupart des constructions possessives. A part ces noms, les catégories étudiées étaient les intensifieurs, les pronoms, les articles et les démonstratifs. En ce qui concerne les intensifieurs, ils apparaissent avant la tête du syntagme nominal et après les autres éléments dans un syntagme nominal élargi.

Ensuite, les pronoms sont présentés. Les pronoms de Tɔ̀húgbe peuvent être divisés en quatre séries : les pronoms sujets, les pronoms objets, les pronoms indépendants et les pronoms logophoriques. Les pronoms qui participent dans les constructions possessives sont les pronoms sujets, les pronoms indépendants et les pronoms logophoriques. Alors que toutes les formes des pronoms logophoriques participent dans les constructions possessives, les pronoms sujets qui participent dans les constructions possessives sont les pronoms de la troisième personne du singulier et du pluriel. Les pronoms indépendants qui participent dans les constructions possessives sont les pronoms de la première personne du singulier et du pluriel et de la deuxième personne du singulier et du pluriel.

Les démonstratifs de Tɔ̀húgbe font intervenir une opposition déictique quinaire ancrée sur le locuteur. Les démonstratifs peuvent donc faire référence à une entité 1. Dans la proximité du locuteur 2. Loin du locuteur 3. Plus loin du locuteur 4. Très loin du locuteur 5. Extrêmement loin du locuteur. A part les démonstratifs de base, qui ont des fonctions des déterminants, un paradigme, composé des formes que l'on peut analysées comme des syntagmes nominaux,

fonctionne comme des adverbes démonstratifs. Ce dernier paradigme, présenté au dessous, est construit sur la même opposition déictique que les démonstratifs de base.

FORME	MORPOLOGIE	PROCES. PHONO
<b>gíyíé</b>	gā + yíé	gí + yíé
<b>gámá</b>	gā + má	gá + má
<b>gém(ú)</b>	gā + m	gé + m
<b>gémē</b>	gā + mē	gé + mē
<b>gémēhē</b>	gā + mēhē	gé + mēhē

Les articles de Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀gbe sont de deux types : l'article défini et l'article indéfini. L'article défini, au contraire de ce qui se passe dans d'autres dialectes de l'éwé, subit l'assimilation phonétique. Ainsi, l'article, qui a la forme **á**, apparaît comme **ǎ** lorsque la voyelle précédente est une voyelle postérieure ; et l'article apparaît comme **-é** lorsque la voyelle précédente est une voyelle antérieure.

Le deuxième syntagme à être étudié est le syntagme verbal. Le syntagme verbal de Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀gbe peut comprendre des marqueurs aspectuels, positionnels et modaux. Les marqueurs modaux qui manifestent des différences par rapport aux marqueurs présents dans d'autres dialectes de l'éwé incluent les marqueurs de la possibilité et les marqueurs de la « capacité/ tentative ». En Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀gbe, la forme **nyá** marque la possibilité épistémique et la forme **ɔ́á** indique la possibilité. La forme **téɔ̀ú**, qui apparaît sous les formes **tá** et **té**, marque la capacité à faire et la forme **kàtsè** indique l'idée d'oser. Enfin, la forme **dzèhā** indique l'idée de tenter avec audace.

Les marqueurs positionnels de Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀gbe qui manifestent des différences par rapport aux marqueurs positionnels des autres dialectes sont les marqueurs itifs, le marquer ventif et le marquer altrilocal. Deux formes marquent l'itif en Tɔ̀ɔ̀ɔ̀gbe : **hé** et **yì**. La forme **hé** indique la simultanéité des événements exprimés dans le verbe et dans le contexte précédent. La forme **yì** est utilisée pour indiquer la séquentialité entre l'évènement exprimé par le verbe et l'évènement

exprimé dans un contexte précédent. Les formes qui marquent le ventif et l'altrilocal sont **vá** et **váyì** respectivement.

Les marqueurs aspectuels ayant des propriétés idiosyncratiques en Tɔ̀nùgbe sont le marqueur du progressif et le marquer de l'habituel. Le marqueur du progressif en Tɔ̀nùgbe peut être éliminé (dans ce cas, la voyelle précédente est nasalisée); ou le marqueur peut participer dans un processus de re-syllabification lorsqu'il est suivi par une voyelle. Le marqueur de l'habituel **á** apparaît comme **é** lorsque la voyelle précédente est une voyelle antérieure. Il apparaît comme **ó** lorsque la voyelle précédente est une voyelle postérieure.

Les derniers éléments à être présentés sont les marqueurs de la focalisation. En Tɔ̀nùgbe, la focalisation peut être faite par l'usage d'un marqueur ou par le changement de l'ordre des constituants de la proposition. Le marqueur subit l'assimilation phonétique lorsque le constituant focalisé est un sujet nominal; mais reste inchangé lorsque le constituant est un sujet pronominal.

Après l'esquisse de la grammaire, il ressort que les propriétés de Tɔ̀nùgbe ne peuvent pas être assimilées aux propriétés d'une zone dialectale particulière. L'hypothèse avancée est que le Tɔ̀nùgbe mélange les propriétés identifiables dans chacune des deux grandes zones dialectales de l'éwé : la zone dialectale australe et la zone dialectale septentrionale. Ainsi, le Tɔ̀nùgbe rassemble les propriétés de ces deux zones, et dans la plupart de cas (ex : les démonstratifs) construit des nouveaux paradigmes qui sont irretrouvables dans les autres dialectes.

### 3. Deuxième chapitre: Typologie des constructions possessives

Les constructions possessives sont des constructions qui encodent la notion de la possession. Dans cette étude, la notion de la possession est comprise comme étant un ensemble de significations dont trois sont prototypiques : appartenance, relations familiales, et relations partie-tout. Ainsi, chaque construction qui exprime l'une de ses significations fondamentales est considérée comme étant une construction possessive. Par conséquent, dans chaque construction possessive, il y a une relation binaire entre une entité, un possesseur, et une deuxième entité, un possédé. La façon dont ces deux entités

sont codées dans une construction motive des catégorisations des constructions dites possessives.

Typologiquement, trois types de constructions possessives sont notés : les constructions possessives attributives, les constructions possessives prédicatives et les constructions à possesseur externe. Les constructions possessives attributives sont les constructions dans lesquelles le possesseur et le possédé sont encodés dans un syntagme nominal complexe; les constructions prédicatives sont les constructions dans lesquelles le possesseur et le possédé sont encodés comme des arguments d'un verbe ; les constructions à possesseur externe sont les constructions dans lesquelles sémantiquement le possesseur est un dépendant du possédé, mais syntaxiquement, le possesseur et le possédé dépendent des verbes. Les trois types de constructions possessives sont illustrés par les exemples suivants :

2. *Le livre de Jean*
3. *Jean a un livre*
4. *Je lui ai coupé les cheveux*

A propos des deux derniers types de constructions possessives, *i.e.* les constructions possessives prédicatives et les constructions à possesseur externe, celles-ci manifestent des relations avec les constructions locatives et les constructions existentielles au niveau morphosyntaxique et au niveau sémantique. Les arguments phares proposés pour rendre compte de ces relations peuvent être regroupés en deux: d'une part les arguments dérivatives (les constructions peuvent être réduites à une construction sous-jacente); d'autre part les arguments fonctionnels (synchroniquement, les constructions sont à considérer comme étant indépendantes). Ce travail adopte une approche fonctionnelle.

#### 4. Troisième chapitre : Les constructions possessives attributives en Tɔŋúgbɛ

Les constructions possessives attributives de Tɔŋúgbɛ sont telles que le possesseur et le possédé sont des constituants d'un syntagme nominal complexe. De façon générale, le possesseur précède le



possédé. L'exemple (5) au dessous illustre une construction possessive attributive de Təŋúgbe.

5. *ŋútsùò sròò nyé kíyíé*  
**[ŋútsù- á srò-á]**                      **nyé**      **kíyíé**  
 homme-ART.DEF épouse-ART.DEF      être      DEM  
 'Voici la femme de l'homme'

Les constructions possessives attributives de Təŋúgbe peuvent être divisées en deux grandes catégories : constructions du niveau syntaxique et constructions à l'interface de la syntaxe et la morphologie. Les constructions du niveau syntaxique peuvent être regroupées en deux sous-catégories : les constructions à connecteur, et les constructions juxtaposées. Dans les constructions à connecteur, les formes **wó** et **bé**, les connecteurs, apparaissent entre le possesseur et le possédé. L'exemple (6) illustre une construction possessive attributive avec connecteur.

6. *ŋútsuó wó núdùgbá yó*  
**[ŋútsu-á wó núdù-gbá]**                      **yó**  
 homme-ART.DEF POSS nourriture-bol      FOC  
 'C'est le bol à manger de l'homme'

Dans ces constructions, lorsque le possesseur est un nominal, les noms qui peuvent fonctionner comme des noms possédés sont les noms des parties du corps, les noms non-relationnels et quelques noms des relations familiales. Lorsque le possesseur d'une construction à connecteur est un pronominal singulier, la construction a des propriétés idiosyncratiques. Quand le possesseur est, soit la première personne du singulier, soit la deuxième personne du singulier, le connecteur n'apparaît pas. Quand le possesseur est la troisième personne du singulier, le pronom possesseur est éliminé. Deux cas de figures peuvent être recensés dans ce dernier cas : soit la construction est composée du connecteur et le nom possédé, soit la construction est composée du possédé et l'article défini clitique. Les deux cas de figure sont illustrés par les exemples au dessous.

7. [**wó** **kúkú**]  
 POSS chapeau  
 ‘Son chapeau’
8. **nàñ-á**  
 mère-ART.DEF  
 ‘Sa mère’

Lorsque la construction est composée du connecteur et le nom possédé, les noms qui apparaissent comme des noms possédés sont les noms des parties du corps, les noms non-relationnels et certains noms des relations familiales. De l’autre côté, lorsque la construction est composée du nom possédé et l’article défini clitique, les noms qui peuvent apparaître comme des noms possédés sont certains noms des relations familiales.

Les deux connecteurs en Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe ont une distribution non seulement contextuelle, mais aussi géographique. Le marqueur **wó**, qui a la même source conceptuelle que le pronom de la troisième personne du pluriel et le marqueur du pluriel, est le connecteur non-marqué alors que le marqueur **bé**, ayant une distribution contextuelle et géographique limitée, est le connecteur marqué. Dans un cadre général des connecteurs disponibles dans les autres dialectes de l’éwé, les connecteurs en Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe et leur fonctionnement sont un brassage entre ce qui existe dans la zone dialectale septentrionale et la zone dialectale australe. Ceci confirme l’hypothèse selon laquelle le Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe ne serait pas assimilable à une zone dialectale particulière.

Le deuxième type de construction syntaxique fait référence à des constructions dans lesquelles deux syntagmes nominaux sont juxtaposés l’un à l’autre sans l’intervention d’un connecteur comme illustré par l’exemple (9) au dessous.

9. *ezìè dzì*  
**ezì-á** **dzí**  
 siège-ART.DEF dessus  
 ‘Le dessus du siège’

Le nom possédé dans ces constructions peut être remplacé par un pronom possédé dédié **tɔ̃**. Lorsque ce dernier remplace un nom possédé, il est agglutiné au possesseur. Les noms qui peuvent fonctionner comme des noms possédés dans les constructions juxtaposées sont des noms des relations spatiales, des noms socio-culturellement relationnels, et certains noms des relations familiales. Le possesseur de l'autre côté peut être nominal ou pronominal. Lorsque le possesseur est un pronom singulier, la forme de la construction peut être de deux ordres : soit le possédé précède le possesseur (constructions à tête-initiale), soit le possesseur précède le possédé (constructions à dépendant-initial). Les deux exemples au-dessous illustrent les deux configurations.

10. **nyè**            **srónyí**                            (*dépendant-initial*)  
       PRO.1SG    neveu  
       ‘mon neveu’
11. **tátá**        **nyè**                                    (*tête-initiale*)  
       père        -PRO.1SG  
       ‘mon père’

Lorsque les constructions ont la forme de dépendant-initial, les noms qui apparaissent pour fonctionner comme des noms possédés sont des noms des parties du corps, des noms non-relationnels et certains noms des relations familiales. De l'autre côté, lorsque la construction à la forme de tête-initiale, les noms qui apparaissent comme des noms possédés sont les noms des relations spatiales, des noms socio-culturellement relationnels, et quelques noms des relations familiales.

En Tɔ̀húgbe, la position du possédé dans les deux sous-types de constructions possessives attributives syntaxiques est caractérisée par le ton haut et le ton bas. Alors, quelque soit le ton intrinsèque du nom qui fonctionne comme nom possédé, celui-ci porte des tons hauts et des tons bas lorsqu'il apparaît en position du possédé (le ton moyen et le ton modulé se transforment en ton haut).

Les noms des relations familiales ont une distribution, à première vue, aléatoire, en tant que des noms possédés, dans les constructions possessives attributives syntaxiques. En effet, les noms des relations

familiales de Tɔŋúgbe peuvent être regroupés en cinq groupes : les noms des relations ascendantes, les noms des relations descendantes, les noms des relations horizontales, les noms des relations parentales, et les noms indicatifs d'ordre de naissance. Les noms des relations familiales qui apparaissent comme des noms possédés dans des constructions juxtaposées sont les noms des relations d'ascendance, les noms des relations horizontales, et les noms des relations parentales. Les noms des relations descendantes et les noms indiquant l'ordre de naissance apparaissent dans les constructions à connecteur comme des noms possédés.

Pourtant, le nom de relation descendante *evī* 'enfant' et d'autres noms des relations descendantes *A+yóví* déjouent cette systématisme et apparaissent dans les deux constructions juxtaposées et constructions à connecteur. Ce phénomène *i.e.* que des noms censés fonctionner comme des noms possédés dans une construction ou l'autre alternent entre des constructions, est illustratif d'un fait général qui s'opère avec les noms possédés dans les constructions possessives attributives syntaxiques. Effectivement, on observe une opposition binaire dans la distribution des noms qui apparaissent en position de nom possédé : les noms non-relationnels, les noms des parties du corps et certains noms des relations familiales d'une part ; les noms des relations spatiales, les noms socio-culturellement relationnels, et certains noms des relations familiales de l'autre part. Alors que le premier groupe des noms apparaissent comme des noms possédés dans des constructions à connecteur, les membres du deuxième groupe fonctionnent comme des noms possédés dans des constructions juxtaposées. Cette opposition est une opposition d'aliénabilité. Ainsi, la construction à connecteur est la construction aliénable et la construction juxtaposée est la construction inaliénable.

Pour rendre compte de la distribution des noms possédés dans l'une ou l'autre construction, deux hypothèses majeures s'opposent. D'une part, il y a l'hypothèse, soutenue surtout par Haspelmath (1999, 2017), selon laquelle la langue exploite la redondance linguistique. D'autre part, il y a l'hypothèse, soutenu surtout par Haiman (1983), selon laquelle l'opposition est motivée par l'iconicité. Selon la première hypothèse, les noms susceptibles d'avoir un modifieur seraient codés

dans des constructions inaliénables et les noms susceptibles de ne pas avoir un modifieur seraient codés dans des constructions aliénables. Selon la deuxième hypothèse, les noms apparaissent dans une construction ou autre selon la distance conçue par un locuteur entre le possesseur et le possédé. Les données de Təŋúgbe soutiennent cette dernière hypothèse. Ainsi, l'alternation des noms des relations familiales dans une construction ou l'autre ne serait que le résultat d'une conception différentielle de distance entre un possesseur et un nom possédé donné.

Cet argument se heurt pourtant à un fait inattendu : les constructions syntaxiques dans lesquels le possesseur est, soit la première personne du singulier, soit la deuxième personne du singulier, n'opposent pas une construction aliénable à une construction inaliénable. Toutes les constructions sont inaliénables en raison de leur nature égocentrique. Ces constructions opposent donc la relation de possession par soi à une relation de possession outre soi. L'opposition construction à tête-initiale et construction à dépendant-initial ne serait qu'en raison d'un effet pragmatique. Ainsi, des motivations fonctionnelles conditionnent les configurations des constructions possessives syntaxiques.

Le second type de constructions possessives attributives sont les constructions à l'interface de la syntaxe et la morphologie (ou les constructions construites tout simplement en morphologie). Dans ces constructions, deux procédés morphologiques sont à l'œuvre : la suffixation et la composition. Les deux types de constructions sont illustrés par les exemples suivants:

12. **ezìà**                    **-tǔ**  
 pauvreté                    PRO.PR  
 'Lit. possesseur de pauvreté'  
 '(Le pauvre)'
13. **sùkú -xó**  
 école-maison  
 'Lit. Maison d'école'  
 '(Sale de classe)'

Dans les constructions construites par suffixation, des suffixes possesseurs qui fonctionnent comme des possesseurs sont suffixés aux noms possédés. Ces suffixes sont en effet des formes qui ont grammaticalisées des lexèmes qui font référence à ‘père’ ‘mère’ et ‘partenaire féminine’. Les constructions suffixées seraient des constructions à l’interface entre la syntaxe et la morphologie en raison de la possibilité d’insérer des déterminants et des modificateurs entre le possédé et le suffixe possesseur.

Le deuxième type de constructions étudiées dans cette section est les constructions faisant intervenir la composition. Ces constructions relèvent du niveau morphologique. Plus pertinent encore, ces constructions sont à distinguer des constructions à connecteur ayant le connecteur éliminé. Ce dernier type de construction est illustré par l’exemple dessous.

14. *Rosà' māmáyóví*  
**Rosà wó māmáyóví**  
 Rose POSS petit.enfant  
 ‘Le petit enfant de Rose’

Les constructions possessives composées ont comme propriété supra segmentale un ton haut sur la position du possédé. Par conséquent, tout nom fonctionnant comme un nom possédé dans une construction composée, a un ton haut, alors que ceci n’est pas le cas dans les constructions à connecteur dans lesquelles le connecteur est éliminé.

Les constructions possessives attributives ne peuvent donc pas être appréciées en dehors de leurs propriétés segmentales et suprasegmentales. Plus important encore, toutes les constructions possessives analysées peuvent être comprises en diachronie comme étant un continuum de constructions. La construction juxtaposée serait la construction la plus ancienne ; elle est suivie par la construction à connecteur. Les constructions morphologiques seraient les constructions les plus récentes, confirmant donc l’hypothèse d’univerbation.

5. Quatrième chapitre : Les constructions possessives prédicatives en Tə́júgbe

Le quatrième chapitre a comme sujet les constructions possessives prédicatives. Ces constructions ont une syntaxe propositionnelle et le possesseur et le possédé fonctionnent comme des arguments du verbe. L'exemple (15) ci-dessous illustre une construction possessive prédicative en Tə́júgbe.

15. *qàsé álé lè wó sí*  
dàsé      ále              lè              wó              sí  
 témoin    ART.INDF    être.à    PRO.3PL    main  
 'Ils ont un témoin'

Les constructions possessives prédicatives de Tə́júgbe peuvent être regroupées dans deux grandes catégories : les constructions possessives à copule et les constructions possessives locatives. Le premier type de ces constructions est illustré par l'exemple (16). L'exemple (15) au-dessus illustre le deuxième type de ces constructions.

16. *tòdzó yìbòé-á nyé atì-tò*  
 chat      noir-ART.DEF      être      Ati-PRO.PD  
 'Le chat noir est à Ati'

Les constructions possessives à copule ont comme propriété majeure le fait qu'une copule occupe la place du verbe. En plus, ces constructions expriment l'idée que le nom possédé appartient au possesseur. Pourtant, selon la copule qui apparaît en position verbale, il peut y avoir une variation en ce qui concerne le sens exprimé par la construction. A propos de ceci, deux copules apparaissent dans les constructions possessives à copule : la copule **nyé** 'être' et la copule **zù** 'devenir'. Lorsque la copule **nyé** 'être' apparaît dans la construction possessive à copule, la construction exprime l'idée d'une possession statique ; lorsque la copule **zù** 'devenir' apparaît dans la construction possessive à copule, la construction exprime l'idée que le possesseur vient d'acquérir le possédé, *i.e.* la possession est inchoative.

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Une deuxième variation caractérise le sens exprimé par les constructions à copule : l'élément sur lequel est centrée la relation de possession diffère selon la construction. En effet, les constructions possessives à copule de Tɔŋúgbe peuvent avoir deux configurations. Dans la première configuration, le nom possédé est en position du sujet et le possesseur est en position de complément. Toutefois, le possesseur, en position de complément, dépend syntaxiquement du pronom possédé (le pronom qui peut remplacer le possédé dans les constructions possessives juxtaposées). L'exemple ci-dessous illustre ce sous-type de construction possessive à copule.

17. *egb̀̀́ ́nyé mié̀̀*  
egb̀̀́-á              **nyé**      mié̀̀-t̀̀  
chèvre-ART.DEF    être      PRO.1PL-PRO.PD  
'La chèvre est à nous'

Dans la deuxième configuration, le possesseur est en position du sujet et le nom possédé, avec le suffixe possesseur est en position du complément. Ce sous-type de construction possessive à copule est illustré par l'exemple ci-dessous.

18. *Kofí ́nyé gb̀̀́t̀̀*  
**Kofí-é**      **nyé**      **gb̀̀́-á-t̀̀**  
Kofi-FOC    être    chèvre-ART.DEF-PRO.PR  
'Kofi est le propriétaire de la chèvre'

Quand la construction prend la forme de la première configuration, le sens exprimé par la construction est tel que la relation de possession est centrée sur le nom possédé *i.e.* le nom possédé est mis en lumière. Lorsque la construction prend la forme de la deuxième configuration, la construction exprime une relation de possession centrée sur le possesseur. Plus important encore, les formes syntagmatiques qui fonctionnent comme compléments sont en effet des formes construites en syntaxe.

Cette dernière propriété syntaxique distingue les constructions possessives à copule d'autres constructions ayant les mêmes formes, et dans lesquelles le suffixe possesseur participe. Les constructions possessives à copule ont en position de complément des syntagmes



nominaux ; des constructions à copule ayant la même structure comme les constructions possessives à copule ont en position du complément des noms composés.

Une deuxième distinction concerne la différence entre les constructions possessives attributives dans lesquelles participent le suffixe possesseur et les constructions possessives à copule dans lesquelles participe le suffixe possesseur. L'on pourrait être tenté de considérer les constructions possessives à copule ayant le suffixe possesseur comme étant des variantes prédicatives de la construction possessive attributive ou vice versa. Cet argument se heurt à des faits fondamentaux tels la distribution des noms pouvant apparaître en position du possédé dans les deux constructions. Au fait, alors que les noms non-relationnels et les noms des parties du corps peuvent apparaître en position du possédé des deux types de constructions, les noms socio-culturellement relationnels **srò** 'époux/se' et le nom de relation familiale **evī** 'enfant' n'apparaissent que dans la construction possessive attributive. Cette distribution est représentative de la distinction fonctionnelle qu'il y a entre les deux types de constructions : dans les constructions possessives attributives, la possession est présupposée ; dans la construction possessive à copule, la possession est déclarée.

Les constructions possessives locatives englobent plusieurs types de constructions. De façon générale, ces constructions ont comme verbe le prédicat locatif **lè/nò** 'être.à'. Aussi, dans ces constructions, de façon générale, le possédé est en position du sujet, et le possesseur est un dépendant syntaxique dans un syntagme adpositionnel. L'exemple (19) illustre une construction possessive locative en Tə̀húgbe.

19. [enyà lè gè sī] káfé ló  
 histoire être.à barbe main avant PART  
 'La barbe aussi a des expériences'

Le type d'adposition fonctionnant comme la tête du syntagme du possesseur de la construction motive une division binaire des constructions possessives locatives : les constructions possessives locatives ayant un syntagme postpositionnel; et les constructions possessives locatives ayant un syntagme prépositionnel. Les

postpositions qui apparaissent le plus souvent comme tête du syntagme du possesseur sont quatre : **así** ‘main’, **ɲú** ‘peau’ **dòmè** ‘milieu’ **dzí** ‘section.supérieure/dessus’ **gbó** ‘environs’.

Les constructions les plus communes et les plus adaptées pour l’expression de la possession sont les constructions dans lesquelles la postposition **así** ‘main’ figure. Ainsi, lorsque la construction inclut **así** ‘main’, le prédicat locatif peut ne pas participer dans la construction et sa place est prise par d’autres verbes (des verbes d’achèvement qui expriment l’idée de la réception d’une entité) ; des verbes tels **ká** ‘contacter’, **dó** ‘atteindre’, **sù** ‘suffire’. Toutefois, lorsque ces verbes remplacent le prédicat locatif, la construction exprime l’idée d’une possession inchoative.

Lorsque les autres postpositions participent dans les constructions possessives locatives, les constructions ont des propriétés particulières : il y a des contextes particuliers pour que la notion de possession soit exprimée ; la signification possessive fondamentale exprimée est, soit limitée à des relations spécifiques, soit inférée. Lorsque la postposition **ɲú** ‘peau’ participe dans la construction possessive locative, la construction ne peut qu’exprimer une signification possessive fondamentale de partie-tout. Par conséquent, les noms qui peuvent fonctionner comme des noms possédés dans cette construction sont des noms des parties du corps, ou des noms interprétés comme étant une partie ou une extension de la partie d’un certain « tout ».

Lorsque la postposition **dzí** ‘dessus’ apparaît comme la tête du syntagme postpositionnel d’une construction possessive locative, la construction exprime l’idée de la possession d’une tâche. Alors, de façon générale, les noms qui, typiquement, fonctionnent comme des noms possédés dans ces constructions sont des noms abstraits. Néanmoins, des noms concrets peuvent fonctionner comme des noms possédés dans la construction. Dans ce dernier cas, le nom concret n’est pas interprété comme étant le nom possédé ; plutôt, il est interprété comme étant celui à qui est liée la tâche possédée.

Lorsque les deux dernières postpositions *viz.* **dòmè** ‘milieu’ et **gbó** ‘environs’ apparaissent dans les constructions possessives locatives, la

possession ne peut qu'être inférée, car ces postpositions sont, en fait, adaptées pour l'expression de la localisation. Néanmoins, dans certaines conditions particulières, les constructions dans lesquelles elles apparaissent peuvent exprimer la possession. Les constructions avec **gbó** 'environs' expriment la possession lorsqu'il y a la contiguïté spatiale: le possédé et le possesseur se trouvent à un même lieu pendant une durée importante, à tel point que le possédé est considéré comme étant un objet appartenant au possesseur. Par conséquent, des constructions possessives dans lesquelles la postposition est **gbó** 'environs' sont rares et se limitent à des aires géographiques spécifiques. Les constructions avec **dòmè** 'milieu' sont rares aussi ; et se limitent à l'expression des relations familiales et la possession des noms possédés acquis en interaction avec la communauté. Donc, les noms qui fonctionnent comme des noms possédés dans ces constructions sont des noms des relations familiales et des noms socialement induits (ex : **edzrè** 'bagarre').

D'autres constructions s'apparentent aux constructions possessives locatives dans lesquelles participent des postpositions. Dans ces constructions, il y a des postpositions et des prépositions. La préposition qui participe dans cette construction est la préposition allative. Structurellement, ces constructions, avec une préposition (l'allative) et une postposition, ont le même ordre de constituants que les constructions ayant des syntagmes postpositionnels *i.e.* le possédé est en position du sujet et le possesseur est un dépendant dans un syntagme adpositionnel. L'exemple (20) illustre cette construction.

20. *agbèlì bǒ ló' sí kò*  
**agbèlì** **bó** **lé** **wó** **sí** **kò**  
 manioc être.abondant à PRO.3PL main INT  
 'Ils ont beaucoup de manioc'

Les verbes qui apparaissent dans ces constructions sont des verbes de quantification tels **sùgbò** 'être nombreux' et **bó** 'être abondant', et non pas le prédicat locatif ou des verbes d'achèvement qui expriment l'idée de la réception. Malgré cette différence, les constructions ayant la préposition allative et des postpositions sont des variantes

quantificatives des constructions dans lesquelles participent les postpositions.

Le dernier type de constructions possessives locatives sont les constructions dans lesquelles il y a des syntagmes prépositionnels. Ces constructions peuvent être aussi divisées en deux types : les constructions dans lesquelles la préposition allative est présente ; et les constructions dans lesquelles le datif est présent. Les deux types de constructions sont illustrés par les exemples suivants :

21. *adàṅù le ṅkúmè né*  
**adàṅù**      **le**      **ṅkú-mè**      **ná**      **-é**  
 créativité    être.à    œil-intérieur    DAT    -PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. Il/elle a la créativité dans la figure  
 ‘(Il/elle est créative)’
22. *é lé lànú lá sì*  
**é**      **lé**      **lànú**    **lé**      **asì**  
 PRO.3SG    attraper    arme    à      main  
 ‘Il/elle a une arme’

Cette distinction n’est pas seulement motivée par la préposition qui apparaît comme tête syntaxique du syntagme qui fonctionne comme le complément du verbe, mais trouve aussi expression dans le sens exprimé par chaque type de ces constructions. Alors que les constructions dans lesquelles seul l’allatif participe expriment une possession temporaire, les constructions dans lesquelles participe le datif expriment une possession par contrôle *i.e.* le possesseur contrôle le nom possédé à sa guise.

Les constructions dans lesquelles participe le datif ont la même structure formelle que les constructions dans lesquelles participent des postpositions : le possédé est en position du sujet, et le possesseur est un dépendant du syntagme prépositionnel. En plus de ceci, les constructions dans lesquelles participe le datif ont le prédicat locatif, le même élément verbal présent dans les constructions dans lesquelles participent les postpositions. Malgré ces similarités structurelles, les constructions dans lesquelles participe le datif ne peuvent pas être décrites comme étant des extensions (bénéfactives) des constructions

dans lesquelles participent les postpositions. Si relation il y a, celle-ci est plutôt avec les constructions à possesseur externes *i.e.* les constructions au cœur des discussions dans le chapitre cinq.

Le dernier type de constructions possessives prédicatives est les constructions dans lesquelles seul l'allatif participe. Ces constructions sont spéciales car elles ont un ordre de constituant différent de tous les autres types de constructions possessives prédicatives ; et ne font pas intervenir le prédicat locatif en aucun cas. En effet, dans ces constructions, le possesseur est en position du sujet et le nom possédé est en position d'objet direct (ex : 22). Le nom possédé est ensuite suivi par un syntagme prépositionnel dans lequel l'allatif est la tête syntaxique. En plus, les verbes qui participent dans ces constructions sont des verbes d'accomplissement tels **lé** 'attraper', **xò** 'recevoir', **tsó** 'prendre' **kó** 'lever'. Enfin, ces constructions expriment la possession temporaire. Ces constructions sont donc à analyser indépendamment des autres types de constructions possessives locatives. Suivant cette dernière suggestion, il en ressort que ces constructions ne sont pas de véritables constructions possessives locatives ; et qu'elles expriment la possession en raison de deux faits : les événements exprimés par les verbes qui y participent, et plus pertinemment, la disponibilité du syntagme prépositionnel.

En guise de conclusion, il est à noter que les différentes postpositions présentes dans les constructions possessives locatives de Tɔ̀nùgbe peuvent être hiérarchisées en ce qui concerne leur adaptabilité pour l'expression de la notion de la possession. La postposition **así** 'main' est la postposition la plus grammaticalisée pour l'expression de la possession. Le datif, qui joue déjà un rôle dans les constructions possessives prédicatives, est présent dans un autre type de construction ayant une syntaxe propositionnelle, *i.e.* les constructions à possesseur externe.

#### 6. Cinquième chapitre: Les constructions à possesseur externe en Tɔ̀nùgbe.

Dans les constructions à possesseur externes de Tɔ̀nùgbe, le possesseur et le possédé apparaissent dans des différentes unités syntagmatiques. Pourtant, la relation exprimée entre les deux entités

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est de la forme Y de X *i.e.* une relation semblable à celle exprimée par les constructions possessives attributives. L'exemple au dessous illustre une construction à possesseur externe en Tɔ̀ŋúgbe.

23. **Ama**      **ŋé**      **afò**      **né**      **Kofí**  
 Ama      casser      pied      DAT      Kofi  
 'Ama a cassé le pied de Kofi'

Les constructions à possesseur externes de Tɔ̀ŋúgbe manifestent une dichotomie structurelle : il y a des constructions à possesseur externe ayant la structure NP V N DAT NP ; il y a des constructions à possesseur externe avec la structure NP V N ALL N DAT NP.

Le premier type de constructions a comme principale caractéristique le fait que le possédé soit en position d'objet. Ces constructions, illustrées par l'exemple en haut, peuvent néanmoins varier selon le type de prédicat qui apparaît dans la construction. Ainsi, il y a des constructions à possesseur externe ayant un possédé objet, et avec des prédicats simples, et des constructions à possesseur externe avec des verbes à objets obligatoires.

Les constructions avec des prédicats simples sont les constructions à possesseur externe les plus fréquentes en Tɔ̀ŋúgbe. Pourtant, il y a des variations au sein de ces constructions aussi. En effet, certaines de ces constructions ont le datif-oblique éliminé lorsque le possesseur datif est identique au sujet (25) ; et d'autres ont le possesseur en position du sujet, et le possédé en position d'objet lorsque le verbe est un verbe d'expérience (26). Comparez l'ordre des constituants dans les constructions suivantes :

24. **é**      **qù**      **asī**      **né**      **Ablá**  
 PRO.3SG      manger      main      DAT      Ablá  
 'Il/elle a mordu la main d'Ablá'

25. **Ablá**      **gbà**      **ŋkú**  
 Ablá      détruire      oeil  
 'Ablá a détruit ses yeux'  
 '(Ablá est aveugle)'

26. dò-mè                      vé-é  
 ventre-intérieur      faire.mal-PRO.3SG  
 ‘Lit. Son ventre lui a fait mal’  
 ‘(Il était énervé)’

De plus, lorsque le datif-oblique n’est pas éliminé dans ces constructions, et que le référent du possesseur est le même que le sujet de la construction, le possesseur peut être remplacé par un pronom réflexif (27).

27. *Kofi ná fɔ né dokoéé*  
**Kofi**      **ɲé**      **afɔ**      **ná**      **é-dókoé-á**  
 Kofi      casser      pied      DAT      PRO.3SG-REFL-ART.DEF  
 ‘Kofi a cassé son pied (pour lui-même)’

Dans les constructions à possesseur externe dans lesquelles le possédé est un objet ayant un verbe à objet obligatoire, il y a deux noms possédés. Le premier nom possédé est l’objet obligatoire. Le deuxième nom possédé est le complément. L’exemple (28) illustre ce type de construction à possesseur externe.

28. **é**                      **kplá**      **asī**      **kò**      **né**      **nàně-á**  
 PRO.3SG      ICV      main      cou      DAT      mère-ART.DEF  
 ‘Lit. Elle a mis sa main sur le cou de sa mère’  
 ‘(Elle a sauté dans le bras de sa maman)’

Tout comme pour les constructions à prédicat simple, lorsque le possesseur est coréférentiel avec l’élément sujet, le datif-oblique peut être éliminé. Toutefois, ce qui est intrigant est que, contrairement à ce qui se passe dans les constructions à prédicat simple, lorsque le possesseur est coréférentiel avec le sujet, le possesseur ne peut pas être remplacé par un pronom réflexif comme le démontre l’exemple ci-dessous.

29. *?Amí fú asī nú né dokoéé*  
**Amí**      **fú**      **asī**      **nú**      **ná**      **é-dókoé-á**  
 Amí      ICV      main      bouche      DAT      PRO.3SG-soi-ART.DEF  
 ‘Ami a frappé sa bouche avec sa main’

Le deuxième type structurel de constructions à possesseur externe *i.e.* les constructions ayant la structure NP V N ALL N DAT NP, a comme principale propriété le fait que le possédé soit encodé dans un syntagme prépositionnel dont la tête syntaxique est la préposition allative. Ce dernier syntagme suit le verbe, pour fonctionner comme le complément du verbe, mais précède le syntagme prépositionnel ayant comme tête syntaxique le datif *i.e.* le syntagme dans lequel se trouve le possesseur. La construction est illustrée par l'exemple ci-dessous.

30. *é dà asī lá lídzí né*

**é            dà        asī        lé        alì-dzí        ná-é**  
 PRO.3SG    jeter    main    à    taille-dessus    DAT.PRO.3SG  
 'Ili a mis sa main sur sa taille'

Ces constructions possèdent les mêmes propriétés syntaxiques que les constructions à objet ayant un verbe à objet obligatoire. Ainsi, dans ces constructions aussi, le syntagme possesseur est éliminé lorsque le possesseur est coréférentiel avec le sujet. Toutefois, le possesseur ne peut pas être remplacé par un pronom réflexif. En ce qui concerne les noms possédés de ces constructions, les noms qui fonctionnent comme des noms possédés sont des formes composées comprenant une partie du corps et une forme de relation spatiale.

Les relations exprimées par les constructions à possesseur externe peuvent être divisées en trois : 1. Les relations binaires, *viz.* la relation entre possesseur et possédé ; 2. La relation de signification possessive fondamentale 3. La conceptualisation de la relation possessive. En ce qui concerne la première relation, il a été mentionné que les constructions à possesseur externe établissent une relation attributive entre le possesseur et le possédé, *i.e.* une relation du type Y de X. Les discussions sémantiques ne concernent donc que les deux dernières relations : la signification possessive fondamentale et la conceptualisation de la relation possessive.

La signification possessive fondamentale exprimée dans les constructions à possesseur externe est une relation de partie-tout. Il y a des variations qui caractérisent cette signification fondamentale. La première variation concerne les constructions dans lesquelles le datif-



oblique est éliminé. Dans ces constructions, la relation partie-tout exprimée est associée à un effet pragmatique. Les événements exprimés dans cette construction sont vus à partir du point de vue du possesseur.

La seconde variation sémantique concerne la signification possessive exprimée par les constructions dans lesquelles le possesseur est remplacé par le pronom réflexif. Dans ces constructions, le sens exprimé est tel que le nom possédé est conçu comme étant affecté par des actions volontairement provoquées par le possesseur. Ainsi, dans ces constructions, à part le sens général de partie-tout, il y a un sens de 'souffrance enduit volontairement'.

La troisième variation sémantique en rapport avec la signification possessive concerne les noms qui fonctionnent comme des noms possédés dans la construction. Etant donné que la construction exprime une signification possessive fondamentale de partie-tout, les noms des parties du corps sont les noms qui, prototypiquement, fonctionnent comme des entités possédés. Lorsque des noms non-relationnels apparaissent comme des noms possédés dans ces constructions, ils sont conçus comme étant une extension du possesseur. Quand, les noms des relations familiales fonctionnent comme des possédés dans ces constructions, la signification possessive exprimée n'est pas celle d'une relation familiale, mais plutôt le rôle joué par la personne référenciée par le nom. Le rôle joué par la personne est conçu comme faisant partie du possesseur. Ainsi, même lorsque les noms des relations familiales fonctionnent comme des noms possédés dans ces constructions, la construction exprime une relation de partie-tout.

En ce qui concerne la conceptualisation de la relation possessive, dans les constructions à possesseur externe, le nom possédé est conçu comme subissant les événements exprimés dans le verbe de façon indépendante. Cette propriété est partagée par les autres dialectes de l'éwé. Néanmoins, alors que dans les autres dialectes de l'éwé (surtout les dialectes de la zone septentrionale), comme preuve de la conceptualisation non-intime de la relation possessive entre le possesseur et le possédé dans les constructions à objet possédé ayant un prédicat simple, et dans lesquelles le datif-oblique n'est pas

éliminé, les possédés peuvent avoir des déterminants et modifieurs, en Tɔ̀húgbe, les noms possédés de ces constructions ne peuvent pas avoir des déterminants et modifieurs. Dans le cadre d'une grammaire plus générale de l'éwé, il ressort que la construction à objet possédé avec un prédicat simple, et dans laquelle le datif-oblique n'est pas éliminé, ne constitue qu'une strate de la construction en éwé. Ceci explique pourquoi les propriétés syntaxiques des noms possédés ne sont pas les mêmes.

#### 7. Sixième chapitre: Constructions possessives, existentielle et locatives

Les constructions possessives de Tɔ̀húgbe manifestent plusieurs relations avec les constructions locatives et la construction existentielle. A part le fait que les constructions possessives attributives peuvent avoir des fonctions localisatrices dans les constructions locatives et existentielles, la relation entre les constructions possessives attributives et les constructions locatives/existentielle est limitée. Par conséquent, les relations étudiées sont les relations entre les constructions possessives ayant une syntaxe propositionnelle (les constructions possessives prédicatives et les constructions à possesseur externe). Avant d'analyser les relations, il est important de présenter la construction existentielle et les constructions locatives de Tɔ̀húgbe.

La construction existentielle de Tɔ̀húgbe affirme la présence d'une entité (la localisée) quelque part. La localisée dans la construction existentielle est en position du sujet ; et le lieu de localisation (le localisateur) est indiqué par le pronom de la troisième personne du singulier qui est en position de complément. L'exemple ci-dessous illustre la construction existentielle en Tɔ̀húgbe.

31. *mí vá lé*

<b>mí</b>	<b>vá</b>	<b>lè</b>	<b>é</b>
PRO.1PL	VENT	être.à	PRO.3SG
'Nous existions'			

La construction existentielle en Tɔ̀húgbe fait intervenir seul le prédicat locatif **lè/nɔ̀**. Le pronom de la troisième personne du singulier qui suit

le prédicat locatif indique un lieu de localisation non-spécifique. Ainsi, le sens exact exprimé par la construction existentielle de Tɔ̀húgbe peut être décrit comme ‘la localisée existe à un lieu inconnu’.

Dans la construction locative, une localisée est localisée à un endroit (localisateur). La localisée est en position du sujet et le localisateur est en position de complément. Exemple (32) illustre une construction locative en Tɔ̀húgbe.

32. *agbèlìé wò lè kùsí mè*

**agbèlì-á-wó**            lè            **kùsí-á**            **mè**  
 manioc-ART.DEF-PL   être.à   panier-ART.DEF   intérieure  
 ‘Les maniocs sont dans le panier’

Le localisateur dans les constructions locatives peut être un syntagme nominal, un syntagme postpositionnel (dans ce cas, le nom du syntagme fonctionne comme l’objet de référence, et la postposition fonctionne comme le désignateur de domaine) et un syntagme prépositionnel (dans ce cas, la préposition fonctionne comme un indicateur de relation et le nom fonctionne comme le localisateur). Suite à ces différences, quatre schémas peuvent être identifiés pour les constructions locatives de Tɔ̀húgbe :

SN	LOC.PRED	SN
SN	LOC.PRED	SN POSTP
SN V		SN POSTP
SN V		PREP SN
SN V		PREP SN POSTP

Les deux premiers schémas font intervenir le prédicat locatif ; et les autres schémas font intervenir d’autres verbes. Les deux premiers schémas, qui représentent les constructions locatives fondamentales, ont la même structure que la construction existentielle, à part l’élément en position de complément *i.e.* la construction existentielle à en position du complément le pronom de la troisième personne du singulier. Cette différence en structure est aussi reflétée dans le sens exprimé par les deux types de constructions : alors que la construction existentielle exprime la localisation d’une localisée quelque part, les

constructions locatives expriment la localisation d'une localisée à un endroit spécifique.

La différence entre les constructions locatives fondamentales et les constructions locatives non-fondamentales (illustrées par l'exemple (33)), représentées par les trois derniers schémas, va au-delà d'une différence de schéma. La différence concerne aussi la manière dont est exprimée la relation de localisation. Dans les constructions locatives fondamentales, la relation ne comprend pas la configuration de la localisée vis-à-vis le localisateur; dans les constructions locatives non-fondamentales, la relation exprimée inclut une caractérisation de la configuration de la localisée vis-à vis le localisateur.

33. *atùkpáá tsá tìtrè lé ekpè dzí*  
**atùkpá-á                      tsí      atìtrè      lé      ekpè      dzí**  
 bouteille-ART.DEF reste debout à pierre dessus  
 'La bouteille est debout sur la pierre'

Les constructions locatives non-fondamentales peuvent aussi être divisées en deux groupes : les constructions locatives non-fondamentales internes et les constructions locatives non-fondamentales externes. Dans les constructions locatives non-fondamentales internes, les événements évoqués par le verbe sont internes à la relation de localisation ; dans les constructions locatives non-fondamentales externes, les événements du verbe sont externes à la relation de localisation. Dans les constructions locatives non-fondamentales internes, la relation de localisation peut être exprimée par soit le verbe, soit le verbe en combinaison avec une préposition.

Les relations entre les constructions possessives, les constructions locatives et la construction existentielle existent à deux niveaux : le niveau lexical et le niveau syntagmatique. La relation relevant du niveau lexical fait référence à des relations dans lesquelles intervient le prédicat locatif; la relation relevant du niveau syntagmatique fait référence à des relations induites par le syntagme ayant comme tête le datif. Les types des constructions possessives concernées par le premier niveau de relation sont les constructions possessives locatives ; et les types des constructions possessives concernées par le deuxième niveau de relation sont les constructions à possesseur

externe et les constructions possessives locatives faisant intervenir le datif en position finale.

Le premier niveau de relation a des conséquences morphosyntaxiques et sémantiques pour les types de constructions concernées. En ce qui concerne la morphosyntaxe, les constructions concernées ont le même ordre des constituants comme en témoignent les exemples suivants :

#### Possessive

	SUJET	VERBE	COMPLEMENT	
	<u>Nom</u>	<u>Verbe</u>	<u>Nom</u>	<u>Adposition</u>
34.	<b>tòdzó</b> chat	<b>lè</b> être.à	<b>é</b> PRO.3SG	<b>sí</b> main
	‘Il/elle a un chat’			

#### Locative

	SUJET	VERBE	COMPLEMENT
	<u>Syntagme nominal</u>	<u>Verbe</u>	<u>Nom</u>
35.	<b>bólùs</b> bouteille-ART.DEF	<b>lè</b> être.à	<b>anyìgbá</b> terre
	<b>-á</b>		
	‘Le ballon est à terre’		

#### Existentielle

	SUJET	VERBE	COMPLEMENT
	<u>Pronom</u>	<u>Verbe</u>	<u>Pronom</u>
36.	<b>wó</b> PRO.3PL	<b>lè</b> être.à	<b>é</b> PRO.3SG
	‘Ils existaient’		

Malgré cette similarité, les constructions ont aussi des différences morphosyntaxiques. Tout d’abord, alors que les constructions possessives locatives et les constructions locatives peuvent avoir des noms et des syntagmes postpositionnels en position de complément, la construction existentielle ne peut pas en avoir. Aussi, les postpositions qui sont présentes dans les constructions possessives locatives, sont les mêmes qui sont présentes dans les constructions locatives.

Toutefois, la postposition la plus adaptée pour l'expression de la possession *i.e.* **así** 'hand', est la postposition la moins adaptée pour l'expression de la localisation ; la postposition la plus adaptée pour l'expression de la localisation, *viz.* **gbó** 'environ', est la postposition la moins adaptée pour l'expression de la possession.

La conséquence sémantique de ce premier niveau de relation est que le sens exprimé par toutes les constructions dans lesquelles participe le prédicat locatif est construit sur la notion de la localisation. La localisation dans les constructions locatives et dans la construction existentielle a été clarifiée au-dessus. Dans les constructions possessives locatives, la relation exprimée peut être rapprochée à la localisation : le nom possédé est localisé dans un espace relatif au possesseur. Ainsi, le nom possédé dans ces constructions fonctionne comme une localisée, et le syntagme possesseur fonctionne comme le localisateur. L'exemple ci-dessous illustre la représentation de ce rapprochement.

LOCALISEE	RELATION	LOCALISATEUR	
<u>localisée</u>	<u>relation</u>	<u>objet réf.</u>	<u>ind. domain</u>
possédé	relation	possesseur	postposition
37. <i>nàné nò sí</i>			
<b>nàné</b>	<b>nò</b>	<b>é</b>	<b>sí</b>
chose	être.à :PST	PRO.3SG	main
'Elle /il avait quelque chose'			

Malgré la similarité entre le sens exprimé par les constructions, chaque construction exprime une idée différente de celle exprimée par l'autre. Le sens exprimé par une construction ne peut pas être assimilé au sens exprimé par une autre construction.

Le deuxième niveau de relation *i.e.* la participation des syntagmes datifs, a pour conséquence le déclenchement de la possession. Ainsi, lorsque les constructions locatives, et la construction existentielle ont un syntagme ayant pour tête le datif en position finale, la construction exprime la possession. Les exemples ci-dessous illustrent une construction existentielle et une construction locative fondamentale ayant en position finale un syntagme datif.

38. **nyànù** **lè** **xò-nú** **né** **Dõtsé**  
 femme être.à chambre-bouche DAT Dotse  
 ‘Dotse a une femme’
39. **tá-gbó** **mé** **lè** **é** **né**  
 tête-environs NEG être.à. PRO.3SG DAT  
**mì-à ?**  
 PRO.2PL-Q  
 ‘Lit. N’avez-vous pas de côté de tête?’  
 ‘(Êtes-vous fous?)’

Le même syntagme datif caractérise les constructions à possesseur externe (Seule la construction à possesseur externe à objet possédé ayant un prédicat simple et dans laquelle le datif-oblique n’est pas éliminé est considérée dans les discussions suivantes). Dans les constructions dans lesquelles la possession est déclenchée par la disponibilité du syntagme datif en position finale, le nom possédé peut être en position sujet, ou en position du complément. En plus de ceci, ces constructions expriment aussi une signification possessive fondamentale de partie-tout. Par conséquent, les noms qui fonctionnent comme des noms possédés sont des noms des parties du corps ou des noms non-relationnels conçus comme étant une extension du possesseur.

Malgré les similarités entre les constructions dans lesquelles la possession est déclenchée et les constructions à possesseur externe, la façon dont est conçue la possession dans les deux types de constructions est différente (et ceci est reflétée dans la nature des verbes qui participent dans chacune des constructions). Dans les constructions à possesseur externe, le possédé est affecté par les événements exprimés dans le verbe ; dans les constructions dans lesquelles la possession est déclenchée, les possédés ne sont pas affectés.

#### 8. Conclusion

Ce travail consiste à identifier les constructions possessives de Tɔ̀nùgbe ; et à souligner les relations que celles-ci peuvent avoir avec les constructions locatives et existentielles. Malgré les similarités

structurelles et sémantiques, les trois types de constructions ne peuvent pas (au moins au niveau synchronique) être réduits à une construction sous-jacente. L'hypothèse avancée peut être résumée en 'chaque construction doit être considérée comme étant une instanciation d'un schéma qui correspond à un sens particulier'.

Malgré le fait que ce travail concerne le Tɔ̀nùgbe, les analyses proposées ne sont pas sans implications pour d'autres dialectes de l'éwé. En tout premier lieu, l'esquisse de la grammaire présente des nouvelles données sur l'éwé. Ces données devraient enrichir encore les documentations sur l'éwé et les langues gbé en générale. Les données devraient encourager une nouvelle génération des linguistes à s'intéresser à la micro variation syntaxique non seulement en éwé, mais aussi dans d'autres parlers gbé. Elles devraient aussi inspirer des discussions sur les langues gbé en ce qui concerne les relations entre les dialectes de celles-ci. En fait, vers la fin de ce travail, dans le cadre des discussions informelles, il a été constaté que certaines catégories syntaxiques de Tɔ̀nùgbe (ex : le paradigme des démonstratifs) peuvent avoir des relations intéressantes avec des catégories dans d'autres langues gbé.

Les discussions sur les constructions possessives apportent aussi des nouvelles analyses en ce qui concerne la langue éwé. Ce travail présente une gamme de constructions et leurs propriétés, qui auparavant, n'était pas capturée dans la littérature existante (ex : les propriétés suprasegmentales des constructions possessives attributives, les constructions possessives prédicatives ayant des pronoms possédés, des constructions prédicatives possessives contextualisées/inférées etc.). En plus, ce travail apporte des données qui doivent enrichir les constructions déjà notées dans la littérature (ex : les constructions à copule, les constructions possessives à possesseur externe).

Ce travail a aussi des intérêts pour la linguistique typologique. Les tons notés en Tɔ̀nùgbe ont déjà suscité des vives discussions avec des spécialistes en tonologie, surtout en ce qui concerne l'évolution tonale. Les différents paradigmes notés pour les catégories syntaxiques (surtout le paradigme des démonstratifs) ont aussi suscité des discussions avec des experts de la linguistique comparative. En



plus, les différents marqueurs des catégories modaux, aspectuels et positionnels ont aussi été le sujet des discussions intéressantes avec des spécialistes dans les différents laboratoires de linguistique dans lequel ce travail à été mené. En ce qui concerne les constructions possessives et les hypothèses avancées, ce travail apporte un nouvel élément en faveur des arguments fonctionnels tenus comme explication pour les configurations des constructions. La proposition est que des considérations conceptuelles motivent les configurations formelles observées en Tɔ̀húgbe. Par conséquent, chaque construction exprime une signification particulière.



**1. Nar Fam.flextext (Narrating the deaf play)**

**fémó ee enū-ó kíyíé mí kpó fíé`**

Famor ee thing-ART.DEF this PRO.1PL see now

Famor what we just saw

1

**ewò yé gblò enū yíé tútútú kpó lé nònòmetátá kíyíé vá yì**

PRO.2SG FOC tell thing this exactly PRO.2SG.see at image this VENT go

**dzí nù**

upper.section DAT-PRO.1SG

tell me exactly what you saw in the film

2

3

**lè nònòmetátá kíyíé-ó vá yì mè-é**

be.at image this-PL VENT go interior.section-FOC

in the film that was just shown

4

**mè kpó bé ñùtsù alá tsó agblè-mè vá**

PRO.1SG see QUOT man ART.INDF from farm-interior.section come

I saw that a certain man came back from farm

5

6

**váyì wò dò dèdè té ñú wò vá vá nò**

ALTR do work fatigue press-PRO.3SG skin PRO.3SG come VENT be.at:PST

**anyī**

ground

he went to work he was tired he came to sit down

7

8

9

**wò dókóé-é vèvèvè**

do REFL-ART.DEF little.by.little

stretched himself a little

10

**kò edò há nó wù tá**

then hunger also COP -PRO.3SG kill-PROG so

and since he was hungry as well

11

**kò wò yó srò-ó bé né vá dọ kpl̩**

then PRO.3SG call-HAB spouse-ART.DEF QUOT PRO.3SG.IMP VENT put table

he call his wife so she sets the dinning table

12

**wò vá dọ kpl̩ né wò tsó asī hé kló**

PRO.3SG VENT put table DAT.PRO.3SG PRO.3SG take hand IT wash

she came to set the dinning table before him he washed his hands

13

14

**wò nù tsì-é vī alē**

PRO.3SG drink water-ART.DEF small ART.INDF

he drank a little water

15

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**kò wò dzè nū-ó qù~qù dzí**  
 then PRO.3SG be.in.contact.with thing-ART.DEF RED~eat upper.section  
 and he started eating

16

**kò wò lé qù wò lé qù**  
 then PRO.3SG COP-PRO.3SG eat-PROG PRO.3SG COP-PRO.3SG eat-PROG

**nyúíé fányì**

well fine

he ate and ate really well

17

**mè kpó bé é vè lé né vèvèvè**  
 PRO.1SG see QUOT PRO.3SG throat hold-PROG DAT.PRO.3SG little.by.little

I saw that he almost got choked

18

**kò wò tró**  
 then PRO.3SG turn

then after that he

19

**tsó tsi-é qè kó kpàlà é dzí-í**  
 take water-ART.DEF some take rinse PRO.3SG upper.surface-FOC

he used water to calm it

20

**kò wò qù-í nyúíé fányì enū-ó há vívì né**  
 then PRO.3SG eat-PRO.3SG well fine thing-ART.DEF also sweet DAT.PRO.3SG

so he ate really well, enjoyed his meal

21

**wò qó fò kò**  
 PRO.3SG full stomach then

he was satisfied; then

22

**mè kpó bé vī alē vī alē tsí wó**  
 PRO.1SG see QUOT small ART.INDF small ART.INDF stay PRO.3PL

I saw that he had leftovers between

23

**áqúté-mè wò qé fast**  
 tooth-inside PRO.3SG remove-PRO.3SG fast

his teeth; he quickly took it off

24

**kò ké-ò qé vò-á yékò**  
 then as-PRO.3SG remove-PRO.3SG finish-TOP and.then

and taking it off

25

**wò kpó bé fffé yè qó fò yékò wò yó**  
 PRO.3SG see QUOT now PRO.LOG full stomach and.then PRO.3SG call

when he realized that he was okay, he called his

26

srò-ó bé né vá fò nū-ó kó yì  
 spouse-ART.DEF QUOT 3SG.IMP come pick thing-ART.DEF take go  
 wife to come and clear the table

27

wò vá fò-é kó yì esrò-ó vā bíé  
 PRO.3SG come pick-PRO.3SG take go spouse-ART.DEF VENT ask-PRO.3SG  
 bé oo

QUOT oh  
 she cleared it all; the wife asked him that

28

29

é dū nū-ó qó fò nyúíé haa  
 PRO.3SG eat thing-ART.DEF full stomach well PART  
 was he satisfied?

30

wò bé oo yè qó fò  
 PRO.3SG QUOT oh PRO.LOG full stomach  
 he answered that yes he was satisfied

31

é ká lé dzí ha wò bé oo yè ká  
 PRO.3SG swear at.PRO.3SG upper.section PART PRO.3SG QUOT oh PRO.LOG swear  
 lé dzí páá

at.PRO.3SG upper.section very.much  
 was he sure? he said he was very sure

32

kò wò fò nū-ó kó yì  
 then PRO.3SG pick thing-ART.DEF take go  
 so she cleared the table

33

yé-ò bé né-ò yì vò-á né wò à-vá  
 and-PRO.3SG QUOT when-PRO.3SG go finish-TOP then PRO.3SG SUBJ-come  
 he asked that she came back after she deposited the things

34

Ké-ò vá yé-ò bíé bé yè ví  
 when-PRO.3SG come and-PRO.3SG ask.PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG child  
 nyànùví-é lé haa

girl-ART.DEF Q PART

when she came back he asked if his daughter was around

35

36

wò bé lé wò bé né yó-é né  
 PRO.3SG QUOT-PRO.3SG be.at.PRO.3SG PRO.3SG QUOT 3SG.IMP call-PRO.3SG DAT  
 yè

PRO.LOG

she answered that she was around and he asked for her to be called

37

306 POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE

**dèví-é vá wò tsó gbè hē dó né**  
 child-ART.DEF come PRO.3SG take voice IT put.on DAT.PRO.3SG  
 when the child came, she greeted him

38

**wò bíé bé fǒ haa wò bé**  
 PRO.3SG ask-PRO.3SG QUOT-PRO.3SG wake.up PART PRO.3SG QUOT  
**yè fǒ**  
 PRO.LOG wake.up

he asked how she was doing, and she said she was doing fine

39

**é dū nū haa wò bé yè dū-í é dǒ**  
 PRO.3SG eat thing PART PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG eat-PRO.3SG PRO.3SG full  
**fò haa**

stomach PART

has she eaten yet? she answered yes. Was she satisfied?

40

41

**wó bé ooo yè tàtè yè-ó làmè sé**  
 PRO.3PL QUOT oh PRO.LOG father PRO.LOG-POSS body.inside strong  
**nyúíé**

well

she said father, i am feeling good

42

43

**yé-ò gblò-é né bé yè flè aló yè tsó**  
 and-PRO.3SG tell-PRO.3SG DAT.PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG buy or PRO.LOG take  
 he then told her that he had bought or he had brought

44

45

**agbalē alē-ó vé né**  
 book ART.INDF-PL come-PRO.3SG DAT.PRO.3SG  
 some books for her

46

**wò bé né yè haa? tàtè-á bé oo yé yó**  
 PRO.3SG QUOT DAT PRO.LOG PART father-ART.DEF QUOT oh PRO.3SG FOC  
 she asked if it was really all meant for her the father said yes, all for her

47

48

**wò tsó-é né**  
 PRO.3SG take-PRO.3SG DAT.PRO.3SG

he gave it to her

49

**wò bé é lè nū srǒ yé haa**  
 PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.3SG COP thing learn-PROG FOC PART

he asked her if she was studying hard

50

**wò bé yè lé srǒ. é lè amè**  
 PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG COP-PRO.3SG learn-PROG PRO.3SG COP person  
**bǔ haa**

respect-PROG PART

she said yes she was studying hard. Was she being polite?

51

wò bé yè éé  
 PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG yes

she yes yes

52

nàñě-á lé bíé bé nyá sè  
 mother-ART.DEF hold-PRO.3SG ask-PRO.3SG QUOT-PRO.3SG issue hear-PROG

haa

PART

the mother asked her if she was paying attention

53

wò bé yè lé sè  
 PRO.3SG QUOT PRO. LOG COP-PRO.3SG hear-PROG

she replied she was

54

kò wó tsó-é né kò é vívī né  
 then PRO.3PL take-PRO.3SG DAT.PRO.3SG then PRO.3SG sweet-PROG DAT.PRO.3SG

so they gave them to her and she was happy about it

55

kò wò wò atú né nàñě-á wò váyì dzò kplá né  
 then PRO.3SG do hug DAT mother-ART.DEF PRO.3SG ALTR jump touch DAT

then she hugged her mother and jumped into the arms

56

57

wó tàté há

POSS father also

of her father as well

58

yé kò wó dè asī lé nǹú bé á-tá yì  
 so then PRO.3PL remove hand at.PRO.3SG skin QUOT PRO.3SG.POT-can go

they then allowed her to go back

59

kò ké-ò yì vò-á yé kò nyànù-ó bíé esrò-ó  
 then as-PRO.3SG go finish-TOP and then woman-ART.DEF ask spouse-ART.DEF

when she had left, the woman asked her husband

60

61

62

bé alò mé lè é tsó m-ó ha

QUOT sleep NEG COP PRO.3SG take PROG-NEG Q

if he was not feeling sleepy

63

wò bé lè yè tsó tá ké  
 PRO.3SG QUOT-PRO.3SG COP PRO.LOG take-PROG so then

he said he was, so

64

yè-ó à-yì xò-mè né wó á-váyì mló anyī  
 PRO.LOG-PL SUBJ-go room-inside so PRO.3PL POT-ALTR lie ground

they should go into the room and sleep

65

**wó váyì mló anyī-é vò fifié ñù vá kè**  
 PRO.3PL ALTR lie ground-ART.DEF finish now day VENT open  
 after they had slept the next day

66 67  
**ḍèví-é vá yì sùkú**  
 child-ART.DEF VENT go school  
 the child went to school

68  
**kò enū-ó kiyié wó tsó né-á é lè**  
 then thing-ART.DEF this PRO.3PL take DAT-PRO.3SG-TOP PRO.3SG COP  
**vìvì né**  
 sweet-PROG DAT.PRO.3SG

and what was given her was exciting her  
 69

**wó tó-ó há wó mé tsó ḍèké vá yí**  
 PRO.3PL PRO.PR-PL also PRO.3PL NEG take none VENT go  
 her colleagues however did not bring any

70  
**Sùkú-ó mè-ò**  
 school-ART.DEF interior.section-NEG  
 to school

71  
**ké-ò vá yì-á oo é vá ḍókóé-é**  
 as-PRO.3SG VENT go-TOP oh PRO.3SG VENT-COP-PRO.3SG REFL-ART.DEF  
**tsí lé sùkú xòmè**

grow-PROG at school room-inside  
 so when she went, she started bragging in the classroom

72 73  
**é-kiyié mé lè mè sí-ò é lè yè**  
 PRO.3SG-this NEG be.at PRO.2PL hand-NEG PRO.3SG be.at PRO.LOG

**ḍèkǎ yè sí**  
 one PRO.LOG hand  
 what you do not have, she is the only one who has it  
 74

**kò ké-ò nò é-kámá-ò fíó wǒ é nò**  
 then as-PRO.3SG COP:PST PRO.3SG-that-PL all do-PROG PRO.3SG COP:PST  
**dò-mè vǔ né-ó tó-ó**  
 stomach-interior.section pain-PROG DAT-PRO.3PL PRO.PR-PL

as she did all that, her colleagues were not happy about it  
 75

**kò ḍèkǎ ḍèkò wò tsó kò zò tẹ ko tó wó mègbé kò**  
 then one just PRO.3SG get.up then walk straight then pass POSS back then  
 one of then just got up, walked straight to her and went behind her

76 77  
**vá dà dzò wó ágbálé-á ḍèkǎ**  
 come throw fire POSS book-ART.DEF one  
 and snatched one of her books



78

**káká wò bé yè à-tró álié hé**  
just.before PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG SUBJ-turn this.way TOP  
before she could turn this way

79

**amè búbũ há gá fò é-ké wó tsó ké**  
person another also REP pick PRO.3SG-this PRO.3PL take this  
some other person took this, picked that

80

**wó afòkpà yéyé yié né-ó flè né há**  
POSS footwear new this that-PRO.3PL buy DAT.PRO.3SG also  
**má lé lá sī-à**  
2SG.NEG-SUBJ hold-PRO.3SG at hand-Q  
instead of holding her new shoes in hand

81

**wò gá tsó-é bé yè à-dà**  
PRO.3SG REP take-PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG POT-throw  
she tried throwing it

82

**hátí-é nyànùví há vá tsó dèkà**  
colleague-ART.DEF girl also VENT take one  
a colleague girl came to pick one of the pair

83

**kò wó há vá lè é flũ**  
then PRO.3PL also VENT COP PRO.3SG mock-PROG  
there they also started teasing her

84

**kò mé dīdī fú háfí wó núfíálá vá gé lé**  
then NEG take.long too.much before PRO.3PL teacher VENT drop at  
not long after, their teacher came in

85

**wó dzí lé sukú-xó-me-ò**  
PRO.3PL upper.section at school-house-interior.section-NEG  
on them in the classroom

86

**yé-ò bíé-ó bé wò vá bíé nyànùví-é bé**  
and-PRO.3SG ask-PRO.3PL QUOT PRO.3SG VENT ask girl-ART.DEF QUOT  
she asked them,she asked the girl about

87

**nūká-é lè dzòdzò lé-ó dzí haa**  
what-FOC COP RED~happen-PROG at-PRO.3PL upper.section Q  
what was happening with them

89

310 POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE

**yé-ò** **fié así amé kíyíé vá dà dzò agbālè-á**  
 and-PRO.3SG show hand person this VENT throw fire book-ART.DEF  
**gbā-tó-é**  
 first-PRO.PR-FOC  
 the girl pointed at the person who first snatched the book  
 90

**wò fié así-í né bé é vá dà dzò**  
 PRO.3SG show hand-FOC DAT.PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.3SG VENT throw fire  
**yè-ó agbálé**  
 PRO.LOG-POSS book  
 she pointed at him, that he had snatched her book  
 91 92

**nūfié alá bí wò bé kpáo mé lè é**  
 teacher ask-PRO.3SG PRO.3SG QUOT never 3SG.NEG be.at PRO.3SG  
**mè-ò**  
 interior.section-NEG  
 the teacher asked but he denied  
 93

**wò bé ká lé dzí ha. wò bé**  
 PRO.3SG QUOT-PRO.3SG swear be.at.PRO.3SG upper.section Q PRO.3SG QUOT  
 she asked if he was sure he said  
 94 95

**éé yè ká lé dzí bé mé lè**  
 yes PRO.LOG swear at.PRO.3SG upper.section QUOT 3SG.NEG be.at  
**é mè-ò**  
 PRO.3SG interior.section-NEG  
 yes, he was sure it was false  
 96

**ké né wò ɲǎ è kpó like né è kpó alé nū-ó**  
 then if PRO.3SG INT PRO.2SG see like if PRO.2SG see manner thing-ART.DEF  
**vá yì dé alé è bù bé é là kó wù nu**  
 VENT go Q how PRO.2SG think QUOT PRO.3SG POT take kill mouth  
 if you observe the actions critically, how do you think it will all end?  
**lè é nuwuwú-é**  
 be.at PRO.3SG end-FOC  
 at the end  
 99

**lé wò súsú mè alé è là kpó bé é**  
 at PRO.3SG brain interior.section how PRO.2SG POT see QUOT PRO.3SG  
**là vá wu nu-ó**  
 POT VENT kill mouth-Q  
 according to you, how will it all end up?

**le nyè súsú mè-é mè kpó bé**  
 be.at PRO.1SG brain interior.section-FOC PRO.1SG see QUOT  
 according to my thinking I forsee that  
 101 102

**nūfíelá là gá yì dzí á-bíé bé nè ká lé**  
 teacher POT REP go upper.section SUBJ-ask QUOT FOC swear at-PRO.3SG  
**dzí bé mé yè-í tsó-é-ò ha**  
 upper.section QUOT NEG PRO.LOG-FOC take-PRO.3SG-NEG Q  
 the teacher will go on to ask if he was sure he was sure he was not the one who  
 took it

103

**mè kpó bé dèví-é à-dó ñú bé éhoo**  
 PRO.1SG see QUOT child-ART.DEF POT-answer PRO.3SG-skin QUOT no  
 i think the child will respond no

104

**vò amé yié wó nú yó-é**  
 finish person this POSS thing FOC-FOC  
 but the person to whom the thing belongs

105

**yé há à-gblò-é bé yé-é tsó-é**  
 PRO.3SG also POT-tell-PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.3SG-FOC take-PRO.3SG  
 she will also insist that he took it

106

**é fíé bé wó à-vá á-bíé**  
 PRO.3SG show QUOT PRO.3PL POT-come SUBJ-ask  
 so they will ask then

107

**né dāsé álé lè-ó sí-á wó á-dó**  
 if witness ART.INDF be.at-PRO.3PL hand-TOP PRO.3PL POT-response  
**ñú**  
 PRO.3SG-skin

if they have witnesses they will answer

108

109

**ná mé kéké vá dzè àgò-é wá hè tò**  
 if person any VENT be.in.contact.with fault-FOC PRO.3PL-POT pull ear  
 and the person who is found culpable will be punished

110

**né lé akpā má mè**  
 DAT.PRO.3SG at side that interior.section  
 in that regard

111

**ké dèví-é kiyié wó nú nyó wó xò lé sí**  
 then child-ART.DEF this POSS thing be PRO.3PL receive at.PRO.3SG hand  
**fíé né-ò yì afè-mè dé nūká là dzò-ó**  
 now when-PRO.3SG go house-interior.section FOC what POT happen-Q  
 what will happen to child from whom the items were taken when she goes back  
 home?

112

**né yì afè-mè-é**  
 if-PRO.3SG go house-interior.section-FOC  
 when she goes home

312 POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE

113

**wó tàtè má tsó-é á-ké-ò**  
 POSS father NEG-POT take-PRO.3SG SUBJ-forgive-NEG  
 her father will not pardon her

114

**é là bé mé lí-é be né nū-ò**  
 PRO.3SG POT QUOT 3SG.NEG hold-HAB care DAT thing-NEG  
 he will say that she is careless

115

**lé nūká tá yó**  
 at what head FOC  
 why?

**tá yé há là hè tò né nyúíé fányì**  
 so PRO.3SG also POT pull ear DAT.PRO.3SG well fine  
 so he will punish her very well

116

**le álé wò váyì wò dò vá flè nū má né kplí gà**  
 at how PRO.3SG ALTR do work VENT buy thing that DAT.PRO.3SG and money  
 due to the fact that he toiled to buy her the items

117

119

**wò à-váyì tsó-é dà lé wó tó-ó**  
 PRO.3SG POT-ALTR take-PRO.3SG throw at-PRO.3SG PRO.3PL PRO.PR-PL  
**á-vá tsó lé gbó**  
 SUBJ-VENT take at.PRO.3SG vicinity  
 and she left it for her colleagues to take away from her

120

**á-gblò bé tá mé lè yè nù bù m-ó**  
 3SG.POT-say QUOT that 3SG.NEG COP PRO.LOG skin think PROG.NEG  
 he will say that she does not appreciate his efforts

121

**tá á-hè tò né nyúíé fányì lé gò má mè**  
 so 3SG.POT-pull ear DAT.PRO.3SG well fine at side that interior.section  
 so he will punish her in that regard

122

**akpe**  
 thanks

2. Sto/Viv.flexttext (A spontaneously invented folktale)

**mí dzé' gòmè**  
 PRO.1PL be.in.contact.with-PRO.3SG below.section  
 let us start.

1

**mè bé má tó glì ná`**  
 PRO.1SG QUOT PRO.1SG-SUBJ pound folktale DAT-PRO.2SG  
 I want to tell you a story.

2

**Eglì-é né vá né mí-á sè**  
 folktale-ART.DEF IMP come so PRO.1PL-SUBJ hear  
 we are ready to hear the story.

3

**Eglì-á nyé bé**  
 folktale-ART.DEF be QUOT  
 this is the story:

4

**kèsé bōsò wó nyé xlò ké gbè dèkǎ-é kèsé vá gblò né**  
 monkey whale PRO.3PL be friend then day one-FOC monkey VENT tell DAT  
 monkey; whale; they are friends. Then one day, the monkey came to tell

5

**bōsò lè tò tó bé né vá kpó yè gbó lá**  
 whale be.at river edge QUOT 3SG.IMP come see PRO.LOG vicinity PART  
 The whale by the riverside that he should visit him.

10

**fífíé alé bōsò á-wò káfí á-yì kèsé gbó-é**  
 now how whale SUBJ-do before SUBJ-go monkey vicinity-FOC  
 now the means by which the whale will go to the money

12

**é vá sésē né kèsé vē**  
 PRO.3SG VENT-COP strong-PROG DAT monkey little  
 became a difficulty for the monkey.

13

**yé kèsé gblò né bōsò bé né tró yì ñkèkè tó gbé**  
 then monkey tell DAT whale QUOT 3SG.IMP turn go daytime third day  
 then the monkey told the whale that he should return on the third day

14

**né yè là vá alé wò là wò á-vá yè gbó**  
 so PRO.LOG POT VENT how PRO.3SG POT do SUBJ-come PRO.LOG vicinity  
 he will come, the means by which he will come to his end

17

**yè le fíé gbé ké eñù kè tútútú kò-à yékò**  
 PRO.LOG COP-PRO.3SG show PROSP then day open exactly then-TOP and.then  
 he will teach him. Then exactly the day after, then

19

20 21

**kèsé váyì tsó agblè-nū kó yì tsò tó-ó nu**  
 monkey ALTR take farm-thing take IT cut river-ART.DEF mouth  
 the monkey took a hoe and went to the bank of the river

22

**wò nò edò kū ví ví ví**  
 PRO.3SG COP:PST hole dig-PROG little little little  
 and started digging little by little.

23

**né kù dò-ó' vĕ kò tsì-é hā vá**  
 if-PRO.3SG drive hole-ART.DEF a.little then water-ART.DEF too come  
 whenever he dug a little, there was a little water in it.

24

**me né kù dò-ó' vĕ kò**  
 PRO.3SG-interior.section if-PRO.3SG drive hole-ART.DEF little then  
**tsìé xá**  
 water-ART.DEF gather

**wò le dò má kù' ví ví ví etsì-é le**  
 PRO.3SG COP hole that dig-PROG little little little water-ART.DEF COP

**mè vá vù kékéké kó vá kèsé wá**  
 PRO.3SG-interior.section come-PROG until until take come monkey POSS  
**tī-é gòmè**  
 stick-ART.DEF below.section

he dug little by little, and with the water filling the holes, he managed to  
 get the river extended to under the tree

25

**yékò enù-ó gá kè , nyé ñkèkè tó gbè kò wò**  
 then daylight-ART.DEF REP open be daytime third day then PRO.3SG  
 then, the next day, three days later,

26

**váyí gblò-é né bōsò bè fifíé á-tá vá yè gbó**  
 ALTR tell-PRO.3SG DAT whale QUOT now SUBJ-can come PRO.LOG vicinity  
 he went to tell the whale that he can now come to his place.

27

**kò bōsò-ó zò etsì-é dzí vū kò vá kèsé**  
 then whale-ART.DEF walk water-ART.DEF upper.section until then come monkey  
 then the whale swam to the monkey's.

28

**gbó ké bōsò và kèsé gbó-é**  
 vicinity when whale come monkey vicinity-FOC  
 when the whale came to the monkey,

29

**wó kó akòdí álé kó dà lé afī álé**  
 PRO.3PL take banana ART.INDF take throw at stick ART.INDF  
**dzí**  
 upper.section

a banana was placed on a certain tree.

30

31

**kè kèsé nyá vè v̄h̄ v̄ē yékò yé vù dù váí tsó**  
 when monkey MOD play play little then PRO.3SG run race ALTR take  
 after playing for a while, the monkey went for

32

**kòd̄i-é lè d̄ùd̄ū yé b̄ōsò bìè bé oo**  
 banana-ART.DEF COP eat~eat-PROG and whale ask-PRO.3SG QUOT oh  
 the banana and started eating. Then the whale asked him: oo

33

**n̄v̄i-nyè mà tsó n̄ū-ó d̄èké nú mà**  
 sibling-PRO.1SG 2SG-POT take thing-ART.DEF none DAT PRO.1SG-Q  
 my brother, will you not give me some of the food?

34

**yé-ò bé yè-ó yèó dé yè-ó núd̄ú**  
 and-PRO.3SG QUOT PRO.LOG-PL PRO.LOG-PL hometown PRO.LOG-PL food  
**η-kíyé**  
 be-this

he replied that, for them, this is their only meal

35

**lè wó há wó dé'**  
 be.at PRO.3PL also PRO.3PL hometwon-FOC  
 as for them,

36

**d̄è-ó n̄ tsàtsā lé t̄-mè**  
 FOC-PRO.3PL COP:PST roam-roam-PROG at river-interior.section  
 they roam in water.

37

**yé tá ke-ó lè ḡíyíé'**  
 PRO.3SG so as-PRO.3SG be.at here-FOC  
 so then, even as he was there

38

**n̄anéké mé lè t̄-mè yè là kó né**  
 nothing NEG be.at river-interior.section PRO.LOG POT take DAT.PRO.3SG  
 there was nothing in the river he could give him.

39

**Hàlèké-ò yékò b̄ōsò dó dzikũ enū yíé wò à-kpó kò-à**  
 yet-NEG then whale put.on anger thing this PRO.3SG POT-see then-TOP  
 the whale then got angry before he could say utter a word,

40

**kèsé klé kòd̄i-é hé d̄ù fíóó**  
 monkey peel banana-ART.DEF IT eat all  
 the monkey peeled and ate all the banana.

42

**yékò b̄ōsò dó dzikũ kò dzó. ké b̄ōsò dzó-é**  
 then whale put.on anger then leave then whale leave-FOC  
 the whale got angry and left. when the whale left,

43

44

316 POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TONGUGBE

**bōsò wó súsú váyì gblò né yé bé eyè yè xló**  
 whale POSS brain ALT tell DAT PRO.3SG QUOT PRO. LOG PRO.LOG friend

**má nyé kèsé-é**  
 that be monkey-FOC  
 the whale conceived of the idea that, that friend of his, the monkey,

45 46  
**yè là blé á-kó vá yè gbó**  
 PRO.LOG POT deceive-PRO.3SG SUBJ-take come PRO.LOG vicinity  
 he was going to deceive him to his place.

47  
**né yè blé vá yè gbó kò-à yè**  
 when PRO.LOG deceive-PRO.3SG come PRO.LOG vicinity then-TOP PRO.LOG  
**gbó wù gbé**  
 come PRO.3SG.kill PROSP

If he managed to lure him to his place, he will then kill him.

48  
**ké kèsé yé mé nyá nànéké ò**  
 then monkey PRO.3SG NEG know nothing NEG  
 the monkey had no idea.

49  
**enū yíé vá dzò nyé bé bōsò tró kèsé váyì tsì nù**  
 thing this VENT happen be QUOT whale turn monkey ALT water drink  
**fé le tó nū**  
 place at river mouth

what happened later was that, the whale returned (hesitation) the monkey went to drink water by the river bank,

50  
**ké kèsé vá yì tsì nù fé le tó-nu kò-à**  
 then monkey VENT go water drink place at river-mouth then-TOP  
 when the monkey went to drink water by the bank,

51  
**yékò bōsò hò lá yékò**  
 then whale come.up PART then  
 then the whale popped up in the distance, and then

52  
**wò kpó kèsé yékò` vù dù vá tò-ó-nū**  
 PRO.3SG see monkey then-PRO.3SG run race VENT river-ART.DEF-mouth  
 it saw the monkey and quickly came to the bank.

53  
**yékò` bé ò yé há né vá srá yè kpó**  
 then-PRO.3SG QUOT oh PRO.3SG also 3SG.IMP come visit PRO.LOG see  
 Then he said oo he should also come and visit him .

54 55  
**yé kèsé gblò né bé**  
 and monkey tell DAT-PRO.3SG QUOT  
 Then the monkey told him that

56



ò má vá srá wò kpó hā nòví-nyè  
 oh PRO.1SG-SUBJ come visit PRO.3SG see Q sibling-PRO.1SG  
 wò bé éé  
 PRO.3SG QUOT yes  
 You really want me to come and visit you my brother? he said yes.

57

yò enyè kòdí mè ò-ó ló. wò bé ò tò-tó η-kíé  
 ok PRO.1SG banana PRO.1SG eat-HAB PART PRO.3SG QUOT oh river-edge be-this  
 òé  
 FOC

I eat bananas, he responded ooo this is a river bank,

58 59 60

kòdí-tí sòj lé yè là vá sé kòdí né  
 banana-tree lot be.at.PRO.3SG PRO.LOG POT VENT cut banana DAT-PRO.3SG  
 there are a lot of banana trees; so he will havest bananas for him

61

wà kó á-yì tò-ó-mè lé yè gbó  
 PRO.3SG-POT take SUBJ-go river-ART.DEF-interior.section at PRO.LOG vicinity  
 so he takes into the river with him.

62 63

yékò kèsé bé yò  
 then monkey QUOT ok  
 Then the monkey said okay.

64

ké nū yíé vá dzò gbè òkà nyé bé  
 then thing this VENT happen day one be QUOT  
 What happened one day was that,

kèsé váyì kplò é hátí-ó bé né-ó vá  
 monkey ALTR accompany PRO.3SG colleague-PL QUOT that-PRO.3PL come  
 yè gbó  
 PRO.LOG vicinity

the monkey called his friends and invited them to his place.

66 67

wó nò dzòdzò lá tí-é dzí nò  
 PRO.3PL COP:PST RED~jump-PROG at tree-ART.DEF upper.section COP:PST  
 dzò~dzò lá tí-é dzí vū  
 RED~jump-PROG at tree-ART.DEF upper.section until  
 They jumped up and down the tress until

68

wá kpó lá kò yékò  
 PRO.3PL-POT see PART then then  
 when they realized,

69

**kèsé nòví alá váyì tsó kóqí alá wá**  
 monkey sibling ART.INDEF ALTR take banana ART.INDF PRO.3PL

**mè vè kō**  
 person two take  
 a sibling of the monkey brought two bananas,  
 70

**vé yē' wò vá tsó-é né nòví-é qèkǎ**  
 come-PRO.3SG and PRO.3SG VENT take-PRO.3SG DAT sibling-ART.DEF one  
 and he gave it to another sibling of his.

71  
**yékò kèsé mé qù kòqí-é ò**  
 then monkey NEG eat banana-ART.DEF NEG  
 Then the monkey did not eat the banana.

72  
**ké nū vá dzò nyé bé amé má há gá kpló**  
 then thing VENT happen be QUOT person that also REP accompany  
**é xló**  
 PRO.3SG friend

**búbú yiké nyé lǎ yíé-ó yó bé tòdzó lé ntí**  
 another that be animal this-PRO.3SG call-HAB QUOT cat at skin  
 What happened was that, that person also brought another friend, the cat, along.  
 73

**tòdzó yíé mé nò akòqí-é qù m-ó yé tòdzó há bé**  
 cat this NEG COP:PST banana-ART.DEF eat PROG-NEG and cat also QUOT  
 The cat did not eat banana. Then the cat also said that

74 75  
**enū yíé dzò nyé bé qè dzè bé wá tsó nūqúqú**  
 thing this happen be QUOT FOC worthy QUOT PRO.3PL-POT take food  
**búbú kó kpé lé enū-ó nū né yè há yè-à kpò**  
 another take add at thing-ART.DEF skin DAT PRO.LOG also PRO.LOG-POT see  
**qè á-qù**  
 ART.INDF SUBJ-eat

They should have added some other food on, so that he could also get something to eat;

76  
**yékò wó tètè wó vá qù akòqúí-é kò eyè há**  
 then PRO.3PL alone PRO.3PL VENT eat banana-ART.DEF then PRO.LOG also  
**yè vá tsí ànyì**  
 PRO.LOG VENT stay ground

and they have ate the bananas while he stayed without eating;

77  
**yétá yē` yè mā gá dó hà kplí**  
 so PRO.LOG PRO.LOG NEG-POT REP put.on crowd and-PRO.3SG

**hú-ò**  
 again-NEG  
 because of that, he was no more going to be a friend of his

78

**má** **gá nyé yè-ó** **hádóhá** **hú-ò**  
 3SG.NEG-POT REP be PRO.LOG-POSS play.mate again-NEG  
 he will not be his mate anymore.

79

**yé kèsé** **gblò bé** **ō alé wó** **kátá wó** **vá yè**  
 and monkey tell QUOT oh how PRO.3PL all PRO.3PL come PRO.LOG  
**gbó-é** **yè** **là wò ɖòdò lé-ó** **ńú**  
 vicinity-FOC PRO.LOG POT do plan at-PRO.3PL skin  
 Then the monkey said that, as they all have come to visit him, he will make  
 adequate plans for all.

80

**kéné tòdzó dzó-é**  
 when cat leave-FOC  
 When the cat left,

81

**yékò tòdzó váyì nò** **egbè gòmè** **tefě álé**  
 then cat ALTR be.at:PST grass below.section place ART.INDF  
 the cat sat under grass somewhere

82

**wò nò afi dí** **né wà** **lé**  
 PRO.3SG COP:PST mouse look.for-PROG so PRO.3SG-POT catch  
 he was looking for a mouse to catch.

83

**afi yíe dí** **tòdzó-ó** **nò** **né wà** **lé vū**  
 mouse this look.for-PROG cat-ART.DEF COP:PST so PRO.3SG-POT catch until  
 As he looked for the mouse,

84

**kò-à yékò`** **kpó**  
 then-TOP then-PRO.3SG see  
 he saw,

85

**yé nò zò~zò** **vū kò`** **yì tò-tó** **kò**  
 PRO.3SG COP:PST RED~walk-PROG until then-PRO.3SG go river-edge then  
 he walked towards the bank of the river,

86

**wò kpó bōsò lá-á.** **ké bōsò vá`** **gblò né ee**  
 PRO.3SG see whale at-PART then whale VENT-COP tell DAT ee  
 he saw the whale in the distance. The whale however had gone to tell,

87

88

89

**wó-tó-ó** **lā** **há-wò** **bé**  
 POSS-PRO.PR-PL animal also-PL QUOT  
 his colleague animals that

90

**yè** **lè nā~nā** **gé kèsé** **á-vá** **yè** **gbó** **kò-à**  
 PRO.LOG COP RED-give PROSP monkey SUBJ-VENT PRO.LOG vicinity then-TOP  
 he was going to lure the monkey to his place;

91

**kò kèsé vá tsí yè gbó**  
 then monkey VENT stay PRO.LOG vicinity  
 then the monkey was going to be stuck at his place;  
 92

**kèsé má gá yì wó dé hú-ò yékò tòdzó se**  
 monkey NEG-POT REP go POSS hometown again-NEG then cat hear  
**nyà-á**  
 issue-ART.DEF

the monkey will not get to go back home. The monkey heard the story.  
 93 94

**tòdzó yé nyá tsi fúfú tá-é**  
 cat PRO.3SG know water RED~throw.limps so-PART  
 Because the cat could swim,  
 95

**yékò tòdzó bé né nyé bé eyè yì yà-é gblò né**  
 then cat QUOT if be QUOT PRO.LOG go PRO.LOG-POT-IT tell DAT  
**kèsé bé**  
 monkey QUOT

The cat thought that immediately he returned, he will tell the monkey that  
 96

**edǔ hí bōsò là tá và blé gbè dèkǎ tá-é**  
 some-PL maybe whale POT can come deceive-PRO.3SG day one so-PART  
 the whale could get to deceive him one day;  
 97

**né bōsò vá blé-è yé hǎ né dzè ayè**  
 when whale VENT deceive-PRO.3SG PRO.3SG too IMP be.in.contact.with trickery  
 and that if the whale deceived him, he should also be cunning.  
 98

**ké kèsé sè nyá kò é kó-é dé tá-mè**  
 when monkey hear issue then PRO.3SG take-PRO.3SG put.on head-interior.section  
 When the monkey heard this, he kept it in mind.  
 99

**enū yíé gá vá dzò nyé bé gbè dèkǎ kò**  
 thing this REP VENT happen be QUOT day one then  
 What happened later was that, one day,  
 100

**bōsò gá vá gblò né kèsé bé yè gbò-ó gbó**  
 whale REP VENT tell DAT monkey QUOT PRO.LOG come-HAB PRO.3SG.vicinity  
 the whale told the monkey that he was coming to visit.  
 101

**yékò kèsé bé ō yè là yì**  
 then monkey QUOT oh LOG POT go  
 The monkey then said, he will go.  
 102

yékò kèsé lɔ vù kékéké wó kátá wó nò yĩ  
 then monkey agree until until PRO.3PL all PRO.3PL COP:PST go-PROG  
 wó nò yĩ vū  
 PRO.3PL COP:PST go-PROG until

Then the monkey agreed; and they went along until  
 103

ké nū yíé dzò nyé bé wó váyì dọ tẹfě yiké tsi-é  
 then thing this happen be QUOT PRO.3PL ALTR reach place that water-ART.DEF  
 what happened was that, they got to a place where the water  
 104

kèkè lá yé bōsò gblò-é nḗ bé  
 open PART then whale tell-FOC DAT-PRO.3SG QUOT  
 was very expanded. Then the whale told him that  
 105

né vá nò yè yè-ó dzimè yé  
 3SG.IMP VENT be.at:PST PRO.LOG PRO.LOG-POSS back and  
 kèsé né vá nò yè yè-ó dzimè  
 monkey 3SG.IMP VENT COP:PST PRO.LOG PRO.LOG-POSS back  
 he, the monkey, should sit on his back.  
 106

yékò kèsé lɔ váyì lè bōsò wó dzimè  
 then monkey agree ALTR be.at whale POSS back  
 Then the monkey agreed and went to sit on the back of the whale.  
 107

vū kékéké wó váyì dọ tì wó dòmè  
 until until PRO.3PL ALTR reach river POSS mid.section  
 Then they got to the middle of the river.  
 108

ké wó dọ tì-ó-ó dòmé yé bōsò gblò né  
 then PRO.3PL reach river-ART.DEF-POSS mid.section then whale tell DAT  
 bé fífíé  
 QUOT now

When they got to the middle of the river, the whale told him that, now,  
 109 110 111

nūqú-ó há vò lé sí  
 food-ART.DEF also finish at-PRO.3SG hand  
 he had no food,  
 112

nūqú áléké mé gá lè yè sí yè là tsó né  
 food none NEG REP be.at PRO.LOG hand PRO.LOG POT take DAT-PRO.3SG  
 hú ò  
 again NEG

he did not have food to give him,  
 113

**yé tá wó séláfé nyé kíyíé. yé kèsé gblò né bōsò bē**  
 so therefore POSS end.point be this and monkey tell DAT whale QUOT  
 so, this was his end. Then the monkey told the whale that,

114 115  
**ō nḍvī-nyè ō mè nyá ò-à**  
 oh sibling-PRO.1SG oh 2SG.NEG know NEG-Q  
 My brother, did you not know?

116 117  
**mí-ṣ kèsé-ṣ né mí tsó-é**  
 PRO.1PL monkeyPL when PRO.1PL get.up-FOC  
 for us monkeys, when we move,

118  
**mí kṣ míṣ dṣi nṣ yìyì m-ṣ**  
 PRO.1PL take-HAB PRO.1PL heart COP:PST RED~go PROG-NEG  
 we do not move with our hearts,

119  
**yé tá enyè nyè dṣi tsí e afè-mè**  
 PRO.3SG so PRO.1SG PRO.1SG heart stay erm house-interior.section  
 so my heart is back home,

120  
**káfé nyè mà dè wò dzimè**  
 before PRO.1SG PRO.1SG-POT reach PRO.3SG back  
 even before i climbed unto your back.

121  
**yé bōsò trṣ gblò-é né bé aa**  
 and whale turn.back tell-PRO.3SG DAT-PRO.3SG QUOT ah  
 Then the whale told him again that,

122  
**wó dṣi tútútú-í hié né yè**  
 POSS heart exactly-FOC need DAT PRO.LOG  
 he needed his heart,

123  
**né yè á-yì tsó né yè-ṣ-tṣ lã-ṣ**  
 so.that PRO.LOG SUBJ-go take DAT PRO.LOG-POSS-PRO.PR animal-PL  
 so that he can give it off to his fellow animals.

124  
**yé wó dṣi-í hié né yè**  
 PRO.3SG POSS heart-FOC need DAT LOG  
 His heart is what he wants

125  
**né yè á-yì tsó né yè-ṣ-tṣ lã-ṣ né**  
 so PRO.LOG SUBJ-go take DAT PRO.LOG-PL-PRO.PR animal-PL DAT  
**wá dṣi**  
 PRO.3PL-POT eat  
 so he gives to his fellow animals so they eat;

126

**ké yé tsí gámá**  
 then PRO.3SG stay there  
 so he is left all by himself.

127

**yé-ò bé ò eyè-ó kèsé-ó lá né yé-ó**  
 and-PRO.3SG QUOT oh PRO.LOG-PL monke-PL TOP when PRO.LOG-PL  
**yé-ó tsó lá dè yé-ó ò-è yé-ó dzì**  
 LOG-PL get.up TOP FOC PRO.LOG-PL remove-HAB PRO.LOG-POSS heart  
**kó dà lé dzì káfí nò yì-yì**  
 take throw at upper.section before COP:PST RED~go-PROG  
 Then he said, for they monkeys, they always leave their hearts in the trees  
 when moving out.

128

**yéé bōsò là tró á-tsó kèsé vù kékéké á-vá kó dà**  
 so whale POT turn SUBJ-take monkey until until SUBJ-VENT take throw  
**lé gò**  
 at bank

The whale then brought the monkey back to the shoreline.

129

**yé wò vá kó-é dà dè vò-ε yé kèsé gblò**  
 then PRO.3SG VENT take-PRO.3SG throw PART finish-FOC then monkey tell  
 When he had finished descending him, the monkey told

130

**né bé nòví-nyè xòlò vóqí né nyó**  
 DAT.PRO.3SG QUOT sibling-PRO.1SG friend evil 2SG.IMP be  
 him that,my brother,you are a wicked friend!

131

132

**mè nyá nū wú-ò**  
 PRO.1SG know thing than-PRO.2SG  
 I am more intelligent than you!

133

**gíyíé kèsé kplí bōsò wó xló-me nú wù lá-é**  
 here monkey and whale PRO.3PL friend-inside mouth finish PART-FOC  
**η-kíé**  
 be-this

This is how the monkey and the whale's friendship ended

134

**akpē**  
 thank  
 Thank you

135





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Dit proefschrift beschrijft bezittelijke constructies in Tɔ̀nùgbe, een van de vele dialecten van Ewe (een Kwa taal). De taal wordt gesproken in zuidoost Ghana, langs de benedenloop van de Volta rivier. De studie maakt gebruik van standaard taalkundige theorie om een gedetailleerde beschrijving te geven van diverse grammaticale constructies en hun betekenissen. Daarnaast is de studie een poging om de verhouding te begrijpen tussen geclausuleerde bezittelijke constructies aan de ene kant en locatieve en existentiële constructies aan de andere. Bovendien bevat de dissertatie een eerste schets van de grammatica van het Tɔ̀nùgbe. Het proefschrift is verdeeld in zes hoofdstukken.

Hoofdstuk 1 is de schets van de grammatica van het dialect. Het bevat een beschrijving van de klankleer, de morfologie en de syntaxis van het Tɔ̀nùgbe. Fonologisch bevat het Tɔ̀nùgbe dezelfde klinkers en medeklinkers als de andere dialecten van het Ewe. Wat betreft de tonen: de mid-toon van de stam van het zelfstandig naamwoord in het Tɔ̀nùgbe is langer dan andere tonen (laag en hoog) van de stam van het zelfstandig naamwoord. Morfologisch worden drie processen bestudeerd: reduplicatie, samenstelling en affixatie.

Op syntactisch gebied laat het proefschrift zien dat de structuren van zelfstandige naamwoorden en werkwoorden eveneens gelijk zijn aan die in andere dialecten van het Ewe. Er is extra aandacht voor de syntactische categorieën in het Tɔ̀nùgbe. De bestudeerde categorieën zijn focuspartikels, lidwoorden, aanwijzende voornaamwoorden, tijd, aspect en modale partikels en adposities. Kenmerkend voor Tɔ̀nùgbe zijn de rijke aanwijzende paradigma en de verschillende markeringen voor tijd, aspect en modaliteit. Het zijn deze kenmerken die suggereren en bevestigen dat Tɔ̀nùgbe de status van een eigen dialect verdient.

Hoofdstuk 2 vormt een overgang tussen de schets van de grammatica van het Tɔ̀nùgbe en de studie van de bezittelijke constructies van het dialect. Het hoofdstuk geeft de definitie van bezittelijkheid die wordt gebruikt in deze studie, dat wil zeggen een paraplubegrip dat drie kernbetekenissen omvat: betekenissen van horen bij, deel-geheel betekenissen en verwantschap. Bovendien bevat het hoofdstuk een overzicht van de bezittelijke constructies in typologie en in verhouding met existentiële en locatieve constructies. Het laatste deel van het hoofdstuk behandelt de analytische benaderingen die zijn gebruikt om deze laatste verhouding te verklaren. Het behandelt ook de in deze studie gebruikte functionele benadering.

Hoofdstuk 3 biedt een beschrijving van attributieve bezittelijke constructies

in het Tɔŋúgbe. Het hoofdstuk bestudeert ook de motieven die de basis vormen van de formele configuraties van de verschillende constructies. Functionele concepten zoals iconiciteit en egocentriciteit vormen daarvan de kern. Het hoofdstuk eindigt met een poging om de constructies zoals gevonden in het Tɔŋúgbe te plaatsen binnen het kader van de vergelijkende grammatica en taalkundige typologie van het Ewe.

Er zijn twee soorten attributieve bezittelijke constructies: constructies die syntactisch gevormd worden en constructies die ofwel gevormd worden op het raakvlak van syntaxis en morfologie, ofwel simpelweg in morfologie. De constructies die syntactisch gevormd worden zijn ook onderverdeeld in twee types: verbindende constructies en tegengestelde constructies. Er wordt aangetoond dat waar verbindende constructies betekenen dat de relatie tussen bezitter en datgene wat bezeten wordt niet intrinsiek is, tegengestelde constructies juist uitdrukking geven aan een intrinsieke relatie tussen bezitter en datgene wat bezeten wordt. De gegevens uit het Tɔŋúgbe bieden steun aan de bewering dat het motief voor gespleten vervreemdbaarheid gevonden moet worden in de manier waarop de relaties tussen de betrokken entiteiten worden geconceptualiseerd. Dit wordt gebaseerd op hetgeen hierover in de typologische literatuur wordt geschreven.

De connectief wordt niet gebruikt bij constructies die gevormd worden op het raakvlak van syntaxis en morfologie (of simpelweg in morfologie). Deze constructies zijn in tweeën verdeeld: bezittelijke constructies als suffix en samengestelde bezittelijke constructies. Bezittelijke constructies als suffix zijn gerelateerd aan tegengestelde bezittelijke constructies; zij bevinden zich op het raakvlak van syntaxis en morfologie. Samengestelde constructies daarentegen worden gekenmerkt door hoge tonen bij het bezetene; zij worden gevormd in de morfologie.

Hoofdstuk 4 beschrijft de bezittelijke constructies als gezegde binnen het Tɔŋúgbe. Het hoofdstuk maakt een onderscheid tussen bezittelijke constructies als gezegde en andere constructies die er structureel op lijken. Het hoofdstuk eindigt met bestudering van de bezittelijke constructies als gezegde in het Tɔŋúgbe in vergelijking met dergelijke constructies in andere dialecten van het Ewe.

Het hoofdstuk onderscheidt twee types constructie: bezittelijke koppelconstructies en bezittelijke constructies van plaats (locatieve constructies). Bezittelijke koppelconstructies betreffen ofwel het bezittelijk voornaamwoord van het bezetene of het achtervoegsel bij de bezitter. Als het bezittelijk voornaamwoord van het bezetene gebruikt wordt is de



bezitsbetekenis verbonden met het bezetene. Als het achtervoegsel bij de bezitter wordt gebruikt is de bezitsbetekenis verbonden met de bezitter. Om het onderscheid met hierop gelijkende constructies die geen bezit uitdrukken te maken wordt aangetoond dat bij de bezittelijke constructies de vormen waarin het bezittelijk voornaamwoord van het bezetene en het achtervoegsel bij de bezitter worden gebruikt deel uitmaken van complexe naamwoordfrases, terwijl in niet-bezittelijke constructies de vormen waarin het suffix van de bezitter wordt gebruikt samengestelde vormen zijn.

Bezittelijke constructies van plaats worden onderverdeeld in drie groepen: postpositioneel, adpositioneel en prepositioneel. Postpositionele constructies gebruiken vijf hoofd-postposities: **así** 'hand', **ɲú** 'huid', **dòmè** 'midden-gedeelte', **dzí** 'bovenste', **gbɔ** 'nabijheid'. Constructies met **así** 'hand' komen het meeste voor. Waar dit gebeurt kunnen werkwoorden die een bezitsovergang aangeven zoals **ká** 'contact', **sù** 'genoeg zijn' en **dó** 'reiken naar' het gezegde van plaats vervangen, waardoor de constructie een rudimentair bezit aangeeft. Constructies met de andere postposities hebben ófwel een specifieke verhalende context ófwel bepaalde types zelfstandige naamwoorden nodig om bezit uit te drukken. Een ander type bezittelijke constructies van plaats die wordt bestudeerd zijn de constructies waarbij zowel preposities als postposities betrokken zijn. Tenslotte is er aandacht voor bezittelijke constructies van plaats waarbij alleen preposities betrokken zijn (allatief en datief).

Hoofdstuk 5 bestudeert de externe bezittelijke constructies in het Tɔ̀ɲúgbe. Het hoofdstuk begint met een beschrijving van de structurele types van dergelijke constructies in de taal. Daarna geeft het een overzicht van de betekenissen voor ieder type externe bezittelijke constructie. Het beschouwt ook de conceptuele relaties die inherent zijn aan de betekenissen van de verschillende types, en het bespreekt de implicaties van de bevindingen voor de vergelijkende syntaxis van het Ewe.

Externe bezittelijke constructies in het Tɔ̀ɲúgbe geven in essentie uitdrukking aan deel-geheel relaties, in weerwil van de structurele variaties. Het eerste structuurtype zijn constructies waarbij het bezetene voorkomt als het lijdend voorwerp van het werkwoord, en de bezitter als de afhankelijke van een oblieke datief. In deze constructies kan de oblieke datief worden weggelaten als ook de obliek-datieve bezitter mede betrekking heeft op het onderwerp. De obliek-datieve bezitter kan echter worden vervangen door een reflexief. Bovendien: als het werkwoord in de constructie een ervaringswerkwoord is staat het bezetene in de onderwerpspositie, terwijl de bezitter voorkomt op de positie van het lijdend voorwerp. Deze structurele

verschillen komen overeen met subtiele semantische verschillen.

Het tweede structuurtype zijn constructies waarbij het bezetene afhangt van een prepositionele frase. Ook in deze constructie kan de oblieke datief worden weggelaten als ook de oblieke-datieve bezitter hetzelfde is als het onderwerp van de constructie. Maar het reflexief komt niet voor in deze constructie, net zo min als in het geval van constructies met het bezetene als lijdend voorwerp en verplichte complementaire werkwoorden. Dit komt doordat de werkwoorden in deze constructies geen verandering in staat impliceren. Er wordt ook gewezen op de subtiele verschillen in betekenis tussen deze structuurtypen. De conceptuele relatie in externe bezittelijke constructies is er één waarbij de gebeurtenissen die door het werkwoord worden uitgedrukt onafhankelijk door het bezetene worden ondergaan.

Het laatste hoofdstuk, hoofdstuk 6, is gewijd aan de verhouding tussen bezittelijke zinsconstructies en de locatieve en existentiële constructies. Om te beginnen duid ik de existentiële constructie in het Tongugbe als een constructie die een idee van plaatsbepaling uitdrukt. Daarna behandel ik de locatieve constructies. Tenslotte beschouw ik de verhouding tussen bezittelijke, existentiële en locatieve constructies.

Locatieve constructies kunnen worden onderverdeeld in twee categorieën: basisconstructies en overige constructies. Basisconstructies betreffen het gezegde van plaats. De overige constructies betreffen andere gezegdes. Deze laatste constructies kunnen verder worden verdeeld in interne en externe constructies.

De verhoudingen tussen de geclausuleerde bezittelijke constructies, locatieve constructie en de existentiële constructie worden geanalyseerd als betrekking hebbend op twee niveaus: verhoudingen die worden gekarakteriseerd door het gezegde van plaats; en verhoudingen gekarakteriseerd door de oblieke datief. Ik geef een overzicht van de morfosyntactische overeenkomsten en verschillen op die twee niveaus in de verschillende constructies. Mijn conclusie is dat ondanks de waargenomen overeenkomsten er toch voldoende semantische en syntactische verschillen zijn tussen de constructies om ze als synchronisch onafhankelijk van elkaar aan te merken.

This thesis concerns the description of possessive constructions in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, one of the many dialects of Ewe (a Kwa language), which is spoken in south-eastern Ghana, along the lower basins of the Volta River. Couched in *Basic Linguistic Theory*, the study presents a detailed description of several grammatical constructions and their meanings. Also, the research seeks to understand the relationship that exists between clausal possessive constructions on the one hand, and locative and existential constructions on the other. In addition to this, the work presents a first outline grammar of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. The work is divided into six chapters.

Chapter 1 contains the sketch grammar of the dialect. This chapter offers a description of the phonetics, the morphology and the syntax of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. Phonetically, it is observed that the vowel and consonant sounds of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe are the same as those of other Ewe dialects. Concerning the tones of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, the duration of the mid-tone of root nouns in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe is longer than the duration of other level tones (low and high) of root nouns. On the morphological level, three processes are surveyed: reduplication, composition and affixation.

Syntactically, it is shown that the noun and verb phrase structures of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe are also the same as those in other Ewe dialects. Particular emphasis is placed on the syntactic categories of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. The categories that are surveyed are intensifiers, articles, demonstratives, tense, aspect and modal particles and adpositions. Some of the distinctive features noted for Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe include the rich demonstrative paradigm and the different tense, aspect and modal markers. These characteristics suggest and affirm the status of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe as a distinct dialect of Ewe.

Chapter 2 serves as a transition chapter between the sketch grammar of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe and the study of the possessive constructions of the dialect. The chapter offers the definition of possession that is adopted in this work i.e. an umbrella notion that encapsulates three core meanings: belongingness meanings, part-whole meanings and kinship meanings. Furthermore, the chapter presents a survey of the range of possessive constructions in typology and their relationship with existential and locative constructions. The final part of this chapter presents the analytical approaches that have been adopted in accounting for this latter relationship, and the approach adopted in this work i.e. a functional approach.

Chapter 3 offers a description of attributive possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. The chapter also examines the motivations that underlie the formal configurations of the different constructions. Functional concepts such as

iconicity and egocentricity are at the centre of the explanations offered. The chapter ends with an attempt to situate the constructions noted for Tɔ̀nùgbe within the framework of Ewe comparative grammar and linguistic typology.

Attributive possessive constructions are grouped into constructions formed in syntax and constructions either at the interface between syntax and morphology or simply in morphology. Constructions in syntax are of two types: connective constructions, and juxtaposed constructions. It is demonstrated that while connective constructions present the relationship between the possessor and possessee as not intimate, juxtaposed constructions express an intimate relationship between the possessor and the possessee. Grounding this in observations made on alienability splits in the typological literature, it is argued that the data from Tɔ̀nùgbe support the assertion that alienability splits are motivated by the conceptualization of relations between the entities involved.

Constructions formed at the syntax/morphology interface (or simply in morphology) do not involve the connective. They are divided into two: suffixed possessive constructions, and compound possessive constructions. Suffixed possessive constructions are correlates of juxtaposed possessive constructions; and they are at the interface between syntax and morphology. Compound constructions on the other hand are characterized by high tones on the possessee, and are constructed in morphology.

Chapter 4 describes the predicative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe. The chapter distinguishes between predicative possessive constructions and other constructions that are structurally similar. The chapter ends with a study of the predicative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀nùgbe in relation to the predicative possessive constructions of other Ewe dialects.

The chapter identifies two main construction types: copular possessive constructions and locative possessive constructions. Copular possessive constructions involve either the possessee pronoun or the possessor suffix. When the possessee pronoun is involved, possessive meaning is centered on the possessee. When the possessor suffix is involved, possession is centered on the possessor. To distinguish these constructions from similar constructions which do not express possession, it is demonstrated that in the possessive constructions, the forms in which the possessee pronoun and the possessor suffix participate are complex noun phrases while in the non-possessive constructions, the forms in which the possessor suffix participates are compound forms.

Locative possessive constructions are divided into three groups: constructions involving postpositions, constructions involving adpositions and constructions involving prepositions. Constructions involving postpositions make use of five main postpositions: **así** ‘hand’ **ɲú** ‘skin’ **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ **dzí** ‘top’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’. It is observed that constructions involving **así** ‘hand’ are the most common; and that when **así** occurs, verbs of transfer of possession such as **ká** ‘contact’, **sù** ‘suffice’ and **dó** ‘reach’ can replace the locative predicate so that the construction expresses inchoative possession. Constructions involving the other postpositions either need particular discursive contexts or particular types of nouns in subject position in order to express possession. Another type of locative possessive constructions surveyed is those in which both prepositions and postpositions participate. Finally, locative possessive constructions involving only prepositions – the allative and the dative– are also surveyed.

Chapter 5 studies the external possessor constructions of Tɔ̀ɲúgbè. The chapter first of all describes the structural types of external possessor constructions in the language. It then continues to present the meanings that are expressed by each of the structural types of external possessor constructions. It also examines the conceptual relationships that are inherent in the meanings expressed by the different structural types of external possessor constructions; and discusses the implications of the findings for comparative Ewe syntax.

Tɔ̀ɲúgbè external possessor constructions express essentially part- whole relations despite structural variations. The first structural type is constructions in which the possessee occurs as the object of the verb, and the possessor as the dependent of a dative-oblique. In these constructions, the dative-oblique can be elided when the dative- oblique possessor co-references the subject. On the other hand, the dative-oblique possessor can be replaced by a reflexive. In addition, when the verb that occurs in the construction is an experience verb, the possessee occurs in subject position while the possessor occurs in object position. These structural differences correspond to subtle semantic differences.

The second structural type is constructions in which the possessee is a dependent of a prepositional phrase. In this construction as well, the dative oblique can be elided when the dative-oblique possessor is the same as the subject of the construction. However, as is the case in object possessee constructions involving obligatory complement taking verbs, the reflexive

does not occur in this construction. This is because the verbs in these constructions do not entail a change of state. It is also pointed out that there are subtle distinctions in the meanings expressed by each of these structural types of constructions. The conceptualized relations in the external possessor constructions are such that the possessee is construed as independently undergoing events expressed in the verb.

The final chapter, Chapter 6, is devoted to the relationship between clausal possessive constructions and locative and existential constructions. I first of all explicate the existential construction in Tɔ̀ŋúgbe as a construction which expresses the idea that a figure is located somewhere. I then continue to present the locative constructions. Finally, I examine the relationship between possessive constructions, the existential constructions and locative constructions.

Locative constructions are grouped into two categories: basic locative construction, and non- basic locative constructions. While the basic locative construction involves the locative predicate, non-basic locative constructions involve other predicates. Non-basic locative constructions are then subdivided into internal and external constructions.

The relationships between the clausal possessive constructions, locative constructions and the existential construction are analyzed as holding on two levels: relationships characterized by the locative predicate; and relationships characterized by the dative-oblique. I spell out the morpho-syntactic similarities and differences that are observable on these two levels across the constructions and come to the conclusion that despite the observable similarities, there exists enough semantic and syntactic differences between the constructions to warrant their being considered as independent of each other synchronically.

Ènūgòmekùkúú kíyíé kù lé nūtónyényé lè Tòṅúgbè mè ṅú. Lè dò yíé mèé, mífò nú tsó nyàkòsòkòsò vòvòvòwó kplí wó gòmèsèsèé ṅú. Ékamá vò mègbéé, ènūgòmekùkúú fò nú tsó kàdódó kíyíé lè nūtónyényé, nàné wó tẹfẹ álé nònó kplí nàné wó ányí nònó gbàdza ṅú. Kpélẹṅú lá, èdò yíé nyé Tòṅúgbè ṅútísé núnúyá gbàto. Mímá dòó lé tá wó àmè àdé mè.

Ètá gbāátò fò nú tsó Tòṅúgbè gbèḍḍíwó, wó nyàtùtùdòsésé kplí wó nyàgbèṅútísésé ṅú. Míkpo bé Tòṅúgbè gbèḍḍíwó sò kplí Èvègbè gbètagbé búbúwó tò. Tó gbó bé núsòs kíyíé lé há lá, vòvòtòtó álé lè Tòṅúgbè ḍḍḍḍáwó kplí Èvègbè gbètagbé màmléás tò dómé. ḍḍḍḍá kíyíé tútútú ṅú vòvòtòtòs kù láé nyé ḍḍḍḍá gbèdòmèsítò. Lè nyàtùtùdò nyàwó gómè lá, mílé ṅkú lé àtsà ètò álé kíyíé lè Tòṅúgbè mè ṅú: nyàtòtrógbí, nyàfòfòkpé kplí nyàkúítétré.

Lè Tòṅúgbè nyàgbèṅútísésé gómé lá, míkpo bé Tòṅúgbè wó ṅkónyá kplí dòwonya kòsòkòsò nyíḍḍḍḍé sò kplí Èvègbè gbètagbé búbúwó nyíḍḍḍḍé. Lè ékíyíé ta lá, mídà sùsù lé nyàhàwó dzí. Ènyàhá kíyíé ṅú mílé ṅkú láé nyé ṅkónyá, gbètètélényàdzínya, ṅkonyàtẹfénònya, àsítónūdízínya kplí asífíénúnnya. Míté gbè lè dzí bé nyàhàó fié bé Tòṅúgbé, Èvègbè gbètagbé wònyé kóṅ.

Ètá vèliá nyé èkàdódó kíyíé lè àkpā gbāátò kplí àkpā màmléás dómé. Lè gíyíéé, míḍè ètónyényé gómè.

Èdòó tá tólíá ná nùtsòtso le nūtónyényé ṅkonyakòsòkòsò ṅú. Lè àkpā kíyíé mè lá, mídzè àgbàgbā bé míáté ṅú ádé dzèsí ènū yíé fiéé nūtónyényé ṅkonyakòsòkòsò bé nònòmè. Mídé dzèsí nūtónyényé ṅkonyakòsòkòsò wó àmèvè fòmeví : ékíyíé mè nyàkúí lè, kplí ékíyíé mè nyàkúí mé lè. Nūtónyényé ṅkonyakòsòkòsò kíyíé mè nyàkúí lè gòmèé nyé bé èmò lè ènütó kplí ènūndàmèsíé dómé. Nūtónyényé ṅkonyakòsòkòsò kíyíé mè nyàkúí mé lè gòmèé nyé bé èmò áléké mélè ènütó kplí ènūndàmèsíé dómé. Yétá, lè kpólẹṅú mèé, álé míbùó míé dziláó ṅú, mèsò kplí álé míbùó ènū búbúwó hàbè èkplí ṅú nènè.

Èdòó tá nèliá fò nú tsó nūtónyényé dòwonyakòsòkòsò ṅú. Mígblo bé nūtónyényé dòwonyakòsòkòsò wó àmè èvè tṅgbè yé lè Tòṅúgbè mè. Gbāátòé nyé ékíyíé gbló àmè wó nūtónyényé hàbè **èkplí nyé Kòfí tò**. Èvèliáé nyé ékíyíé fòó nu tsó nàné wó àmè sí nònò ṅú, hàbè **èkplí lè Kòfí sí**. Lè nyàkòsòkòsò èvèliá kíyíé mèé, ènyaó hàbè **àsí, ṅú, dómé, dzí, gbó**, nòó nyàgbèkòsòkòsò mè. Kè dèé, nyàkòsòkòsò kíyíé mè **àsí** lèé, wóó mízáá lè Tòṅúgbè mè wú. Wòwò álié, né **àsí** nyá lè nyàgbèkòsòkòsò kíyíé mè kòà,

dòwònyá aláós habē **ká**, sù kplí **dó** té d̀lìé tēfēndòwònyá kíyíé nòò nyàgbékòsòkòsòó mè.

Ètá àtòliá hā lé ñkú lé nūtónyényé dòwònyakòsòkòsòó búbuwó ñú. Lè dòwònyakòsòkòsòó kíyíéó mèé, ènyàkúí kíyíé nyé **ná** tóó àsī ènūtó. Ké zì gèdē d̀éé, mí d̀ìē enūtóó kplí wó àsífíényá d̀á. Né mí mé d̀éé lá wòè, ké ékamá mí té d̀lìé ènūtóó kplí d̀òkóénya. Kpé lé ékamá ñúí, né èdòwònyáá nyé sèsèlèlámènyá alá habē **vèvè** nènéé, ké àmèñútínúó kíyíé nyé ènūndàmèsíé nyéé núwòlálá, yé nūtó nyéé àlòdólálá. Nòndòmè vòvòvò kíyíéó lè nyàgbékòsòkòsòó kíyíé sí wòé bé wó gòmèsèsèó tóó vòvò ví.

Èdòó tá màmlèto fò nú tsó èkàdódó kíyíé lè nūtónyényé nyàgbékòsòkòsòó, kplí nyàgbékòsòkòsòó kíyíéó fòó nú tsó nàné wó tēfē alá nòndó kplí nàné wó ányí nòndó gbàdzà ñú. Míkpo bé nyàgbékòsòkòsòó kíyíéó dó ha lé tēfē wó àmé vè àlè. Gbā lá, wó kátā wózàá nòfēndòndó dòwònyá kíyíé nyé **lè**. Èvèliá lá, nyàkúí kíyíé nyé **ná** fiéé ènūtó. Mídé dzèsíí lé ènúwùwúó bé nyàgbékòsòkòsòó wó àmé ètò kíyíéó tó vòvò nē wó nòéó.



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