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Morphological Classes and Genders in Dijim

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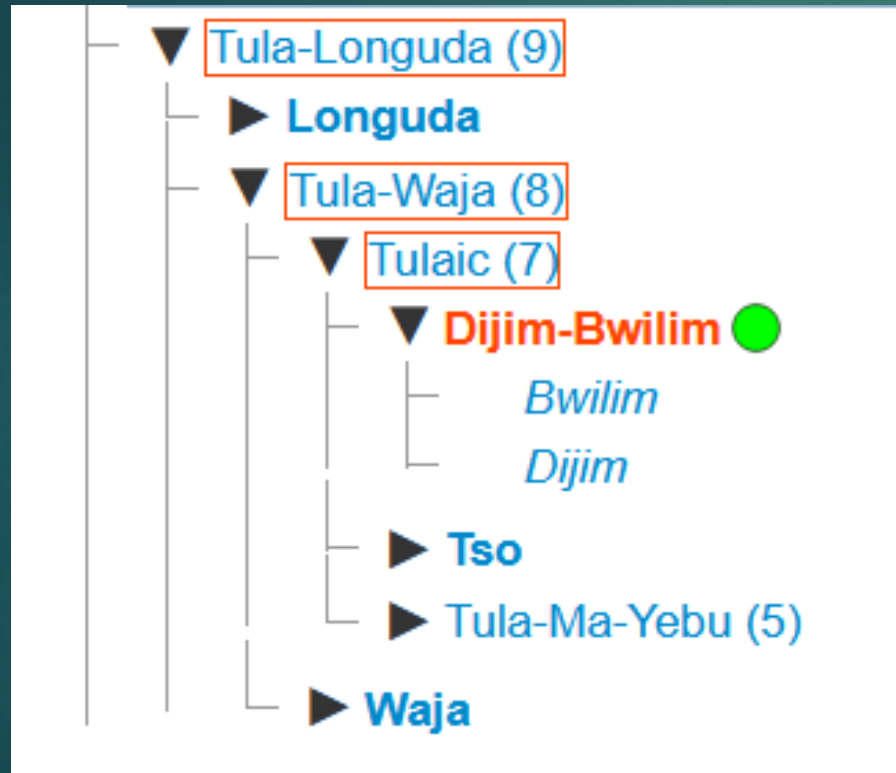


Overview

- ▶ Introduction
 - ▶ Classification
 - ▶ Location
 - ▶ Previous research on Dijim
- ▶ Dijim noun class system
 - ▶ Noun structure
 - ▶ Morphological classes
 - ▶ Gender system

Classification

- ▶ Dijim is a Niger-Congo language of the Tula-Waja group:

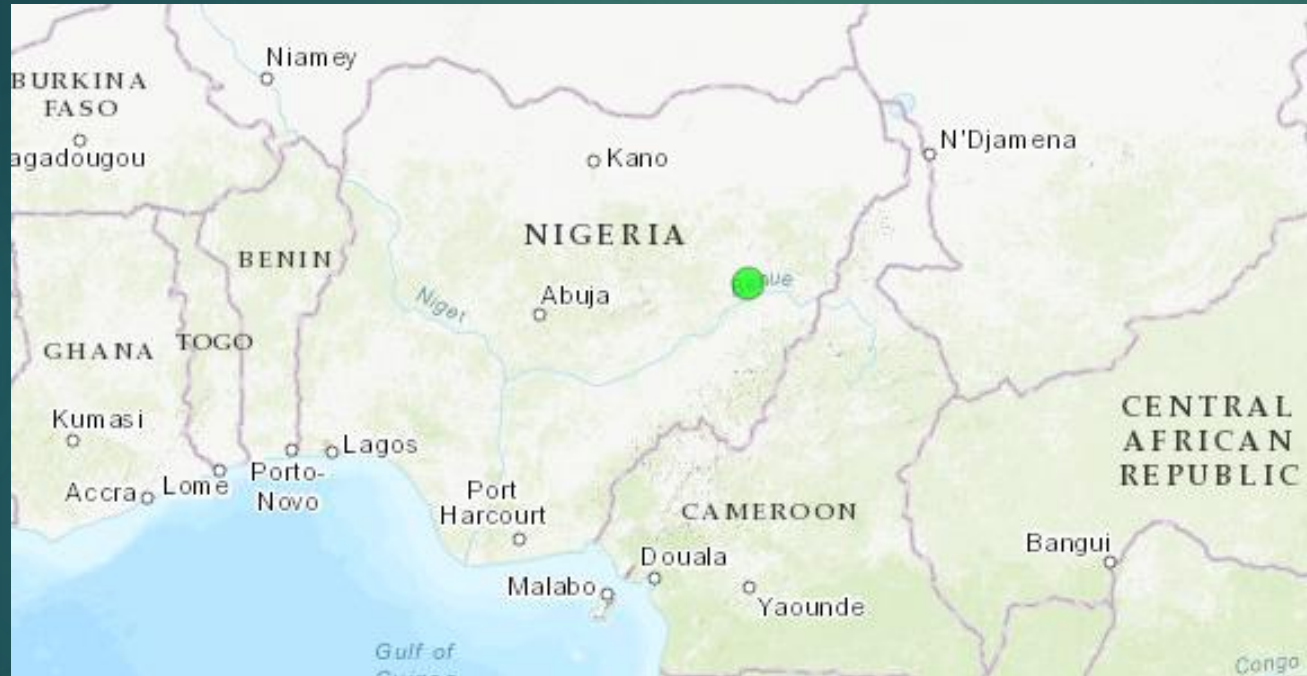


- The position of Tula-Waja as a language family is not yet clear.
- Most of the languages are underdescribed.
- AdaGram (Van de Velde & Idiatov) : grammar and documentation of Adamawa languages around the Benue River Valley.

Glottolog 4.6 (based on Kleinewillinghöfer 2014)

Location

- ▶ Dijim is spoken around the Benue River Valley on the border of Gombe and Adamawa states in the north-east of Nigeria.



Dijim is spoken in the following villages:

- Mwana (Tari) – Adamawa State
- Cham (Kindiyo) – Gombe State
- Mona (Bwilim) – Gombe State



Previous research on the language

Very little was known about the language before I began my research:

- ▶ A couple of dozen of words of the language cited by Jungraithmayr (1968-1969)
- ▶ Kleinewillinghöfer (2014) collected a list of 18 words on which he based his classification of Dijim as a Tula-Waja language.
- ▶ In reconstructing the gender system of Tula-Waja, Elstermann (2021) mentioned some examples from Dijim.
 - ▶ Based on secondary data

The noun class system of Dijim

In Dijim nominal classification, I adopted a synchronic approach which distinguishes morphological classes from noun classes (Idiatov & Van de Velde 2017 ; Corbett 1991).

- ▶ Morphological classes in Dijim are defined by sets of nouns that have the same singular-plural marking.
- ▶ Grammatical genders are defined by sets of nouns that trigger the same agreement pattern.

Noun Structure

A noun can be made up of:

- ▶ Root + suffix

kùbà + r = kùbàr ‘chin’

A more complex noun can be made up of:

- ▶ Root + suffix + AM + root + suffix + suffix

jǐi + r + da + dú + r + ɛn = jìrdàdúróń ‘hair’

hair SUFX AM head SUFX SUFX

Morphological classes (MC)

Morphological classes in Dijim are defined by sets of nouns that have the same singular-plural marking

- ▶ Morphological classes are indicated by suffixes.
 - ▶ Either marked in the singular, plural, both.
 - ▶ There are cases of zero realisations of the MC in the singular
 - ▶ Some MC can mark both singulars and plurals
- ▶ Functions:
 - ▶ Number marking
 - ▶ Derivational suffixes
- ▶ In addition, Dijim employs stem alternation in marking number.

Morphological classes

- ▶ In the next 6 slides, I will give examples of all MC in Dijim, which will be subsequently followed by the summary of all the MC.

1) Sg/Pl	Examples	Gloss
-ɪ/-bɛ	dígór-î/dígór-bê	‘co-wife(ves)’
-ɪ/-tɛ	kààr-í/kààr-té	‘monkey(ies)’
-ɪ/-nɪ	kùl-ì/kùl-nì	‘wall(s)’
-ɪ/-ə̀m	jìll-ì/jìll-ə̀m	‘boy(s)’
-ə̀r/-tɛ	hòtó-r/hòtó-té	‘hyena(s)’
-ə̀r/-nɪ	gúlúm-ə̀r/gúlúm-nî	‘peanut(s)’
-ə̀r/-ɪ	kúηηó-r/kúηηó-í	‘hut(s)’

Morphological classes

2)		
-aŋ/-tɛ	wìn-àŋ/wìn-tɛ	‘tail(s)’
-aŋ/-ɪ	ɕíímá-ŋ/ɕìímá-í	‘stalk(s)’
-ən/-tɛ	hàtɛr-ən/hàtɛr-tɛ	‘fly chaser(s)’
-əm/-nɪ	ɕàà-m/ɕààm-nǐ	‘guinea corn(s)’

Morphological classes

3)		
SG/PL	Examples	Gloss
-∅/-bɛ	lògór/lògòr-bé	‘widower(s)’
-∅/-tɛ	gwàrà/gwàrà-tè	‘bush duiker’
-∅/-nɪ	hàró/hàró-ní	‘cave(s)’
-∅/-əm	ɲwî/ɲwî-m	‘woman(women)’
-∅/-ər	kêŋ/kéŋŋ-ér	‘side(s)’
-∅/-ɪ	dùŋglà/dùŋglà-ì	‘hatred(s)’
stem alternation	ʈúgô/kàgám	‘friend(s)’

Morphological classes

- ▶ Some of these morphological classes may have been petrified overtime in the singular.
 - ▶ In these cases, they are zero realisations of MC in the singular
 - ▶ Their final consonants of the nouns are phonetically similar to the final consonants of overt MC.
 - ▶ They have the same relationship with genders as cases of overt morphological classes do.

4)		
ɔ̀̀sɔ̀̀n/ɔ̀̀sɔ̀̀n-té	‘dry season(s)’	class K (-aŋ)
ɔ̀̀n/ɔ̀̀n-té	‘penis(es)’	class D (-ən)
sùgùm/sùgùm-nì	‘compound(s)’	class B (-əm)

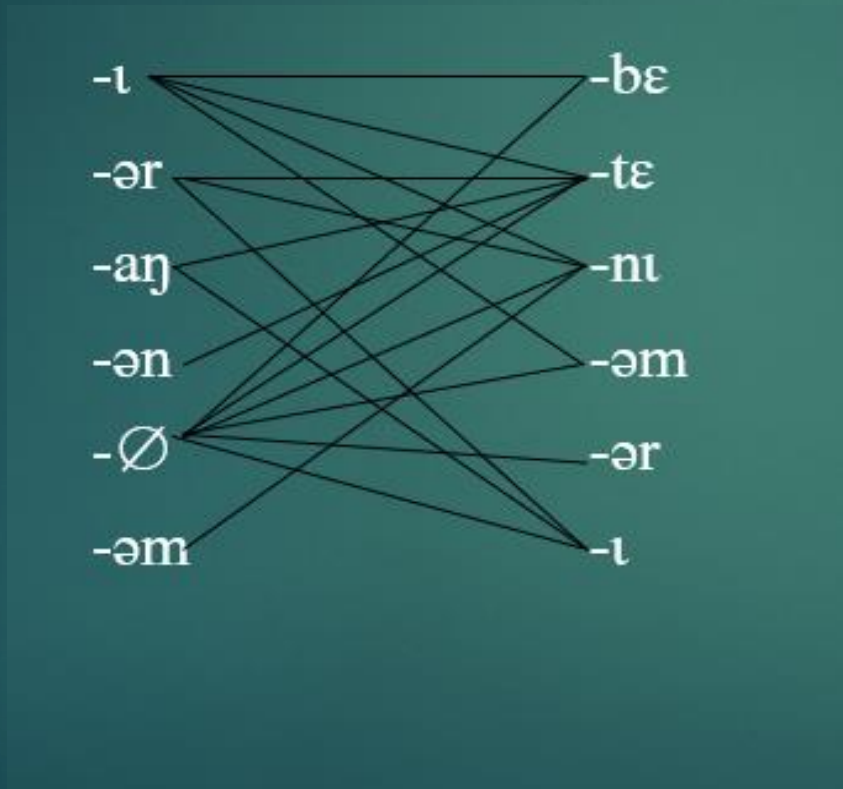
Morphological classes

- ▶ A special kind of nouns exist which are compounds in the singular but take morphological classes in the plural.
- ▶ They occur with the noun *nu* ‘person’ in the singular and the morphological class *-bɛ* in the plural.

5)		
nídô	dù-bé	‘chief(s)’
níkû	kú-bê	‘thief(s)’
nùfwì	fù-bè	‘visitor(s)’

Morphological classes

- ▶ Dijim morphological classes and their pairings can be summarized as follows



Realizations of MC

- ▶ A -VC shaped MC can be realized as -C after the application of vowel elision due to hiatus resolution.

6)	-ər → -r	lèm-ér ‘navel’	kúŋŋó-r ‘hut’
	-əm → -m	jìll-əm ‘boys’	ɕàà-m ‘guinea corn’
	-aŋ → -ŋ	kèr-áŋ ‘fire’	nùnó-ŋ ‘baobab’
	-ən → -n	kwór-én ‘cloud’	búlâ-n ‘buffalo’

Morphological classes and allomorphs

- ▶ Dijim attests ATR vowel harmony.
- ▶ Morphological class markers agree in their ATR value with the root vowels of nouns.
- ▶ ATR harmony occurs with morphological class with –CV and –V shapes.

7)	-tɛ vs -te	lòò-té ‘owls’	kùlòn-té ‘crocodiles’
	-nɪ vs -ni	kùl-nì ‘weeds’	mìm-ní ‘powder’
	-ɪ vs -i	wùr-í ‘woman’	jíŋŋ-í ‘housefly’
	-bɛ vs -be	lògòr-bé ‘widowers’	kú-bê ‘thieves’

Semantics of morphological classes

Morphological classes in Dijim cannot be entirely predicted on the basis of semantics. For instance:

-bε	only humans (PL)
-əm	humans and some nouns such as ‘blood’, ‘beads’, ‘guinea corn’
-aŋ	mostly trees, wood products, animals, body-parts, natural things such as ‘sun’
-ən	mostly wood products, natural things such as cloud, animal
-ər	mostly body-parts, animal, stick, human propensity (lie), stones
-ɿ	
-tε	
-nɿ	body-parts, plants, nature, seeds, unseen beings

Gender system of Dijim

- ▶ 6 grammatical genders which are defined by 6 agreement patterns
- ▶ Each agreement pattern has two markers, a prefix and a suffix. Example (8) demonstrates the agreement patterns of class D, showing the prefix and suffix.
 - 8) gùmbà-r d-è júlúw-ún
 he.goat-D D-LK black-D
 ‘a black he-goat
- ▶ The gender system is represented by means of alphabetic letters K, D, I, W, B and T, which represents the agreement patterns they trigger on linkers, demonstratives, quantifiers, etc

Agreement domain

- ▶ The domain of agreement is the noun phrase.
- ▶ Nominal modifiers occur after the nouns they modify as shown in (8), except for (9) where the nominal modifier *àgì* ‘some’ occurs before its nominal controller.

9) t-àgì wé-té

T-some stone-T

‘some stones’

The following targets agree in gender with their nominal controllers:

- ▶ associative marker (AM) *á/â*
- ▶ linker (LK) *è*
- ▶ numeral *in/kwán* ‘one’ (1)
- ▶ demonstrative (DEM) *é*
- ▶ possessive pronominals
- ▶ relative clause (REL)
- ▶ adjective (ADJ)
- ▶ nominal possessor (PSSR)
- ▶ definite marker (DEF) *h*.

Gender system

- ▶ The consonantal part of agreement markers has the same place of articulation as the consonant of the morphological class marker on the nominal controller.

NC	#	MC	AM	LNK	'1'	DEM	POSS	REL	ADJ	PSSR	DEF
D	sg	-ər, -ən, -un, ∅	d-	d-	d-	d-	-ən	-ən	-ən	-ən	-ən
K	sg	-əŋ, -aŋ, -ŋ∅	k-	k-	k-	k-	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ
B	pl	-m, -əm, -bε	b-	b-	n.a.	b-	?	-əm	-əm	-əm	-əm
T	pl	-tε	t-	t-	n.a.	t-/y-?	-u	-ɿ	-ɿ	-ɿ	-ɿ
I	pl	-nɿ	?	ɿ-	n.a.	ɿ-	?	?	-ɿ	-ɿ	-ɿ
W	sg	-ɿ, ∅	y-		kwan	w-	-u	-i	-ɿ	-ɿ	-ɿ

Gender system

- ▶ Again, this table shows the relationship between morphological classes and gender.

NC	#	MC	AM	LNK	'1'	DEM	POSS	REL	ADJ	PSSR	DEF
D	sg	-ər, -ən, -un, ∅	d-	d-	d-	d-	-ən	-ən	-ən	-ən	-ən
K	sg	-əŋ, -aŋ, -ŋ∅	k-	k-	k-	k-	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ	-əŋ
B	pl	-m, -əm, -bε	b-	b-	n.a.	b-	?	-əm	-əm	-əm	-əm
T	pl	-tε	t-	t-	n.a.	t-/y-?	-u	-t	-t	-t	-t
I	pl	-nɪ	?	ɪ-?	n.a.	ɪ-	?	?	-t	-t	-t
W	sg	-ɪ, ∅	y-	n.a	kwan	w-	-u	-i	-t	-t	-t

Gender system

10) Class D:

gùmbà-r d-è júlúw-ún
he.goat-D D-LK black-D
'a black he-goat'

12) Class K:

rìj-àṅ k-è júlúw-úṅ
tree-K K-LK black-K
'a black tree'

11) Class B:

ṅwì-m b-è júlúw-úm
women-B B-LK black-B
'black women'

13) Class T:

gùmbà-tè t-è júlúw-í
he.goat-T T-LK black-T
'black he-goats'

Gender system

14) Class W:

kààr-ì júlúw-í
 green.monkey-W black-W
 ‘black green monkey’

16) Class W:

jàw-ì mǐj-ú
 chicken-W 1SG.POSS-W
 ‘my chicken’

15) Class I:

tùù-nì júlúw-í
 rat-I black-I
 ‘black rats’

► Examples of genders with zero nominal markers.

18) Class K

gàntàŋ k-é

crab.K K-DEM

‘this crab’

20) Class D

dùlòn d-é

hare.D D-DEM

‘this hare’

Noun class system

In terms of pairing:

SG

PL



Merci!