

THE FORM AND FUNCTION OF DIMINUTIVE PARTICLES IN TIV

Michael Terhemen Angitso
Universität Hamburg, Hamburg
senseimy@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines the morpho-syntax, semantics and pragmatics of the diminutives **w-án-** and **án-** from a cognitive linguistic perspective in a little researched Niger-Congo language: Tiv. Tiv diminutives are particularly interesting in terms of their morphosyntactic origin, as well as the fact that they show the predominant influence of metaphor on variant interpretations. This leads to the proposal of more metaphors, in addition to those proposed in Jurafsky (1996), explaining the mapping of interpretations. Metaphor also aids the application of other mechanisms of semantic change, by shifting from the PERSON to the QUALITY feature of 'child'. Similar to previous researches on diminutives, e.g. Nikitina (2018), and Appah and Amfo (2011; 2019) this study shows that the diminutives' interpretations are interconnected and modellable into a single network, using the Radial Category approach. Theoretically, while Jurafsky's proposed model for diminutives only shows associations among the semantic interpretations and not among the pragmatic interpretations, this study shows how pragmatic interpretations also interact in Tiv.

Keywords: Tiv, diminutive, Niger-Congo, cognitive semantics, Radial category.

Kwagh saven

Kwagh henen ne time sha kwagh u mofosintaks, semantiks man paragematiks u ingyer man iindi panden a w-án- man án- ke udzwa Tiv, sha gba u koginitiv linguisitiks. Udzwa Tiv ngu ke nongo u idzwa i Naija-Kongo, kpa i time sha kwagh u u tsembelee ga. U panden ingyer man iindi ke dzwa Tiv yô, ka i see w-án-gayô án- sha iti i kwagh. Igbinda i ingyer man iindi paden ke Tiv ka kwagh u gban shima sha gbenda u mhir ve ke gbâ mofosintaks, man iwasen i metafo a nan sha u andza a gen a due ke kwagh u ingyer man iindi panden yô. Sha nahan yô, i kule ke kwagh henen ne ye, u metafo kpishi see sha u metafo mba ke Jurafsky (1996), u nan ikyaa sha mdue man mzo u andza a i dzuan a mi ke kwagh u ingyer man iindi panden ne. Metafo kpaa, wasen igbinda i gen i andza a sematiks a geman yô, er u geman mnenge u wan er or a hingir mnenge u wan er iindi gayô mdoo yô. Di tso er akaa a ngeren a tsuaa er Nikitina (2018), man Appah man Amfo (2011; 2019) nahan, kwagh henen ne tese ye andza a kwagh u ingyer man iindi panden ne, a fatyo u kohol ve kpelan ke netiwok mom, sha gbenda u Radial Category. Sha gbaa u mhen yô, netiwok u Jurafsky sha kwagh u ingyer man iindi panden ne tese ye ka andza a semantiks tesegeh a dzuan ye; andza a paragematiks yô nga dzuan ga. Kwagh henen ne tese ye andza a paragematiks kpaa nga ningir nga dzuan ke dzwa Tiv.

Ati a hange-hange: Tiv, ingyer man iindi panden, Naija-Kongo, koginitiv semantiks, Radial category.

1. Introduction

Diminutives constitute an aspect of the evaluative morphology of a language (Grandi & Körtevelyessy, 2015), typically marked in two ways in the world's languages: phonosyntactically and/or morphosyntactically. Diminution is marked phono-syntactically via segmental changes such as consonant shift (Vanhove and Ahmed, 2018) or prosodic changes such as tone and/or intonation changes (Gergerson, 1984). Although studies on diminutives are ongoing since the nineteenth century, in Niger-Congo, apart from the fact that diminutive markers predominantly originate from the relational concept 'child', little is known about the variant semantics and pragmatics of diminutives. The found available information on the semantics and pragmatics of diminutives in this group of languages exist on south-eastern Mande languages (Nikitina, 2018), Akan (Appah and Amfo, 2011; Amfo and Appah 2019), as well as Ewe (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer, 1991; Agbetsoamedo & Agbedor, 2015) and Selee (Agbetsoamedo & Agbedor, 2015) of the Kwa Volta-Congo subgroup of Niger-Congo. In the Bantu sub-group, despite the presence of works on the expression of diminutivity in some language groups like Central Ring Grassfields Bantu (Akumbu, and Kießling, 2020), the meanings associated with diminutives are under-described. This study contributes to existing studies by exploring the various semantic and pragmatic properties of diminutive markers in Tiv – a currently under-researched Bantoid language spoken in Nigeria and Cameroon. The study adopts a synchronic perspective, and models these properties after Radial Category theory proposed by Jurafsky (1996), highlighting the interactions between the semantic and pragmatic categories.

The aim of this study is to investigate the semantics and pragmatics of the diminutive (forms) in Tiv¹. While diminutives are highly productive in Tiv and often mentioned in the discussion of the language's nominal morphology, particularly the popular noun class systems, there is a scarcity of research on its semantics and pragmatics. In fact, a search beginning from analogue databases like the Tiv Bibliography compiled by Gundu and Jockers (1985), to digital databases like the Google Scholar, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), and Pro Quest Dissertation and Theses, reveals no (dedicated) research on these aspects of Tiv diminutives. However, the entries for the forms **án** and **wán** in all the existing Tiv dictionaries indicate that there is definitely more than one interpretation, i.e., diminutive, associated with the forms. In Malherbe (1933:13), there is an entry of **án-**, which is described as "...used as the diminutive prefix of nouns, e.g., **wányē** = **ányē**, a young child", which in a strict sense suggests the existence an interpretation 'young', which is not clearly entered in the prose description, in addition to the interpretation 'small' (i.e., diminutive). Under **wán**, Malherbe gives three basic interpretations, but the given examples suggest more interpretations than the given ones. The interpretations are: '(i) a child by birth (ii) diminutives formed by prefixing **wán** or **án** to the singular, and **án** (rarely **wán**) to the plural of nouns, whatever the class may be; (iii) **wán** is sometimes used in a more general sense, e.g., a subject to a king.' The given illustration of the usage of **wán** include: **wándzèdè** 'a short walk, journey', **wányàngè** 'a little while, i.e., not many days', **wánkwāsè** 'a girl a young woman', **wánngō** 'a brother or sister' **wángbiān** 'a relative'. Abraham (1940) does not contain an entry for **án**, but for **wán** (see page 311-312) under which the following interpretations are identified, and to which all (subsequent) nouns beginning with **wán-** are cross-referenced: "(i) young of animal: child of human being (ii) daughter, son, full brother or sister: any relation of one's own generation, half-brother or sister, fellow clans man: fellow member of same kindred; child, servant, subject of any office-holder; small, unmarried girl living at home; baby: any male above the age of circumcision. In Karshima (2013: 23, 316), **án** is described as "a diminutive form: little, small in size, statue or quantity"; while **wán** has four interpretations: (i) a child; the young of man or animal (ii) that which is not grown up yet (iii) be virtuous and disciplined (iv) little. At this point, at least two general questions loom: how many (more) semantic and pragmatic interpretations are associated with the diminutives in Tiv, and to what extent are these interpretations interrelated?

To approach these questions, data is collected from the Jengbagh variety of Tiv², which is often considered as the 'standard' Tiv despite the absence of actual language standardization processes, and is spoken in Buruku, Tarka, Konshisha, Vandeikya, Ushongo, and Gboko, local government areas of Benue State, Nigeria. The data originates in a variety of sources. Diminutive forms, i.e., words containing the diminutive forms **w-án-** and **án-**, especially those in the pragmatic part, are extracted from fifteen hours of audio recordings of some Tiv folktales and texts narrated by seven different native speakers of the Jengbagh variety of Tiv. Data were collected from some secondary sources including Malherbe's (1933) *Tiv-English dictionary*, Abraham's (1940) *Tiv dictionary*, Karshima's (2013) new

¹ Tiv is an under-described Tivoid language within the Bantoid sub-group of Benue-Congo under the Niger-Congo phylum, and it is spoken in Nigeria and Cameroon.

² Despite the claim by most Tiv scholars like Bohannon and Bohannon (1953: 5), Dzurgba (2007: 64, 66, 76) and Karshima (2013: xv) that Tiv has no dialect, Jockers (1992: 163) notes that "there are at least five distinct dialects which differ from each other in lexical items, use of suffixes in the noun class system, apocopy, tonal progressive and regressive assimilation etc.", though without any concrete description and demonstration, Angitso (2020: 6-11) demonstrates that Tiv has at least four (4) different dialects, distinguished by relatively minor but significant variations in vocabulary, orthography, phonology, grammar, semantics, style, and even pragmatics. These dialects are: Ihyarev, Masev-Kwande, Sankara and Jengbagh dialects. The dialects' labels come from the names of the traditional sub-groups in the Tivland.

Tiv-English dictionary. The Tiv dictionaries were carefully used in data generation because they are bilingual (English and Tiv), and it is known that bilingual dictionaries can alter the interpretation of data. Margalitadz and Meladze (2016: 791) observe that “lexicographers have major difficulties in finding the exact matches in a target language for the words in a source language, as far as multiple shades of meanings of relatively but not fully synonymous lexical units ... are making the task of finding the exact and most suitable correspondence invariably complicated.” The database is also supplemented by diminutive forms generated with the author’s native speaker intuition.

For the analysis and modelling, the study adopts four (4) standard semantic change mechanisms – metaphor, inference, Lambda-abstraction and generalization – as well as lexicalization, described in Nikitina (2018). Metaphor is triggered by similar features between semantic domains (Heine 1997; Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer 1991; Kövecses, 2002); inference is triggered by contexts and conventional factors/variables (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer, 1991); Lambda-abstraction is associated with general re-interpretations such as approximation and exactness, where first order predicates/meanings give rise to second order predicates/meanings (Jurafsky, 1996); generalization deals with less informative and approximate interpretations that are made from specific interpretations, while lexicalization is the encoding of conceptual components in a lexical unit. A semantic frame, including the mechanisms of semantic change, reflects world views and real-world situations (see Geeraerts, 2006: 16) which are in themselves multidimensional. It is therefore not enough to adopt one semantic change mechanism in accounting for the variant contexts in which the prototypical meaning of linguistic devices like diminutives are replaced with (other) peripheral meanings. Hence, the necessity to adopt the 4 standard semantic change mechanisms in this study to capture variant Tiv world-views and real-world situations.

The study is generally organized as follows: Section 2 contains short grammatical sketch containing information on the relevant grammatical features of the language, e.g., general rules about the noun class system. Section 3 provides a sketch of the morphosyntax of the diminutives **w-án-** and **án-**. Section 4 outlines and discusses their semantic interpretations. Section 5 focuses on identifying and discussing the pragmatic interpretations associated with **w-án-**. Section 6 applies the Radial Category approach to synthesize the interpretations of the diminutive in Tiv. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2. Tiv Grammatical Sketch

The canonical structure of Tiv nouns (N) includes a nominal root and a noun class affix. Angitso (2020) show that noun class affixes in Tiv consists of not only noun class prefixes (NPx) and suffixes (NSx), but in marginal cases, also infixes (NIx) that originate in erstwhile morphophonological processes in Tiv nouns. Affix combinations in nominals thus define five nominal affix groups which are labelled NPx-N, NPx-N-NSx, (NPx-)N<NIx>, (NPx-)N-NSx<NIx>, as illustrated in Table 1 alongside with exemplifications. The overwhelming majority of nominal roots are disyllabic. When compared to reconstructed nouns in Proto Bantu, some monosyllabic nominal roots can be reconstructed to disyllabic nominal roots, e.g. **w-án** ‘child’ from the Proto Bantu ***-jána** (Meeussen, 1967:100).

NPx-N	N-NSx	NPx-N-NSx	(NPx-)N<NIx>	(NPx-)N-NSx<NIx>
w-án 1-child ‘child’	mà-pè building-16 ‘some where’	ú-kōr-ũy 15-horn-15 ‘horn’	ø-k<w>āsē 1-woman<1> ‘woman’	ø-k<w>ã-y 1a-thing-1a<1> ‘thing’

Table 1: Noun class affix patterns of Tiv nominals in isolation

Tiv has two phonemic tone levels: high (H), and low (L) as reflected in the minimal contrast of H vs. L in (1), plus two contour tones, i.e., HL, LH which result from the interaction of underlying lexical level tones with different (floating) tones associated with

inflectional morphemes. There is also a phonetic mid (M) which might also be analysed as a downstepped high tone or an upstepped low tone.

1. **súlè** ‘coin’
sulé ‘farm’
sùlè ‘to become cold’
sùlé ‘to make something cold’

Thirteen noun classes are established in Tiv by Angitso (2020) on the basis of agreement marking on modifiers within the noun phrase, e.g., possessive prefixes, demonstrative prefixes, adjective suffixes, cardinal numerals’ prefixes, associative markers, and within the clause, e.g., pronominal subject markers, and auxiliary verb prefixes. Table 2 presents the Tiv noun classes and the relevant part of the system to this study, i.e., the nominal affixes, excluding the entire concord spectrum. Noun class numbering follows the canonical Bantu where odd numbered classes contain singular nouns and even numbered classes contain plural nouns.

N/class	Noun class affixes	
	A-forms	B-forms
1	∅-; -, -, à-, á-, m-, w-, (w)án-, òr-, ∅- <w>	∅-; -, à-, á-, m-, w-, (w)án-, òr-, ∅- <w>
1a	∅- <w> -y	∅- <w>
2	- -v, mbà- -v, mbá- -v, -v ; ú- -v	-, mbà-, mbá-, mbà-, ú-, ù-, -m
2a	mbà-, mbá-, mbà- - , ù-, ù- - , -m	
2b	í- - , ì- -	ì-
3	ú- -	ù-
5	í- -	ì-
6	á- -	à-
6a	m- -m	m-
7	í- -y	ì-
8	í- -v	ì-, ù-
9	ì-	ì-
10	í- -	ì-
14	ú- -v	
14a	í- -v	ù-
14b	ú- -y	ù-
15	ú- -y	ù-
15a	í- -y	ì-
16	∅- -pé, ∅- -pè	∅- -pé, ∅- -pè

Table 2: Overview of the Tiv noun classes and forms (Angitso, 2020: 132-3, 228).

Tiv nouns come in two different forms: The A-form representing the full form of the noun including its class prefix, suffix and probably infix vs. the B-form characterised by deletion of all segments of the suffix, tone and/or segmental changes in the remnant prefixes (Angitso, 2020). In terms of syntactic distribution, nouns take the A-forms in isolation and head position of a noun phrase, and require the B-form in dependent positions in associative constructions and various propositional phrases, as illustrated in (2) where as soon as the nouns occurs in N2 positions, i.e. as complement of various prepositions or as modifier in associative constructions, NSx are deleted, the NPx tone could changes to become L (2b), and the vowel quality of the NPx could change (2c). Syntactically, B-forms signal dependent syntactic relation, i.e. marking when a noun occurs as a dependent element in an associative constructions and prepositional phrases (Angitso, 2022). As still illustrated in (2), after suffix deletion, nouns take an originally noun class agreement enclitic (2a) that has degenerated in

some morphosyntactic contexts to a grammatical tone (2b) but still perform pragmatic and morphosyntactic functions, like indicating the topics in associative constructions, marking concord, indexing headship, and marking the boundary of an associative bracket that the head noun forms (Angitso, 2020; forthcoming). The enclitic is simply glossed as ENC. Though identical to the tone of noun class suffixes, the enclitic is not a remnant of deleted suffixes as it also manifests on nouns devoid of suffixes in isolation, when they occur in the identified contexts. Suffix deletion does not affect the very few class 16 nouns, consequently, the high tone enclitic is not found on any of them.

2a.	tòr	→	ń-kǎn-ùń	m̄má	tòr-ùń
	1-king		6a-chair-6a	6a.AM	1.king-7:ENC
	‘king’		‘chairs/seats of a king’		
b.	ń-kǎn-ùń	→	á-vě	ā	m̄-kǎn
	6a-chair-6a		6-hand:6	15. AM	6a-chair:ENC
	‘chairs’		‘arms of chairs’		
c.	í-yǎ-v	→	...fá	ù-yà	
	14-belly-14		... on	14-belly	
	‘belly’		‘on a belly’		

Noun classes pair in fourteen major genders (1/2, 1/6, 1/10, 3/6, 3/10, 5/6, 7/6, 7/6a, 7/8, 9/2, 9/6, 9/10, 14/8, 15/6, and 15/8), exemplified in (6-12), and seven inqorate or minor genders (5/6a, 5/8, 9/6a, 14/6a, 15/6a, and 16/2), bringing it to a total of twenty-one paired gender in Tiv. Every noun class in Tiv has at least one noun that does not pair with another class for a singular vs. plural contrast, which results in thirteen single class genders. In addition to paired and single genders, there are also at least seven double genders patterns in the language: Genders 1/2 ~ 6, 1/2 ~ 10, 1 ~ 3/10, 3 ~ 9/6, 7/6a ~ 8, 14/6a ~ 8, and 1 ~ 16/2 (see Angitso, 2020: 193-225).

Tiv operates a head-initial syntax in the noun phrase and clause. In the noun phrase, apart from the distributive quantifier **hǎnmà** ‘every’ (3a), all modifiers occur after the head noun (3b). As it could be deduced from (2), and probably (3b) associative constructions are also head initial. The constituents of a basic clause occur in the following order: subject - (subject marker) - (auxiliary verb) - verb - (indirect object) - (direct object) (- adjuncts, e.g. prepositional phrase). The order is exemplified in (3c).

3a.	hǎnmà	ì-kpʼà			
	every	9-bag			
	‘every bag’				
b.	á-kpā	á-ám	á	vèsē-n	á-hár ʈì:
	6-bag:6	6-my	6. AM	grow-PTCP	6-two all
	‘all these two big bags of mine’				
c.	Térsô:	ngù wūà-n	ì-kyěy	á	ì-hyō
	Tersoo	1. AUX kill-PTCP	9-chicken	with	9-knife
	‘Tersoo is killing a chicken with a knife’				
di.	òr-tèsē-n				
	1.person-teach-PTCP				
	‘teacher’				
ii	òr-tōm				
	1.person-3.work				
	‘worker’				

Similarly, in compound structures, the head obligatorily precedes the modifier(s), as illustrated with the agentive nominals in (3d), where the **òr** ‘person’, which has acquired the function of an agentive marker, precedes the verb ‘teach’ and the noun ‘work’. The correspondence in the distribution of heads and dependents in N1 of N2 associative constructions, to the distribution of heads and dependents in N-N compounds is the first indication that the later originates in the former. Similarly, the fact that the (V)erb follows the head noun in the N-V compounds, just like it follows the subject in the clause, suggests that N-V compounds originate in a clause.

3. Morphosyntax of Tiv diminutives

Before proceeding, it is pertinent to clarify that the diachronic source of the diminutive marker (4b) is the paired noun class gender 1/2 noun 'child' (4a), which has the same morpho-phonetic shape as the marker itself. The diminutive marker and the noun for 'child' are, in the running text, consistently spelled as **w-án-** and **w-án**, respectively. In other words, the presence vs. absence of the hyphen is the difference between the diminutive forms and 'child'.

- 4a. **w-án** ~ **ǎn-ǔv**
 1-child 2:child-2
 'child' 'children'
- b. **w-án-kʷà**
 1-child-3.leaf
 'small leaf'

This section begins by examining the extent to which **w-án-** and **án-** are acknowledged as diminutive morphemes in previous literature on Tiv, and the existing views on the status of the markers in relation to grammatical number (i.e., singular vs. plural). It proceeds to show the diachronic source of the diminutive marker; and identifies **án-** as the phonological variant of **w-án-**. This introduces the arguments for the word and root morphological statuses of **w-án** and **án**, which in turn motivate the distinction of two diminutive structures in Tiv: [word+word] and [root+word], whose usage depends on salient semantic distinctions such as [+/- female] and [+/- young]. In addition, the section points out to the reinterpretation and equation of the diminutive marker to prefixes, and outlines a similarity of diminutive + noun compositions to associative constructions.

There has been much discussion on the status of these two forms: **w-án-** and **án-**. Early analyses of Tiv generally identify **w-án-** as the diminutive marker in Tiv, and this tradition continues till today. Scholars who espouse this view include Hewby (1909); Malherbe (1933), Abraham (1940), Arnott (1967), Terpstra (1968), and Jockers (1991)³. Others, such as Abraham (1940) also list **án-** as a diminutive marker. However, it appears that **án-** is not widely acknowledged as such because some Tiv scholars, such as Hewby (1909), did not mention **án-** as a diminutive morpheme. Terpstra (1968: 11) and Malherbe (1933: vi) even define **w-án-** as a noun class marker. Some publications, like Malherbe (1933: viii, 13) and Abraham (1940: 312), describe **án-** as a plural diminutive morpheme that replaces the singular diminutive morpheme **w-án-** on noun stems if pluralized. Specifically, Malherbe (1933: vi, viii) notes that the 'prefix **wan-** becomes **an-** in the plural, **-m** or **-v** often suffixed to the word, e.g. **waniwa** (dog), plur. **aniwav** (dogs)'. In the analysis presented here, **án-** is not the plural counterpart of **w-án-**. Neither forms have a plural value (5a): whether **án-** or **w-án-** occurs on a plural diminutive noun, it does not affect the plural meaning of the noun, as long as either of the noun class 2 suffixes⁴, **-m** (5b) or **-v** (5c), is added to the stem. The noun class suffix **-m** is almost exclusively used to pluralize non-lexicalized diminutive nouns like (5a), while **-v** is predominantly used to pluralize diminutivized nouns that are lexicalized in the language like (5b).

- 5a. **w-án-ywā** = **án-ywā**
 1-child-9.dog child-9.dog
 'small dog/puppy' 'small dog/puppy'
- b. **w-án-ywā** → **w-án-ywā-m** = **án-ywā-m**
 1-child-9.dog 1-child-9.dog-2 child-9.dog-2
 'small dog/puppy' 'small dogs/puppies' 'small dogs/puppies'

³ Old as these works are, they are still relevant references for Tiv studies since there are no current studies on most aspects of the language, e.g. the Tiv diminutive system.

⁴ These suffixes are sometimes preceded by a vowel corresponding to final vowel of the root, when the root ends with a consonant.

- c. **w-án-gb^yĩàn** → **w-án-gb^yĩàn-ěv** = **án-gb^yĩàn-ěv**
 1-child-9.maternal_kin 1-child-9.maternal_kin-2 child-9.maternal_kin -2
 ‘sibling’ ‘siblings’ ‘siblings’

Another evidence that **án-** is not a plural marker nor the plural counterpart of the **wán** resides in the morpho-phonetic behaviour of the source word ‘child’. In Tiv, ‘child’ is not a single gender noun which does not have to undergo morpho-phonological alternation to mark singular vs. plural. Rather, ‘child’ is a paired gender noun with two distinct forms, i.e., **wán** vs. **ǎnúv**, for singular vs. plural contexts, respectively, as it appears in (4a) above. In plural formation, there is a vowel alternation in the root, i.e., /a/ → /ɔ/, that probably originates in an erstwhile assimilation system. The trigger for this alternation in plural context is obviously lost in Tiv. The same alternation of the root form of ‘child’ in singular vs. plural contexts occurs in other Tivoid languages like Ugare, where **vàn** ‘child’ becomes **bón** ‘children’ (see Cassetta and Cassetta, 1994: 8). Since ‘child’ is not a single gender noun, if any of its forms is to be used for pluralization, the expected form would be **ón** in which the vowel /ɔ/ inherently specifies plural. However, this is not the case; therefore, in plural diminutives **án** relies on other plural noun class markers, predominantly the class 2 suffix **-m** for pluralization.

The diminutive marker is actually the head nouns in an endocentric compound, thereby occurring as the first noun (henceforth, N1) in the compound (6a-d). Regarding the domain of application, **w-án-** is used on non-derived (6a) and deverbal nouns where the nominalization is triggered by an inflectional operator **m-** (6b), pure adjectives (6c) as well as on verbs that denote properties or attributes (6d). However, **w-án-** does not apply to verbs connoting events, and despite compound head function of **w-án-** in **w-án-** plus adjective compounds like those in like (6c), the end result is still an adjective.

- 6a(i). **gbándè** → **w-án-gbāndè**
 1.plate 1-child-1.plate
 ‘plate’ ‘small plate’
- (ii) **ú-húndǎ** → **w-án-húndà**
 3-door:3 1-child-3.door
 ‘door’ ‘small door’
- b(i). **tê:** → **m-tê:** → **w-án-m-tê:**
 ‘to sell’ 1-sell 1-child-1-sell
 ‘manner of selling’ ‘small manner of selling’
- (ii) **wàsè** → **í-wàsě-n** → **w-án-wàsè-n**
 ‘to help’ 5-help-PTCP:5 1-child-5.help-PTCP
 ‘help/assistance’ ‘little help/assistance’
- c(i). **ír** → **w-án-ír**
 ‘black’ 1-child-black
 ‘blackish’
- púpǔ:** → **w-án-púpǔ:**
 ‘white’ 1-child-white
 ‘whitish’
- d. **vèsē-n** → **w-án-vèsē-n**
 grow-PTCP 1-child-PTCP
 ‘growing/to be old’ ‘older (to some extent)’

The diminutive forms are in a word/root contrast for the noun ‘child’. For clarity, I will separate the discussion of the word/root status for the noun ‘child’ (which is the focus of this paragraph) from the discussion of the status of the two forms of the diminutive presented in the following paragraph. In the noun ‘child’, **án** is a root to which the noun class 1 **w-** vs. the noun class 2 circumfix **-v** are added to generate the singular word **w-án** ‘child’ vs. its plural **-ón-úv** ‘children’. Although the plural of ‘child’ is not involved in diminutivization as it will soon be made clear, its original root vowel remains /a/ which changed to /ɔ/ in the history of Tiv and other Tivoids, like Ugare (see Cassetta & Cassetta, 1994: 8). Hence, **án** is

the constant root in both singular and plural contexts. In addition to formally marking noun class and gender membership, the class affixes are responsible for the status of ‘child’ as a word since in isolation, **án** has no lexical meaning, but **w-án** and **ǎnúv** do as ‘child’ and ‘children’, respectively. By implication, **w-án** and **án** are distinguishable on the basis of syntactic independency vs. boundness. The absence of the independence feature in *án* is illustrated in (7) where **w-án** in (7b) can serve as an answer to (7a), but **án** in (7c) cannot. More so, as a root, **án** lacks the ability to occur in all argument positions in sentences and phrases as in the unacceptable (8a) where **án** occurs in the object position. On the other hand, **w-án** as a word, has this agility, thereby occurring in argument positions as in the acceptable (8b) in which **w-án** occurs in the object position.

- 7a. **mámá** **mà:** **ŋī**
 mother give_birth what?
 ‘mother gave birth to what?’
- b. **w-án**
 1-child
 ‘child’
- c*. **án**
 ‘child’
- 8a*. **mámá** **mà:** **án**
 mother give_birth child?
 ‘mother gave birth to a child’
- b. **mámá** **mà:** **w-án**
 mother give_birth 1-child
 ‘mother gave birth to a child’

One logical question from the preceding paragraph is: how does the word/root contrast in ‘child’ reflect in the Tiv diminutive? As is already clear, the word/root contrast morphophonologically reflect in the identity of the diminutive forms **án-** and **w-án-** to the root and word forms of ‘child’, respectively. Irrespective of the used diminutive form, diminutivized nouns are automatically assigned to paired gender 1/2, which indicates the inherent specification of ‘child’ as a class 1 noun, and excludes the possibility that the prefix **w-** makes ‘child’ a class 1 noun. The transferred word/root contrast from ‘child’ to the diminutive marker forms also reflect subtle semantic distinction, e.g., female vs. non-female (i.e. [+/-female]), and young vs. non-young [+/-young]. To illustrate the [+/-female] semantic distinction, in (9a), the presence of the word form of diminutive marker **w-án-** a noun like **Yánděv** designating the name of person (§4.5) and locality (§4.6) results in three semantic interpretations possibilities, i.e. ‘daughter of **Yánděv**’, a ‘female member of the locality: **Yánděv**’, and ‘small person/place’, two of which are associated with [+female]. On the other hand, in (9b), the presence of root form of the diminutive marker **án-** on the same noun only results in one semantic interpretation, i.e., ‘small **Yánděv**’, which is [-female]. To be specific, the semantic feature [+female] is possible with the **w-án-** but not possible **án-**.

- 9a. **w-án-yánděv**
 1-child-yandev
 ‘small **yandev**’ OR ‘daughter of **yandev**’ OR ‘female member of **yandev**’
- b. **án-yánděv**
 child-yandev
 ‘small **yandev**’

The [+/-young] distinction only manifest in the human noun ‘girl’ and ‘boy’. Alongside the default diminutive interpretation, [+ young] human interpretation is only available when **w-án-** is used on the generic nouns **k<w>āsē** ‘female/woman’ (10a) and **nôm** ‘male, husband’ (10b), but absent when **án-** is used on the same nouns. The derivation of ‘girl’ from ‘woman’ is straight forward and does not require the presence of additional elements, apart from **w-án-**. When the root **án-** is used on **k<w>āsē** ‘female/woman’, only the default diminutive reading is available (10c). On the other hand, the derivation of ‘boy’ is more complex than ‘girl’

because it involves an extra element, **-sú** whose origin is obscure at the moment but has synchronically acquired the function of marking the human feature in the generic term ‘male’, **nôm**. When **-sú** is added to **nôm**, the word means ‘male human’, but when it is omitted **nôm** either takes the generic meaning ‘male’ or is interpreted as ‘male non-human, i.e. animal’⁵; hence, the gloss of **-sú** as HUM(an) in this study. The generic meaning of **nôm**, ‘male’, is metonymy extended to mean ‘husband’ in Tiv. The suffix **-sú** cooccurs with the diminutive form parallel to the word form of ‘child’ (i.e. **w-án-**) as in (10b) but does not cooccur with the diminutive form parallel to the root form of ‘child’ (i.e. **án-**) as in (10e). In absence of **-sú**, **án-** can be used on **nôm** ‘husband’ (10f), which strengthens the incompatibility of **án-** with **-sú**. Hence, the subtle [+/- young] human interpretation in the respective usage of **w-án-** vs. **án-** in deriving ‘boy’ from ‘male/husband’.

- 10a. **w-án-k<w>āsē**
1-child-1.female<1>
‘daughter’
- b. **w-án-nôm-sū**
1-child-1.male-HUM
‘small male human’ = ‘boy’
- c. **án-k<w>āsē**
child-1.female<1>
‘small woman’
- d. **w-án-nôm-sū** vs. **w-án-nôm**
1-child-1.male-HUM 1-child-1.male
‘small male human’ = ‘boy’ ‘small male non-human’ OR ‘small husband’
- e. ***án-nôm-sū**
child-1.male-HUM
‘boy’
- f. **án-nôm**
child-1.male
‘small non-human male’ OR ‘small husband’

The juxtaposition of either **w-án-** or **án-** with a(nother) noun obligatorily requires some morphological changes in the noun. These changes include the omission of all noun class prefixes and suffixes that are not involved in nominal derivation (11a). Noun class infixes are not deleted when either of the diminutive forms is added to nouns like ‘female, woman’ (11b) in which they, i.e., infixes, are found. Noun class affixes are retained if they: (i) perform derivational functions in the nominals, i.e. as word class changing inflections (see Haspelmath, 1996; Bauer, 2004) like the class 1 prefix **m-** (11c) used in active manner nominal derivation, or (ii) have been reinterpreted as part of the noun stem as in (11d) where the class 1 prefix **á-** has become part of the ‘motorcycle’ and there is not dropped during pluralization. Where a noun class prefix triggers morphophonological features like palatalization (11a) and labialization (11e) or glide formation in a noun, the features are retained and preserved as reflexes to the (actual) noun class prefix’s form. Morphotonological processes, such as tone raising, which are triggered by the noun class prefixes and suffixes affixes are not retained. High or Low tone spreading, which actually has nothing to with the nominalisation process, occurs when a noun class affix bearing a corresponding tone is to a nominal root. Despite the predominant absence of the actual noun class prefixes of the N2s (i.e. the diminutivized nouns), the reflexive morphophonological features indicate that N2s preserve their statuses as words in the compound. Hence, synchronically, diminutive

⁵ Generally, the suffix **-sū** is very rare suffix in the Tiv nominal morphology. In the database used for this study, the suffix only occurs **nôm-sū** ‘boy’, vs. **nôm** ‘male sex’, ‘non-human male offspring’, or ‘husband’. The suffix is obviously masculine since it is absent in the word for human female offspring, **wán-kwāsē**, i.e. ‘girl’.

structures in Tiv can be morphologically divided into two classes: [word+word] and [root+word], which indicate that diminutive structures in Tiv vary according to the morphological status of the head constituent (N1). In the [word+word] diminutives class, both constituents regularly bear (reconstructible) noun class inflections, as in (10a), while in the [root word] diminutives class, only one constituent (i.e., the diminutivized noun) bears a (reconstructible) noun class inflection, as in (10c).

11a.	í-kʸᵛn-ũy 7-chair-7 'chair'	~	m-kᵛn-ùm 6a-chair-6a 'chairs'	→	w-án-kʸᵛn 1-child-7.chair:ENC 'small chair'
b.	k<w>āsē 1.woman<1> 'woman'	~	kásē-v 2:woman-2 'women'	→	w-án-k<w>āsē 1-child-1.woman<1> 'daughter/small woman'
c.	m-fē 1-know	~	m̀bà-m-fē 2-1-know	→	w-án-m-fē 1-child-1-know 'knowledge'
d.	á-gùgù 1-motorcycle 'motorcycle'	~	m̀bà-á-gùgù 2-1.motorcycle 'motorcycles'	→	w-án-á-gùgù 1-child-1.motorcycle 'small motorcycle'
e.	ú-k^wá 3-leaf:3 'leaf'	~	í-ká 10-leaf:10 'leaves'	→	w-án-k^wà 1-child-3.leaf 'small leaf'

In diminutive + noun compositions involving some nouns like 'chair' (11), deleted suffixes are sometimes replaced by the enclitic that occurs in Tiv prepositional phrases and association construction identified in §2 and re-illustrated in (12a). These processes are (at least) the two aspects in which diminutive + noun compositions are morphosyntactically similar to noun + noun associative constructions, thereby betraying the fact that the compositions originate in associative constructions. While diminutive + noun is identical to any noun + noun compound, both compositions differ from associative constructions, particularly in the extent of prefix deletion in on the second noun (N2). In diminutive + noun compositions, the deletion of noun class prefixes is obligatory in nonderivational contexts (12b); while in associative constructions, all noun class prefixes and infixes are retained (12a).

12a.	m-ngér-èṁ 6a-water-6a 'water'	→	í-bʸér-ēy 7-drop-7	kí 7.AM	m-ngěṛ 6a-warter:ENC 'a drop of water'
b.	m-ngér-èṁ 6a-water-6a 'water'	→	w-án-ngěṛ 1-child-6a.water:ENC 'little water'		

Both the word and root diminutive forms are reinterpreted as and equated to prefixes (see also Angitso, 2020: 250). As already stated, the source of the diminutive forms, **w-án** 'child', has a counterpart **ʸn-ú-v** 'children' with which it alternates in singular vs. plural contexts, but neither of the diminutive forms **án-** and **wán-** have a plural counterpart that could be reconstructed to a lexical item. The plural of 'child' is not used in used in pluralizing diminutives (13a).

13a.	w-án-ywèn 1-child-stone 'small stone'	~	*ʸn-úv-ywèn⁶ 2a:child-2a-5.stone 'small stones'
------	--	---	---

⁶ The asterisk sign at the beginning of this composition marks ungrammaticality or unacceptability and not a diachronic form.

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| b. | w-án-ywèn | ~ | wán-wèn-èrn |
| | 1-child-stone | | 2a-child-5.stone |
| | 'small stone' | | 'small stones' |
| c. | (w-)án-gbiān | ~ | (w-)án-gbiān-ěv |
| | 1-child-9.maternal_kin | | 1-child-9.maternal_kin-2 |
| | 'brother/sister' | | 'brothers/sisters' |

In plural contexts, the diminutive forms co-occur with the class 2 plural suffixes **-m̄** (13b) or **-v** (13c), indicating the ongoing grammaticalization of the diminutive forms to prefixes; hence, their inclusion in the wide array of class 1 prefixes in Table 2. To give some degree of fairness to their nominal status and the grammaticalization process, they are described as markers in this study.

4. The Semantics of **W-án**, 'Child'

This section focuses on identifying and discussing the different semantic interpretations associated with **w-án-** when it constitutes a nominal.

4.1. Small

The predominant use of **w-án-** is to indicate diminution, which is also the motivation for starting this section with this interpretation. **W-án-** combines with different roots to mean a 'small' size (14). Although the 'small' interpretations are discussed together in this section, they could be separated, as in the proposed semantic structure of the diminutive in Tiv (see Figure 1).

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------|---|----------------------|
| 14a. | í-ywě̄n | → | w-án-ywèn |
| | 5-stone:5 | | 1-child-5.stone |
| | 'stone' | | 'a small stone' |
| b. | í-d̄ʒ̄ndũ-y | → | w-án-d̄ʒ̄ndũ |
| | 7-calabash-7 | | 1-child-7.calabash |
| | 'calabash' | | 'small calabash' |
| c. | òr | → | w-án-òr |
| | 1.person | | 1-child-1.Person |
| | 'person' | | 'small/short person' |

The 'small' interpretation associated with 'child' is derived via metaphoric shift from the PERSON feature of 'child' to QUALITY. The 'small' interpretation results from the evaluation of the physical qualities of the 'child' and its progenitor to derive the meaning 'small version of X', where X is the actual entity, property or event from which a diminutive form is derived. The metaphoric shift from PERSON to QUALITY domain has already been described in many languages such as Ewe (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer, 1991: 79; Claudi and Heine, 1986: 314 - 316).

4.2. Offspring or Descendant of X

The primary meaning associated with **w-án-** is 'human offspring'. In (15), **w-án-** combines with **tòr** 'king' to derive the term for offspring of a king - 'princess/prince'.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|---|------------|---|-------------------|
| 15. | w-án | + | tòr | → | w-án-tòr |
| | 1-child | | 1.king | | 1-child-1.king |
| | 'child' | | 'king' | | 'princess/prince' |

The 'child' is a descendant of a family, which is a unit consisting also of progenitors. The natural relationship within a family is blood ties. On the common ground of blood ties, two forms of relationship are observed within the family: child-child relationship and progenitor-child relations. These forms of relationship further motivate other interpretations associated with 'child'. The child-child relationship motivates interpretations like kinship by blood (§4.3), while the progenitor-child relationship motivates interpretations like patronym: daughter of X (§4.5) and 'female member of a locality' (§4.6) interpretations. The 'offspring/descendant' interpretation coincides with the 'young' interpretation (§4.11). The

‘young’ interpretation is assumed to suffice for the ‘offspring/descendant’ interpretation. Therefore, the ‘offspring/descendant’ interpretation does not appear in the proposed structure for the interpretations of the diminutive in Tiv (Figure 1, in §6.0).

4.3. Kinship: Related to X

When **w-án-** combines with nouns designating kinship and parental places of origin, as well as the verb denoting the special matrimonial activity of paying bride price, it derives other kinship concepts that designate a person with whom someone shares a common progenitor, and is associated either by blood (16a) or marriage (16b).

16a.	w-án	+	ì-gb^yĩàn	→	w-án-gb^yĩàn
	1-child		9-maternal_kin		1-child-9.maternal_kin
	‘child’		‘maternal kin’		‘brother/sister’
b.	w-án	+	kèm	→	w-án-kèm
	1-child		‘to pay bride price’		1-child-to_bride_price
	‘child’				‘in-law’

While the combination of **w-án-** and **ì-gb^yĩàn** ‘maternal kin’ to derive ‘brother/sister’ in (16a) is transparent, further explanation might be needed in explaining how the meaning ‘in-law’ is generated from ‘child’ and ‘to pay bride price’ in (16b). In deriving ‘in-law’, **w-án-** combines with the verb **kèm** ‘to pay bride price’ and not with its noun counterpart, **ú-kèm** ‘bride price’. The presence of the L tone that the verb **kèm** ‘to pay bride price’ bears in isolation in the compound ‘in-law’ serves as evidence to this fact. The compound **w-án-kèm** ‘in-law’ originates in a reduced relative clause which literally means ‘a child of paying bride price’, but actually translates into ‘child that is acquired by paying bride price’. The background is as follows: through the payment of the price for the bride, there is a transfer of various marital and family rights between the bride and groom, and their families. For example, while the bride and the groom acquire the right to legitimately procreate through the special ceremony of bride-price payment, they and their siblings (also) automatically acquire the rights to be affiliated to the opposite families, i.e. the bride and her siblings become affiliated to the groom’s family, and the groom and his siblings become affiliated to the bride’s family, through this special ceremony. Via this special ceremony both families combine and extend into one big family. Hence, the term **w-án-kèm** ‘in-law’ specifies the means through which either the bride and her siblings or the groom and his siblings have become part of another family, thereby distinguishing them from the actual biological children in the (new) family. The term **w-án-kèm** ‘in-law’ is not only used by the parents of the spouse’s but also their children, i.e. the siblings of the spouse because they consider the newly acquired siblings via matrimony as their responsibility, therefore, their children.

The meaning ‘Kinship: related to X’ derives from the exploitation of both the child-child and progenitor-child relationship in the family (§4.2) via the metaphor COMMON PROGENITOR IS KINSHIP. In the Tiv culture, membership of a family could be by marriage as well. When someone marries into or from a family, a family affinity group is created with the siblings of the spouse, and s/he considers the parents of the spouse as his/her parents as well. Such a family affinity group is not difficult to form because, culturally, anyone who is older than another has the right to refer to the latter as his/her ‘child’ and vice versa. Other nouns in this category include ‘paternal kin’ (17a) and ‘maternal kin’ (17b).

17a.	w-án-těr
	1-child-1.father
	‘paternal kin’
b.	w-án-gb^yà
	1-child-5.mother’s_place_of_origin
	‘maternal kin’.

4.4. Member of Socio-cultural/Religious Group

The marker **w-án-** designates a male or female MEMBER of a unit when it combines with names of social, cultural or religious associations (18a), tribe or ethnic groups (18b).

Generally, Jurafsky (1996: 542) identifies ‘member’ as another universal interpretation associated with diminutives.

18a.	w-án	+	tív	→	w-án-tív
	1-child		1.tív		1-child-1.tív
	‘child’		‘Tiv’		‘a Tiv person’
b.	w-án	+	ídómà	→	w-án-dómà
	1-child		1.idoma		1-child-1.idoma
	‘child’		‘Idoma’		‘an Idoma person’

The ‘member’ meaning emanates from the metaphor **GROUPS ARE FAMILIES** – children, both boys and girls in this case, are members of the family (i.e. a group) formed by a common progenitor. The cultural evidence for this argument is that people who come from the same ethnic, social, cultural or religious groups often consider themselves brothers and sisters in one extended family.

4.5. Patronym: Daughter of X

The marker **w-án-** is patronymic because it denotes or relates the names of females to fathers or male ancestors. **W-án-** combines with family names to mean ‘daughter of X’ (19).

19a.	w-án	+	àtùkū	→	w-án-àtùkū
	1-child		1.atuku		1-child-1.atuku
	‘child’		‘Atuku’		‘daughter of Atuku’
b.	w-án	+	tìē	→	w-án-tìē
	1-child		1.tie		1-child-1.tie
	‘child’		‘Tie’		‘daughter of Tie’

The argument about the ‘feminine’ meaning associated with ‘patronym’ is substantiated by the fact that the same terms cannot refer to male representatives of the categories, in particular, that they cannot be used as patronymics for men. Men are popularly called by their surnames, without adding any affix or independent markers to the names.

Based on its function to indicate ‘daughter of X’, **w-án-** is also used to introduce a married woman's maiden name after her surname. In this context, the meaning of **w-án-** parallels the originally French word ‘née’, which now occurs in English dictionaries. The ‘daughter of’ meaning associated with **w-án-** derives from the metaphor that **WOMEN ARE CHILDREN**. Culturally, women are considered as tender and delicate as children and should be protected from hazards. This implies that women are to be protected from serious issues such as war or conflict just like children. In the case of war for example, women and child are evacuated, but men are not.

Jurafsky (1996: 542) shows that the feminine interpretation of diminutives is universal. Theoretically therefore, the ‘daughter of X’ interpretation is a more specific interpretation that derives from the blend of the universal ‘feminine’ interpretation of diminutives, and the interpretation of ‘offspring’ (§4.2). Noteworthy is the fact that there are emerging exceptions to Jurafsky’s statement. Aikhenvald (2012: 63) notes that in a number of languages, feminine interpretation is associated with large size, rather than small size. Specifically, she states that: “[i]n a number of languages, large size (and also squat, extended shape) is a correlate of feminine gender. Small size and slender shape are a correlate of masculine gender.”

4.6. Female Member of a Locality

The marker **w-án-** sometimes designates females who originate from localities. The interpretation here is generated compositionally via the combination of **w-án-** and nouns designating localities, as in (20). Although ‘feminine’ (§4.6) and ‘member’ (§4.4) are distinct universal meanings of diminutives, in Tiv, the ‘female’ and the ‘member’ general interpretations of diminutives conflate to derive a more specific ‘female member of a locality’ interpretation, as in (20).

- 20a. **w-án** + **yánděv** → **w-án-yánděv**
 1-child 1.yandev 1-child-1.yandev
 ‘child’ ‘Yandev’ ‘female from Yandev’
- b. **w-án** + **mákúdí** → **w-án-mákúdí**
 1-child 1.makurdi 1-child-makurdi
 ‘child’ ‘Makurdi’ ‘female from Makurdi’

The logical basis for **w-án-** to designate females who originate from localities is that locales in Tivland are named after great ancestors who founded them or originated from such places. The settlement **yánděv**, for example, is named after one of the earliest second-class chiefs in Tivland, **yánděv ámà:bàí**, because he came from and governed the locality. In a wider scenario, this usage of diminutives in Tiv relates to the denotations of diminutives in relation to places, like the familiarity with a particular place denotation in Beja – a North Cushitic language (Vanhove and Ahmed, 2018). The local government area **makurdi** is named after a rich Hausa man who lived in the area and was generally referred to as **mai kudi** ‘mister money’. The rationale of naming locales after influential ancestors leads to the generalization that all localities are named after influential ancestors, and the referents are progenies. The combination of **w-án-** and the name of a locale implies the ‘daughter of’ the ancestor after whom the locale is named. This indicates the relatedness of the ‘female member of X’ and the ‘daughter of X’ (§4.5) interpretations, whereby the former develops from the latter. **W-án-china** in (21) means a woman from ‘china’ based on the assumption that ‘china’ is the name of an ancestor and the referent is a progeny.

21. **w-án** + **ṭjāinà** → **w-án-ṭjāinà**
 1-child 1.china 1-child-1.china
 ‘child’ ‘China’ (a country) ‘a Chinese woman/girl’

Examples such as (21) cannot be analyzed as identical to those in §4.4 because while the former have female gender-specific interpretation, the interpretation associated with the latter (i.e. §4.4 and its examples) makes no reference to a particular gender. The argument about the ‘feminine’ meaning associated with ‘member of a locality’ is substantiated by the fact that the same terms cannot refer to male representatives of the categories, in particular, that they cannot refer to male members of localities. To refer to male members of locales, the term **òr** ‘person’ is added to the names of the locales (22). In concrete terms, **w-án-** is omitted in instances like (22) because they designate ‘male’ instead of female members of a locality.

- 22a. **òr** + **yánděv** → **òr-yánděv**
 1.person 1.yandev 1.person-1.yandev
 ‘person’ ‘Yandev’ ‘Yandev man’
- b. **òr** + **mákúdí** → **òr-mákúdí**
 1.person 1.makurdi 1.person-1.makurdi
 ‘person’ ‘Makurdi’ ‘Makurdi man’

The interpretation of ‘female member of a locality’ is mapped from the ‘daughter of’ meaning associated with **w-án-** using the metaphor **LOCALES ARE PROGENITORS**. The metaphor means that people living in a particular area are descendants of an ancestor, who is immortalized by the name of the locality. Therefore, using ‘child’ to mean a woman from a locale is a sine qua non for indicating a daughter-progenitor (see §4.2) bound to the ancestor.

4.7. Imitation

The marker **w-án-** also designates a person who is neither an actual member of a social, cultural or religious group (§4.4), but displays attributes that are parallel or similar to the members of these groups. An **ígēdē** person who displays the qualities of an **ídómà** or Tiv person would be referred to as **w-án-dómà** (23a) or **w-án-tiv** (23b).

- 23a. **w-án** + **ídómà** → **w-án-dómà**
 1-child 1.idoma 1-child-1.idoma
 ‘child’ ‘Idoma’ (an ethnic group) ‘An Idoma person
 or a person who behaves like an Idoma’

b.	w-án	+	tív	→	w-án-tív
	1-child		tív		1-child-1.Tiv
	'child'		'Tiv' (an ethnic group)		'a Tiv person or a person who behaves like a Tiv'

The interpretation of 'typical appearance or character of' associated with **w-án-** is a generalization from the 'member of a social, cultural, or religious group' (§4.4) and 'female member of a locality' (§4.6) meanings. The rationale here is, it is assumed, that every group has its code of conduct and members of the group behave according to these stipulations. Therefore, anyone who displays such traits is approximated to a member of the group. All these fits in nicely with the prior observation that diminutives in African language develop social/respect associations more than elsewhere in the world (Ponsonnet 2018).

4.8. Small type

There are also instances in Tiv where the presence of **w-án-** on morphemes yields the interpretation of 'small type' (24). Nikitina (2018: 5) describes 'small type' interpretation as "conventionalization of diminutives as labels for entire ontological kinds of entities, not merely individuals with deviating physical size". Compared to 'small size' interpretation, the instances of 'small type' are very rare in Tiv.

24. **w-án-kū** 'Tenebrionid beetle'

Although lexicalized, the noun 'Tenebrionid beetle' might be analysed as derived from a reduced form of **kùlú:** 'tortoise' forms a construction that (originally) means a small type of 'tortoise'⁷. As a lexicalized concept, **w-án-kú** refers to an entire ontological kind of 'beetle', rather than a 'small size' of 'beetle'. This obviously indicates that irrelevance of size in this case. This interpretation develops from the 'small size' interpretation (Nikitina, 2018: 5; Jurafsky, 1996: 542), via the lexicalization⁸ of the diminutives.

4.9. Partitive

The concept **w-án-** occurs with mass nouns to mean a selected unit from an articulated mass. In this regard, **w-án-** expresses measurement and partitioning of (un)bounded mass nouns like 'land' and 'flour' in (25).

25a.	í-jǎ	→	w-án-jǎ
	10-land:10		1-child-10.land
	'land'		'a delineated part of land'
b.	ín-wè-ín	→	w-án-wè
	6a-flour-6a		1-child-6a.flour
	'flour'		'a delineated quantity of flour'

The partitive interpretation of **w-án-** is another metaphoric shift from the PERSON feature of 'child' to QUALITY, which results from the evaluation of the 'child' as one of the members of the family unit (i.e. a whole) to which it belongs. The interpretation is derived from the meaning 'small' via Lambda-abstraction. This means that one arrives at the conclusion that **w-án-jǎ** means 'delineated part of the land' when s/he compares the part designated as **w-án-jǎ** to the total amount or quantity of land involved, for example.

4.10. Attenuation

The marker **w-án-** is used to mark low intensity, short duration and little progress. Approximations show that a value or quantity is nearly but not exactly complete or correct. In this regard, semantic approximations or hedges on gradable adjectives (26a), nouns (26b) and verbs that attribute a property (26c) are subsumed under attenuation.

⁷ The names of most beetles cannot be analysed as being derived in the same way. Most beetles are named based on certain striking physical and behavioural properties they exude. For example, weevil is called **nò:** which actually means 'elephant', due to its long snout.

⁸ Contrary to the submission of this paper and Nikitina (2018: 5), Jurafsky (1996: 542) argues that 'small type' develop from 'small size' via inference.

- 26a. **niǎn** ‘red’ → **w-án-niǎn** ‘reddish’
ír ‘black’ → **w-án-ír** ‘blackish’
púpǔ: ‘white’ → **w-án-púpǔ:** ‘whitish’
b. **í-tǎvé:** ‘worthless’ → **w-án-tǎvé:** ‘worthless (to some extent)’
ì-tǎn ‘poverty’ → **w-án-tǎn** ‘poverty (to some extent)’
c. **vèsē-n** ‘to be growing’ → **w-án- vèsē-n** ‘older (to some extent)’

The approximation meaning associated with **w-án-** is also attained via the Lambda-abstraction semantic change mechanism. With this mechanism, the value of a property, manner of an activity or entity is judged as ‘nearly but not complete’ when there is a measure of ‘completeness’. The property **niǎn**, ‘red’, for example is judged as complete only when the colour reaches an acceptably high concentration level. Hence, the colours **niǎn**, ‘red’, **ír**, ‘black’ and **púpǔ:**, ‘white’ are first order predicates, while **w-án-niǎn** ‘reddish’, **w-án-ír** ‘blackish’ and **w-án-púpǔ:** ‘whitish’ are second order predicates whose values do not equate the first order predicates. In fact, this interpretation could also be analysed as another metaphoric shift from the PERSON feature of ‘child’ to QUALITY, which results from the physical evaluation of the ‘child’ as not being completely developed to the extent of its parents.

4.11. Young

The meaning ‘young’ is an important feature of ‘child’, which is described in some African languages such as Ewe (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer, 1991) and southern Mande languages (Nikitina, 2018), as well as Akan (Appah and Amfo, 2011: 90). The meaning ‘young’ could only arise if the diminutive is added to a word denoting a living thing. The meaning ‘offspring’ (§4.2) is closely related to the meaning ‘young’, given that all ‘offspring’ are young. The feature ‘young’ is also “closely related to the meaning small as well as the source of the diminutive – ‘child’” (Appah and Amfo, 2011: 90). **W-án-** combines with concepts such as ‘woman’ and ‘male/man’, which designate matured human beings, to derive the concepts for young female (27a) and male (27b).

- 27a. **w-án** + **k<w>āsē** → **w-án-k<w>āsē**
1-child 1.woman<1> 1-child-1.woman<1>
‘child’ ‘woman’ ‘girl’
b. **w-án** + **nôm-sū** → **w-án-nôm-sū**
1-child 1.male-HUM 1-child-1.male-HUM
‘child’ ‘male human’ ‘small male human’ = ‘boy’

The use of **w-án-** ‘child’ to mean ‘young’ is not limited to human beings, but also covers other living beings such as birds and animals. The marker **w-án-** combines with names or animals to mean ‘young’ beings of such animals (28).

- 28a. **ì-kʷěy** → **w-án-kʷěy**
9-fowl 1-child-9.fowl
‘fowl’ ‘chick’
b. **ì-vʷō** → **w-án-vʷō**
9-goat 1-child-9.goat
‘goat’ ‘kid of a goat’

The exploitation of ‘child’ to mean ‘young living beings’ is widely spread among Niger-Congo languages such as Ewe (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer, 1991: 79, 81), Bali Mungaka (Kießling, 2013: 53), Mmen (Möller 2012: 14), Ngamambo (Achiri-Taboh, 2014: 61) and Tura (Nikitina, 2018: 9-10). The ‘young’ feature is further exploited in these languages to build other semantic and pragmatic interpretations, which are associated with ‘child’. In Tiv, for example, ‘young’ is exploited to derive other interpretations such as ‘inexperience/apprentice’ (§5.1). The ‘inexperience/apprentice’ interpretation is arrived at as a result of combining the ‘young’ meaning with some specific contextual information, as explained in §5.1.

5. The Pragmatic Interpretations of W-án

Apart from denotative meanings, diminutives are universally associated with predictable connotative meanings embedded in speech acts and situations. This implies that the use of diminutives is not only to denote ‘small’ entities, but to also provide positive and/or negative pragmatic evaluations (Booji, 2007: 16; Schneider, 2003: 10-15). Submissions that diminutive markers are associated with connotative interpretation, at least, date as far back as the 19th century. Coleridge (1857: 109-110) for example, observes that the diminutive –LET in English could lead to an inference of politeness and contempt when it occurs with what he calls “frequentative verbs”. The connotative meanings derive from the interaction of the attested denotative meanings (and sometimes other connotative meanings) with extra-linguistic variables such as the setting, the relationship and attitude of the people involved (friends/non-friends), age, and status as well as stylistic and sociolinguistic constraints governing language use in societies. The pragmatics of diminutives depend on how inherently informal or formal a speech situation is (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi, 1994: 325). Informal situations greatly favor the use of diminutives while formal situations restrict or block the use of diminutives. This section explores the connotative meanings associated with the marker **w-án-**, and shows that one pragmatic interpretation can combine with specific contextual information to derive a new pragmatic interpretation.

5.1. Inexperience or apprentice

When **w-án-** ‘child’ combines with names of vocations and training institutions, the newly modified word form would refer to someone who is still undergoing formation or a training process. Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer (1991) refers to this category as ‘inexperience/apprentice’, which refers to people who are still undergoing a formation process via learning, as in (29).

29a.	fádá	→	w-án-fādā
	1.priest		1-child-1.priest
	‘priest’		‘seminarian’
b.	kílíkí	→	w-án-ākílíkí
	‘junior’		1-child-junior
			‘apprentice/attendant’

The ‘inexperience/apprentice’ interpretation is a result of combining the ‘young’ meaning with some specific contextual information such as time. It is believed that experience comes with time. Although the ‘inexperience/apprentice’ interpretation is arrived at as a result of combining the ‘young’ meaning with some specific contextual information (§4.11), the link between the ‘young’ interpretation associated with **w-án-** and ‘inexperience/apprentice’ is significantly motivated by the metaphor TIME/AGE IS EXPERIENCE. People normally engage in more practical contact with facts or events over time, and maturity comes with age/time. Children are people who have existed for a short time and may not have come into as much practical or observational contact with facts and events as the adult has. Consequently, a learner who is yet to understand the nuances of an aspect is a ‘child’ in that regard. The link between the ‘young’ and ‘inexperience/apprentice’ interpretations support the argument in §4.11 that ‘young’ is an important feature of ‘child’, and one from which other interpretations are mapped.

5.2. Contempt

The use of the marker **w-án-** could be interpreted as expressing a critical, mocking and/or disrespectful attitude in certain extra-linguistic contexts, even when humor is involved. This interpretation is common with terms for human (Nikitina, 2018: 10). The ‘contempt’ interpretation of **w-án-** is a negative interpretation that results from the clash between the ‘non-seriousness’ interpretation of **w-án-** and formal extra-linguistic factors. One of such factors is the age of the speaker in comparison to the listener. Tiv speakers often weaken the illocutionary force surrounding themselves and their properties to yield ‘modesty, politeness and honorification’ interpretation (§5.6). However, the weakening of the illocutionary force surrounding people (presumed to be) of a higher class or their properties,

like knowledge (30), yields a ‘contempt’ interpretation. The interpretation is basically that the speaker is self-assertive, disregarding the knowledge status and authority of the referent.

30. **w-án-m-fē** **w-ènē** **kùmà-nē**
 1-child-1-knew 1-your.PL enough-2SG.PL
 ‘your little knowledge is enough for you’

Also, **w-án-** is associated with a ‘jocular’ interpretation (§5.4). Culturally, irrespective of their physical sizes, people of a higher class, like elders, are used for ‘jocular’ effects due to their wealth of knowledge and wisdom gathered from experience. The use of elders for ‘jocular’ invites the implicature of contempt, as in (31) where **w-án-k<w>āsē** ‘small woman’ is used by a younger or subordinate person to describe, qualify or refer to an elder or superior in the utterance. This is due to the association of ‘jocularity’ with ‘nonserious’ (§5.3).

31. **w-án-k<w>āsē** **nè** **hèn** **y-ê** **ûn**
 1-child-woman<1> this think 3.SG-COMPL 3.SG.RC
 hèmbà ā-gé:
 pass 6-power
 ‘this small woman thinks that she is more powerful’

Contrastively therefore, the use of diminutives with the names and properties of peers to create humour is less restrictive; while the use of diminutives with names of elders to create humour is highly restricted, even when the elder in question is a parent of the speaker. This implies that, (in)formality and attitudes and emotions such as familiarity are gradable and constrained when it comes to the use of diminutives. While younger people are restricted from using diminutives to describe, qualify and/or refer to the older ones, the older people are licensed to use a diminutive to describe or qualify a young familiar person. From the foregoing, the context-dependent ‘contempt’ interpretation maps from the ‘nonserious’ interpretation of diminutives via the inference that ‘small is nonserious’, as it also occurs in southern Mande (Nikitina, 2018: 10), for example.

5.3. Nonserious

The diminutive **w-án-** often motivates the implicature of pettiness, insignificance and/or triviality, when they occur on noun stems. Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994) describe this feature as ‘nonseriousness’. The marker **w-án-** is used on abstract nouns like **ìliàm**, ‘talk’ (32a) and **tíndì**, ‘law’ (32b) to mean that the referent is insignificant, less potent or intensive, and weak.

- 32a. **w-án** + **ì-liàm** → **w-án-liàm**
 1-child 9-talk 1-child-9.talk
 ‘child’ ‘talk’ ‘petty talk’
- b. **w-án** + **tíndì** → **w-án-tíndì**
 1-child 1.law 1-child-1.law
 ‘child’ ‘law’ ‘petty law’

The use of **w-án-** to mean ‘pettiness/triviality’ is mapped from the ‘small’ interpretation associated with **w-án-**, ‘child’ through the interaction of generalization mechanism of semantic change as well as metaphor. Generally, the Tiv people tend to regard whatever is ‘small’ as ‘non-serious’ insignificant and probably less potent. Hence, via the metaphor of VALUE IS SIZE, the ‘non-serious’ interpretation develops from the ‘small’ interpretation of diminutives. The ‘nonserious’ interpretation serves as a development basis for other pragmatic interpretations such as, ‘modesty, honourification/politeness’ (§5.6), ‘ludic/jocular’ (§5.4) interpretations as well as ‘contempt/derogation’ (§5.2), as discussed in the sections that analyze these interpretations individually. Actually, Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi (1994: 105-106) consider ‘nonseriousness’ as a core pragmatic interpretation upon which other interpretations are built.

5.4. Jocularity

The jocular effects are one of the reasons why speakers use the diminutive maker. The diminutive is used to invoke amusement/humour, by adding it to noun stems to express

foolish, unreasonable, or out of place concepts and entities. In this regard, a speaker who tells a joke on others might use the diminutive **w-án-**. For example:

33. **w-án-v^yō** **fūn ná** **d̥z̥iɔd̥z̥iɔ** **y-ê**
 1-child-9.goat the give 1.faith 3.SG-COMPL
àpàm ā yímà ûn
 1.lion 1.SM save 3.SG.CR
 ‘the small goat believed that a lion will save it’

Example (33) is a sentence, which is extracted from a folktale about a goat which ran away from an elephant into a lion’s den because the elephant appeared too big. The goat hoped that the lion would save it from the elephant. Logically, this is a foolish and unreasonable situation. Pragmatically, the narrator used **w-án-** to qualify **v^yō** ‘goat’ so as to create humour and make the folktale amusing in a foolish and unreasonable situation.

Also, while referring to an agemate or a younger person, when a speaker makes an utterance like (34) the diminutive use presents the referent as ‘nonserious’ (§5.3) and therefore ‘jocular’. However, when the referent is older than the speaker, the interpretation becomes ‘contempt and derogation’ (§4.2).

34. **w-án-òr** **nē** **kpà vā**
 1-child-1.person this also come
 ‘this small man also came’

Therefore, the ‘jocularity’ interpretation is mapped from the ‘pettiness/triviality’ interpretation associated with the diminutive through the semantic change mechanism of Metaphor. In this case, the metaphor is HUMOR IS NONSERIOUS, given that humour is an informal aspect of life, which is not meant to be harmful and does not merit a deep reflection.

5.5. Affection

The marker **w-án-** also denotes emotions such as endearment, love, and close emotional proximity, pity and sympathy, when it is combined with other lexical items. There are different ways of showing ‘affection’. By adding **w-án-** to: (i) actual given names of people shows ‘affection’ (35a); or (ii) animate or inanimate lexical items to generate hypocorisms like nicknames based on the characteristic of the referent (35b). Inherently, hypocorisms indicate a close emotional proximity between the user and bearer. The implication is that diminutive markers often index proximity and intimacy (Ponsonnet, 2018: 23-4; Fradin, 2003: 56; Mattisoff, 1991: 333; Wierzbicka, 1984).

- 35a. **sēsùɔ** → **w-án-sēsùɔ**
 ‘**Sesugh**’ (name of a person) 1-child-**Sesugh**
 ‘little **Sesugh**’
- b. **í-tǎ-y** → **w-án-tǎ**
 7-tilapia-7 1-child-7.tilapia
 ‘tilapia’ ‘small/young tilapia’

The pity and sympathy emotional denotation of the marker **w-án-** manifest in situations conceptualized as tragedy or misfortune, such as divorce/separation, illness, accident, death. In (36a), instead of denoting the ‘woman’ as small, **w-án-** highlights the ‘woman’ as the sufferer of the misfortune of ‘death’. On the part of the speaker, (36a) indicates that s/he is sympathetic, in contrast to (36b) which is interpreted as lacking the notion of sympathy.

- 36a. **w-án-k<w>āsē** **fūn** **kpé**
 1-child-1.woman<1> DEF die
 ‘the poor woman died’
- b. **k<w>āsē** **fūn** **kpé**
 1.woman<1> DEF die
 ‘the woman died’

It is important to mention that the ‘poor’ sense in which **w-án-** is used is limited to highlighting pity, sympathy, and the sufferer of misfortune. To highlight the attribute of having few or no possessions, the noun **itfàn** ~ **átsán** ‘poverty/s’ is used, followed by the recipient of the attribute, in an N1 of N2 associative construction.

5.6. Modesty, Politeness/Honorification

Modesty, politeness and/or honorification is a context-specific pragmatic hedge associated with **w-án-**. Diminutive markers might be used to reflect different degrees of politeness and positions in the social hierarchy of the interlocutors (Booji, 2007: 224). In discourse, many speakers use the marker **w-án-** to deliberately reduce, underestimate or downgrade the worth or importance of themselves, their possessions, commitments, propositional contents and/or obligations as a way to avoid being perceived as being boastful or ostentatious, and to show high respect and great esteem to the people around. By so doing, the illocutionary force surrounding the referent is weakened. Consider the statement in (37) made to the community of Tiv elders by a highly-educated young man, who was campaigning for a political position:

37. **w-án-m-fē** **w-ǎm** **kùmà-m̄**
 1-child-1-know.PST 1-my enough-1SG
 ‘my little knowledge is enough for me’

Obviously, the education and literacy level of the youth supersedes that of the village elders who were his audience in (37). In spite of his education and literacy, he uses **w-án-** to weaken the illocutionary force surrounding his knowledge and appear humble before the uneducated and illiterate elders through self-belittlement. On the other hand, the elders see the speaker as not being self-assertive. In other words, the elders feel the knowledge, status and authority, which they have acquired over time is acknowledged and held in higher esteem – honorification. Hence, the ‘modesty, polite and honorification’ interpretation is mapped from ‘nonserious, petty and trivial’ either via the semantic change mechanism of inference from the speech situation, or the metaphor INSIGNIFICANCE IS MODESTY.

6. The Radial Category Model for the Semantic and Pragmatic Interpretations of **W-án-**

This section presents a unified structure for the semantic (§4.0) and pragmatic (§5.0) interpretations associated with **w-án-**, using the radial category model. A radial category is a unified structure with one or more core meanings from which other interpretations are derived through different semantic extension mechanisms (Booji, 2007: 223). The extensions from one interpretation to another are explained with the four semantic change mechanisms – metaphor, inference, Lambda-abstraction and generalization – briefly defined in §1. Figure 1 contains the proposed structure for the interpretations of the diminutive in Tiv. The schema consists of nodes and links. The nodes contain the categories of interpretations while the links represent the mechanisms motivating the change from one interpretation to another. In Figure 1, metaphoric links bear the label “M”; inference links bear the label “I”; the Lambda-abstraction links bear the label “L”; the generalization links bear the label “G”, and the lexicalization link bears the label “Lx”.

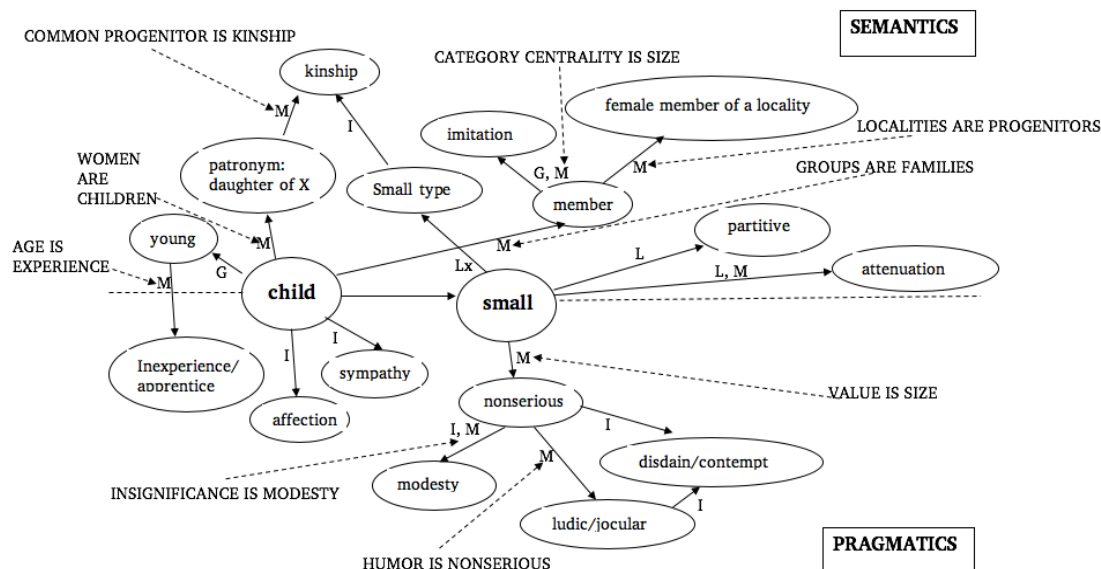


Figure 1: The proposed structure for the interpretations of the diminutive in Tiv

In Figure 1, quite a number of metaphors play an important role in explaining the motivations for different interpretations. The metaphor COMMON PROGENITOR IS KINSHIP motivates the linkage between the interpretation ‘kinship’ and the interpretation ‘patronymic: daughter of X’. The metaphor GROUPS ARE FAMILIES motivates the linkage between ‘child’ and the ‘member’ interpretation. The metaphor WOMEN ARE CHILDREN motivates the linkage between ‘child’ and ‘patronymic: daughter of X’. The metaphor VALUE IS SIZE motivates the link between ‘small’ and ‘non-serious’. The metaphor HUMOR IS NONSERIOUS motivates the linkage between the ‘nonserious’ interpretation and the ‘jocular’ interpretation. The Metaphor INSIGNIFICANCE IS MODESTY could motivate the link between ‘nonserious’ and ‘modesty, politeness, and honorification’. Lastly, the metaphor TIME/AGE IS EXPERIENCE motivates the link between ‘young’ and ‘inexperience/apprentice’ interpretation categories.

The interpretations in Tiv mostly conform to the generalizations proposed by Jurafsky. However, they differ from them in some aspects. Jurafsky (1996: 542) identifies ‘child’, ‘small’ and ‘female’ as absolute fundamental categories from which semantic and pragmatic meaning associated with diminutives are generally mapped. These senses are described as absolute because they do not consist of different interpretations. Tiv has only two of the three basic senses: ‘child’ and ‘small’. The diminutive interpretation ‘female’ does not occur in Tiv as an independent category (see §4.0 and Figure 1). Instead, apart from its existence in ‘patronym: daughter of X’ (§4.5), the ‘female’ interpretation exists in combination with ‘member’ to derive a more specific interpretation ‘female member of a locality’ (§4.6). This implies that some of the generalizations proposed by Jurafsky are not absolute in individual languages. A similar combination of distinct interpretations to form more specific meaning is also reported for (another Niger-Congo language,) Akan (Appah and Amfo, 2011).

7. Conclusion

The basic goal of this study was to examine the interpretations associated with the diminutive in Tiv. The diminutive in Tiv reveals an interesting interaction between the morphology, phonology, semantics and syntax interfaces and the lexicon. Similar to many languages, the diminutive markers in Tiv originate the noun ‘child’, *w-án-*, which has the phonological variant *án-*. None of these markers have plural value, but they morphologically motivate the distinction two diminutive structures Tiv, whose usage depend on certain semantic principles. Synchronically, in spite of their morphological statuses, the diminutive markers are reinterpreted and equated to prefixes, and the compositions which they head still exhibit similarities to associative constructions. On the main focus of the paper is to work out a model of diminutives provides a systematic and organized way of identification and

mapping of the different interpretations associated with diminutives in the language. Beyond aligning with the view that semantic interpretations expand to other semantic interpretations, the study has shown that the proposed universal pragmatic interpretations could also further expand to other modifiable pragmatic interpretations resulting from extralinguistic contexts, in individual languages.

Abbreviations

DIM = Diminutive, ENC = Enclitic, HUM = human, NEG = Negative marker, PL = plural, PTCP = Participial maker, PST = Past Tense marker, CR = Continuous reference, SG = singular, SM = Subject marker.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, R.C. (1940). *The Tiv dictionary*. London: Crown Agents for the colonies
- Aikhenvald, A. (2012). *Round Women and Long Men: Shape, Size, and the Meanings of Gender in New Guinea and Beyond*. *Anthropological Linguistics* 54(1). 33–86.
- Achiri-Taboh, B. (2014). *The Ngamambo Noun Class System: Concord and prefixhood*. *JWAL* XLI.2: 43-68.
- Agbetsoamedo, Y. and Agbedor, P. K. (2015). Ewe. In Nicola Grandi & Livia Körtvélyessy (eds.), *Edinburgh handbook of evaluative morphology*, 472 - 479. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Agbetsoamedo, Y. and Di Garbo, F. (2015). Selee. In Nicola Grandi and Livia Körtvélyessy (eds.) *Edinburgh Handbook of Evaluative Morphology*, 487–495. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Akumbu, P. W. & Kießling, R. (2020). *The expression of diminutivity in Central Ring Grassfields Bantu*. *Afrika und Übersee* 93.257–280.
- Amfo, N.A. and Appah, C. K. I. (2019). *Lexicalization of Akan Diminutives: form, meaning and Motivation*. *Linguistik Online*, 94(1), 3–18.
- Angitso, M.T., (2022). *Towards an understanding of noun forms as syntactic relation markers in Bantoid*. Presented at the First Conference on Bantoid Languages and Linguistics, Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 23-25 March, 2022. DOI 10.17605/OSF.IO/MRTAS
- Angitso, M.T., (2020). A descriptive study of the Tiv nominal morphology. unpublished PhD Thesis. Hamburg: Universität Hamburg.
- Angitso, M. T., (fc). The Enclitic in Tiv associative constructions and prepositional phrases.
- Appah, C. K. I and Amfo, N.A. (2011). *The morphopragmatics of the diminutive morpheme (-ba/-wa) in Akan*. *Lexis* 6, 85-103.
- Arnott, D. W. (1967). Some reflections on the Content of Individual Classes in Fula and Tiv. In M.G Manasse (ed.) *La Classification nominale dans les langues negro-africaines*. 45-74. Paris (Edition du Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique)
- Bohannan, L. and Bohannan, P. (1953). *The Tiv of Central Nigeria: Western Africa*. Routledge, New York
- Bauer, L. (2004). The function of word-formation and the inflection-derivation distinction. In: Henk Aertsen, Mike Hannay & Rod Lyall (eds), *Words in their Places. A Festschrift for J. Lachlan Mackenzie*, Pp. 283-292. Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit.
- Booij, G. (2007). *The grammar of words: An introduction to morphology*. Oxford University Press.
- Cassetta, P. and Cassetta, L. (1994). *The Ugare Noun Class System*. Unpublished Manuscript. Accessible on: <http://www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo/Bantoid/Tivoid/Ugare/Ugare%20noun%20classes.pdf>
- Claudi, U. and Heine, B. (1986). *On the metaphorical base of grammar*. *Studies in Language*. 10: 297–335
- Coleridge, H. (1857). *On diminutives in 'LET'*. *Transactions of the Philological Society*. 93-115.
- Dressler, W. U & Merlini Barbaresi, L. (1994). *Morphopragmatics. Diminutives and intensifiers in Italian, German and other languages*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Dzurgba, A. (2007). *Aspects of Tiv Culture*. John Archers Publishers Limited, Ibadan.
- Fradin, B. (2003). *Le traitement de la suffixation en -et*. *Langages* 37(152). 51–77. Geeraerts, D. 2006. A rough guide to cognitive linguistics. In Dirk Geeraerts (ed.) *Cognitive linguistics. Basic readings*, 1-28. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Grandi, N. and Körtvélyessy, L. (2015). Introduction: Why evaluative morphology. In Nicola Grandi & Livia Körtvélyessy (eds.), *Edinburgh handbook of evaluative morphology*, 3–20. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Gregerson, K. (1984). *Pharynx symbolism and Rengao phonology*. *Lingua* 62.209-38.
- Gundu, G. A. and Jockers, H. (1985). *Tiv Bibliography*. Makurdi: The Government printer.
- Haspelmath, M. (1996). Word-class-changing inflection and morphological theory. In: Geert Booij & Jaap van Marle (eds.) *Yearbook of Morphology 1995*, Pp. 43–66. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Heine, B., Claudi, U. and Hünnemeyer, F. (1991). *Grammaticalization: Conceptual framework*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Heine, B. (1997). *Cognitive Foundations of Grammar*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press
- Hewby, W. (1909). *Notes on the Munshi*. Jos Museum. Palmer papers Ms. No. 116.

- Jockers, H., (1992). Linguistics Studies on Tiv - Before, by, and after R.C. Abraham. In: *Papers in Honour of R.C. Abraham (1890-1963)*, Philip J. Jaggard and Michael Mann (eds.), pp. 163– 173. London: School of oriental and African Studies.
- Jockers, H. (1991). *Studien zur sprache der Tiv in Nigeria*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Jurafsky, D. (1996). *Universal Tendencies in the Semantics of the Diminutive*. *Language*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 533-578
- Karshima, D. T. (2013). *New Tiv-English Dictionary*. Doo-Ter publications, Makurdi.
- Kießling, R. (2013). On the Origin of Niger-Congo nominal classification. In Kikusawa, R. and Reid, L. A. (eds.) *Selected papers from the 20th International Conference on historical Linguistics*, Osaka, 25-30 July, 43-65. John Benjamins Publication company.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Malherbe, W.A. (1933). *Tiv-English dictionary*. Lagos: The Government Printer.
- Margalitadze, T. and Meladze, G. (2016). Importance of the Issue of Partial Equivalence for Bilingual Lexicography and Language Teaching. In: Margalitadze, T. and G. Meladze (Eds.), *Proceedings of the XVII EURALEX International Congress: Lexicography and Linguistic Diversity*, 6–10 September, 2016, Tbilisi, Georgia: 787-797. Tbilisi: Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University.
- Matisoff, J. A. (1991). *The mother of all morphemes. Augmentatives and diminutives in areal and universal perspective*. Papers from the first annual meeting of the Southeast Asian Linguistic Society, Tempe, 293–349.
- Meeussen, A.E. (1967). Bantu grammatical reconstructions. *Africana Linguistica* 3, 79–121.
- Möller, M. (2012). *The noun and verb in Mmem a Center Ring Grassfields Bantu language*. SIL B.P. 1299, Yaoundé Cameroon.
- Nikitina, T. (2018). *Diminutives derived from terms for children: Comparative evidence from Southeastern Mande*. *Linguistics* 57(1): 1-28.
- Ponsonnet, M. (2018). A preliminary typology of emotional connotations in morphological diminutives and augmentatives. (Publication version) in Ponsonnet M. & Vuillemet, M. (eds.) *Morphology and emotions across languages*, Special issue of *Studies in Language* 42:1, 17-50.
- Schneider, K. P. (2003). *Diminutives in English*. Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- Terpstra, G. (1968). *A Tiv grammar*. S.U.M Mkar
- Vanhove, M. and Ahmed, M. H. (2018). Diminutives and augmentatives in Beja (North- Cushitic). Ponsonnet M. & Vuillemet, M. (eds.) *Morphology and emotions across world's languages*, Special issue of *Studies in Language* 42 (1), 51-80.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1984). *Diminutives and depreciatives: Semantic representation for derivational categories*. *Quaderni di Semantica* 5.123-30.