Possessive constructions in Tongugbe, an Ewe dialect
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POSSESSIVE, EXISTENTIAL AND LOCATIVE
CONSTRUCTIONS

1. Introduction

Possessive, locative and existential constructions of Tɔŋúgbe 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 Tɔŋúgbe constructions:

Possessive
1. **tòdzó**   **lè**   **é**   **sí**
    cat   be.at   PRO.3SG   hand
    'She has a cat'   (Flex_Ext: Fok 4.1)

Locative
2. *bɔ́lùɔ́ lè anyīgbá*
    bɔ́lù-á   **lè**   **anyīgbá**
    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-ḿ**
   PRO.3PL   VENT   COP   PRO.3SG   wash-PROG
   'They are washing it'   (Flex_Ext:Dzi 77.1)

5.   *avùɔ́ bé eyɛ̀ mè lè lɔ̀lɔ̀ gèɔ̀*
   avù-á   **bé**   **eyɛ̀**   **mè**   **lè**   **lɔ̀lɔ̀**
   dog-ART.DEF   QUOT   PRO.3SG   NEG   COP   agree
   gè   **ò**
   PROSP   NEG
   'The dog_i said he_i was not going to accept'
                                    (Flex_Ext:Viv 19.1)

6.   *tòdzó tètè lé ŋtí kò hlé bà le é ŋútí*
   tòdzó   **tètè**   **lé-é**   **ŋútí**   **kò**   **hlé**
   cat   get.close   at-PRO.3SG   skin   then   spread
   ebà   **le**   **é**   **ŋútí**
   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 Tɔŋúgbe. 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 Tɔŋúgbe

The existential construction of Tɔŋúgbe 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 Tɔŋúgbe. In this example, the figure is **mí** 'we' and the ground is the third person singular.

7.   *mí vá lé*
   mí   **vá**   **lè**   **é**
   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 Tɔŋúgbe:

-   The verbal predicate is invariably the locative predicate **lè** 'be.at' or its non-present variant **nɔ̀**.
-   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.   *dɔ̀fé mé lé ò*
     dɔ̀ƒé   **mé**   <u>**lè**</u>   <u>**-é**</u>   **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.* **nɔ̀** 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.   *dɔ̀ƒé mé nɔ̀ɛ́ ò*
     dɔ̀ƒé   **mé**   **nɔ̀**   <u>**-é**</u>   **ò**
     place.of.sleep   NEG   be.at:PST   -PRO.3SG   NEG
     'There was no place to rest'

10. **dɔ̀ƒé**   **mé**   **nɔ̀**   <u>**anyī**</u>   **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 Tɔŋúgbe 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 Tɔŋúgbe

In locative constructions of Tɔŋúgbe, 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 **agbèlìéɔ** 'the cassavas' and **kùsíɛ mè** 'inside the basket' vis-à-vis the locative predicate.

12. *agbèlìéɔ lè kùsíɛ mè*

agbèlì-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 Tɔŋúgbe 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 Tɔŋúgbe locative constructions. I first of all survey the verbal predicates that occur in Tɔŋúgbe locative constructions and the oppositions that these engender (section 3.1). I then continue to present the different units that function as grounds in Tɔŋúgbe 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 [42]. The following examples illustrate the verbs **xíxá** 'stick' and **dzɔ̀** 'be straight' occurring in locative constructions:

13. *bɔ́lùɔ́ xíxá lé atīɛ́ álɔ̀nú*
     bɔ́lù-á   **xíxá**   **lé**   **atī-á**   **wó**
     ball-ART.DEF   stick at   tree-ART.DEF   POSS
     alɔ̀-nú
     wrist-mouth
     'The ball is stuck on the branch of the tree'
                                    (Flex_Loc: Dav 12.1)

14. *agbèlìtíɛ́ dzɔ̀ lá tīkpóɔ́ ŋú*
     agbèlì-tí-á   **dzɔ̀**   **lé**   **tīkpó-á**
     cassava-tree-ART.DEF be.straight ALL   wood-ART.DEF
     ŋú
     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[43] .

Further distinctions are to be noted in the meanings expressed by basic locative constructions and non-basic locative constructions. To

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[42] For more details on the different verbs that occur to encode location in Ewe, cf. Ameka 1995, and Ameka 2006

[43] 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 Tɔŋúgbe 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 Tɔŋúgbe are illustrated below:

	FIGURE	RELATION	REF. OBJECT	S. DOMAIN
15.	*ayíéɔ́ lè kplɔ́ɔ́ dzí*			
	ayí-á-wó	**lè**	**kplɔ̃-á**	**dzí**
	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.	*ekàá xátsá lé kpīɛ́ ŋú*				
	ekà-á	**xátsá**	**lé**	**kpē-á**	**ŋú**
	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 **mlɔ́** 'lie' are internal to the locative description, *i.e.* the verb specifies the relation between the figure and the ground.

17. *avūɔ́ kplí tòdzóɔ́ hǎ́ wó mlɔ́ anyi leɔ́ gbɔ́*

avū-á	**kplí**	**tòdzó-á**	**hǎ́**	**wó**	**mlɔ́**
dog-ART.DEF	and	cat-ART.DEF	also	PRO.3PL	lie

anyī	**le**	**wó**	**gbɔ́**
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 dzī** 'the surface of the chair'.

18. *é gá dà tá ví álé lé ezìē dzī*

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 **mlɔ́** 'lie' **ɖì** '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 mlɔ́ atīɛ́ wá lɔ̀ dzí*

ekàá	**mlɔ́**	**atī-á**	**wó**	**alɔ̀**	**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. *atīɛ́ ɖì lá nyīgbá mè*

atī	**ɖì**	**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 ekpe dzí*

atùkpá-á	**tsí**	**atìtrè**	**lé**	**ekpē**	**dzí**
bottle-ART.DEF	remain	upright	at	stone	top

'The bottle is upright on a stone'   (=11)

22. *atùkpáá tsò agā le kùsíé mè*

atùkpá-á	**tsò**	**agā**	**le**	**kùsí-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. *atīɛ́ mlɔ́ ekplɔ́ɔ́ dzí*
    atī-á   **mlɔ́** **ekplɔ̄-á**   **dzí**
    tree-ART.DEF   lie   table-ART.DEF   top
    'The stick is lying on the table'   (Flex_Loc: Dav 119.1)

24. *ayíɛ́ɔ́ 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. *avɔ̀ɔ́ gba lé ekplɔ́ɔ́ dzí*
    avɔ̀-á   **gba**   **lé**   **ekplɔ́-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. *atīɛ́ tsò agā le atīkpóɔ́ ŋú*
    atī-á   **tsò**   **agā**   **le**   **atīkpó-á**   **ŋú**
    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. *ʔatīɛ́ tsò agā atīkpóɔ́ ŋú*

atī-á	**tsò**	**agā**	**atīkpó-á**	**ŋú**
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 Tɔŋúgbe 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 sub-divided 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 Tɔŋúgbe locative constructions according to verbal predicate*

	Verb	Relation	Loc. description
Basic locative	Loc.pred	-configuration	+internal
Non-basic locative			
Internal	posture	+configuration	+internal
External	transitive	+configuration	-internal

3.2.   Grounds in locative constructions

The ground in Tɔŋúgbe 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 **gíyiɛ** 'this place', while in example (29) the ground is the postpositional phrase **kplɔ́ɔ́ dzí** 'top of the table'.

28. *mì lè gíyiɛ́*

mì	**lè**	**gā-yiɛ́**
PRO.2PL	be.at	place-DEM

'Lit. You are at this place'
'(You are here)' (Flex_Sto:Azi 284:1)

29. *bɔ́lùɔ́ lè kplɔ́ɔ́ dzí*

bɔ́lù-á	**lè**	**kplɔ́-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
Tɔŋúgbe 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 kùsíέ mè** 'in the basket', of which the
locative is part, occurs to function as the complement of the verb.

30. *ayíέɔ 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 kùsíέ mè*

atùkpá-á	**tsò**	**agā**	**le**	**kùsí-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	
Figure	**Relation**		**[Ref. Obj**	**S. domain]**
SUBJ	PREDICATE		COMPL	
i. NP	LOC.PRED	NP		
ii.NP	LOC.PRED	NP	POSTP	

Non-Basic Locative Construction

internal

FIGURE	CONF. RELAT.		GROUND	
Figure	**Conf. Relat.**	**[Ref.Obj**	**S.domain]**	
SUBJ	PREDICATE		COMPL	
NP	V	NP	POSTP	

FIGURE	RELATION			GROUND	
Figure	**[Conf. Relat.**	**Relat.]**		**[Ref.Obj**	**S. domain]**
SUBJ	PREDICATE			COMPL	
i.NP	V	PREP	NP		
ii.NP	V	PREP	NP	POSTP	

External

FIGURE	RELATION			GROUND	
Figure	**[Conf. Relat.**		**Relat]**	**[Ref.Obj**	**S.domain]**
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 **PRO.3SG**
LOCATIVE   ⟶   NP LOC.PRED **NP**
LOCATIVE   ⟶   NP LOC.PRED **NP POSTP**

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** | **gbɔ** | *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 **atīkpó** 'wood' functions as the reference object. The postposition **dzí** 'top' locates the relevant area of the reference object.

35. *agbèlìé lè atīkpóɔ́ dzí*
    agbèlì-á   **lè**   <u>**atīkpó-á**</u>   <u>**dzí**</u>
    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 Tɔŋúgbe that are under consideration. I have also investigated the morpho-syntactic and semantic relationships that exist between Tɔŋúgbe 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 Tɔŋúgbe 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**	**gíyiɛ**
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 gɔ̀mè** 'grass under' is basically the lower section of grass.

38. **tòdzó   váyì   nɔ̀   egbè   gɔ̀mè**
     cat   ALT   be.at:PST   grass   below.section
     'Lit. Cat went to be at the buttom 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 Tɔŋúgbe: 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 nɔ̀ sí*
     nàné   nɔ̀   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	
	Noun	Verb	Noun	Adposition
40.	**tòdzó**	**lè**	**é**	**sí**
	cat	be.at	PRO.3SG	hand
	'She has a cat'			(=1)

Locative

	SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT
	Noun phrase	Verb	Noun
41.	*bɔ́lùɔ́ lè anyīgbá*		
	bɔ́lù-á	**lè**	**anyīgbá**
	bottle-ART.DEF	be.at	ground
	'The ball is on the ground'		(=2)

Existential

	SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT
	Noun	Verb	Pronoun
42.	*wó lé*		
	wó	**lè**	**é**
	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.
Possessive		*
Locative	*	*
Existential	*	

- ***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:

NP lè NP **sí**

NP lè NP **ŋú**

NP lè NP **dòmè**

NP lè NP **dzí**

NP lè NP **gbɔ́**
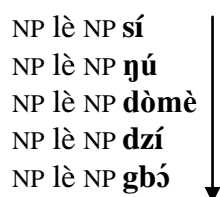
The higher a postposition is on this scale, the more appropriate it is for expressing possession; the lower the postposition is on the scale, the less appropriate it is for expressing possession.

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:

POSS

NP lè NP **sí**
NP lè NP **ŋú**
NP lè NP **dòmè**
NP lè NP **dzí**
NP lè NP **gbɔ́**

LOC
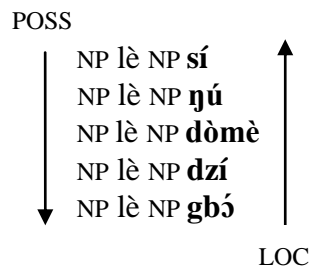
It has to be observed that some postpositions that occur in locative constructions seldom occur in locative possessive constructions. This is the case of postpositions such as **nú** 'entry' **gɔ̀mè** 'under' **tá** 'top' **xá** 'side' **tó** 'edge' etc.

- *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
	figure	relation	ref.object	search domain
	possessee	relation	possessor	postposition

43. *nàné nɔ̀ sí*

nàné	**nɔ̀**	**é**	**sí**
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 <u>construed</u> 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** | <u>**lá**</u> | **le** | **Kofí** | **sí** |
|--------|--------------|--------|----------|--------|
| money | ART.DEF | be.at | Kofi | hand |

'The money is with Kofi'

45. | **ga** | **lá** | **le** | **Kofí** | <u>**gbɔ**</u> |
|--------|--------|--------|----------|----------------|
| 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 Tɔŋúgbe. Therefore, when the possessee in locative possessive constructions of Tɔŋúgbe is <u>construed</u> 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. *avūɔ́ lè Kofí sí*

avū-á	**lè**	**Kofí**	**sí**
dog-ART.DEF	be.at	Kofi	hand

'Kofi has the dog'

47. *avūɔ́ lè Kofí gbɔ́*
    avū-á   **lè**   **Kofí**   **gbɔ́**
    dog-ART.DEF   be.at   Kofi   vicinity
   'The dog is with Kofi'

However, locative possessive constructions in which the possessee is not <u>construed</u> as being definite cannot be paraphrased with the locative construction. Example (48) cannot therefore be adequately paraphrased as (49).

48. *evī ɖèkǎ kǒ lèé sí*
    evī   **ɖèkǎ**   **ko-é**   **lè**   **é**   **sí**
    child   one   only-FOC   be.at   PRO.3SG   hand
    'She had only one child'

49. *evī ɖèkǎ kǒ lèé gbɔ́*
    evī   **ɖèkǎ**   **ko-é**   **lè**   **é**   **gbɔ́**
    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 Tɔŋúgbe), 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:

+ DEFINITE PD   -DEFINITE PD

⟵——————————————⟶
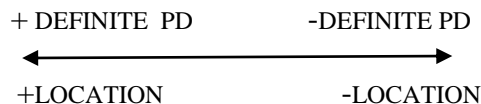
+LOCATION   -LOCATION

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 (±) 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. *awùɔ́ lè sí (gàkē é gbé dodo)*

[awù-á	**lè**	**é**	**sí]**	**(gàkē**	**é**
dress-ART.DEF	be.at	PRO.3SG	hand	but	PRO.3SG

gbé	**dódó)**
refuse	wear

'He has the dress (one of it), but he has refused to wear it'

51. *awùɔ́ lè gbɔ́ gàkē é gbé dódó*

[awù-á	**lè**	**é**	**gbɔ́]**	**gàkē**
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 (±) 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

	Possessive	**Locative**	**Existential**
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' **ɖó** 'reach', and quantifying variants of the locative predicate instantiated by verbs such as **sùgbɔ̄** 'be plenty, **bɔ́** '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	
	Figure	**Conf.rel**	**Relat.**	**Ref.object**	**Se. domain**
	Possessee	Verb	Prep.	Possessor	Postposition
52.	*agbèlì bɔ̌ lɔ́ˊ sí kò*				
	agbèlì	**bɔ́**	**lé**	**wó**	**sí**
	cassava	be.abundant	at	PRO.3PL	hand
	'They have a lot of cassava'				

FIGURE		RELATION	GROUND	
Figure	**C.relat.**	**Relat.**	**Ref. object**	**Se. dom.**
Noun phrase	Verb	Prep	Noun phrase	Postpos.

53. *avɔ́ɔ́ gba lé ekplɔ́ɔ́ dzí*

avɔ̀-á	**gba**	**lé**	**ekplɔ̃-á**	**dzí**
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. *é tsɔ́ lànú lá sì*

é	**tsɔ́**	**lànú**	**lé**	**asì**
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 Tɔŋúgbe below:

70. **Ama   ŋé   afɔ̀   né   Kofí**

Ama	break	leg	DAT	Kofi

'Ama has broken Kofi's leg'

The major pattern of the external possessive construction in Tɔŋúgbe 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. **nyànù   lè   xɔ̀-nú   né   Dŏtsɛ́**
>   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-gbɔ́   mé   lè   é̱   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. *atīɛ́ mlɔ́ kplɔ̃ dzí nṹ*
    atī-á   **mlɔ́ ekplɔ̃** **dzí**   <u>**ná-m**</u>
    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 costruction in example (74).

74. **ɖèvǐ**   **lè**   **akɔ̄**   **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   <u>ŋkúmè</u>   né   <u>adèlǎ</u>**
    anger   be.at   face   DAT   hunter
    'Lit. Anger is in the hunter's face
    '(The hunter is not calm)'

76. *asī lé né mì*

    <u>asī</u>   lè-é   ná-<u>mì</u>
    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 possessees 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 **akɔ̀tá** 'chest', in complement position can at first sight be analyzed as possessees.

77. *asī né nɔ̀ yámè né mì*

    <u>asī</u>   né   nɔ̀   eyá-mè   né   <u>mì</u>
    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 nṹ*

    é   lè   <u>tá</u>   ná   <u>m̀</u>
    PRO.3SG   be.at   head   DAT   -PRO.1SG
    'It's on my head'

79. *asī là kɔ̀tá ná mesiáme*

asī	**lè**	**akɔ̀tá**	**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 <u>body-part terms</u>) of the erstwhile locative construction function as possessees 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 nɔ̀ kɔ̀tá nɛ́*

asī	**nɔ̀**	**akɔ̀tá**	**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 <u>constructions where there are two possessees</u>, 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. *?asīɛ́ lé né mì*

asī-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 gɑ̃́ má nũ̂*

é	**lè**	**[tá**	**gɑ̃́**	**má]**	**ná**	**-m̀**
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 possessees 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. *asī ɖèkă nɔ̀ kɔ̀tá(*á) nɛ́*

asī	**ɖèkă**	**nɔ̀**	**akɔ̀tá(*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 possessees in these constructions are body-part terms. However, there is a particular set of nouns that occur in complement positions to function as possessees 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. *aḍàŋù le ŋkúmè nɛ́*
    adàŋù   le   <u>ŋkú-mè</u>   ná   -<u>é</u>
    creativity   be.at   eye-inside   DAT   -PRO.3SG
    'Lit. Creativity is at her face inside'
    '(She is very creative)'

85. *egà lè kòtokúmè nɛ́*
    egà   lè   kòtokú-<u>mè</u>   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. *ʔaḍàŋù le ŋkú má mè nɛ́*
    adàŋù   le   [ŋkú   <u>má</u>   mè]   ná   -<u>é</u>
    creativity   be.at   eye   DEM   inside   DAT   -PRO.3SG
    'Lit. Creativity is at that her eye inside '

87. *egà lè kòtokúɔ́ mè nɛ́*
    egà   lè   [kòtokú-<u>á</u>   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

	PD				PR
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 Tɔŋúgbe.

ROLES:			PD		PR
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[44], 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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[44] 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-gbɔ́ lé (*má) né mì*

tá-gbɔ́	**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. *aɖàŋù le ŋkú (*má)mè nɛ́*

adàŋù	**lè**	**[ŋkú**	**(*má)**	**mè]**	**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. *mè ɖɔ̀lī afɔ (*má)né kofí*

mè	**ɖɔ̀lī**	**afɔ̀**	**(*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 possessees 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 possessees of external possessor constructions are with respect to their semantic role patients undergoing the change of state, possessees 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 nɨ̌́*

é	**xíxá**	**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 nɨ̌́*

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

	LOC/EXIS+DAT-OBL	**EXTERNAL PR**
Constituent order	S V CPL DAT-OBL NP V (PREP) N ná NP	S V OBJ DAT-OBL NP V N ná NP
Complement	bare noun	bare noun
Possessee	+meronymic	+meronymic
Verb	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. *exɔ̀ lè gɛ nɛ́*

exɔ̀	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 **exɔ̀** 'house' in example (93) above, can occur with the definite article for instance as demonstrated in the example below.

94. *exɔ̀ɔ́ lè gɛ nɛ́*

exɔ̀	-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 possessees in both construction types are different. Nouns that occur as possessees 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 possessees 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 **dzìlá** 'parent' occurs as the possessee in the dative-oblique locative possessive construction.

95. **kpɔ̀-lá**   **dzìlá-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. **kpɔ̀-lá**   **[dzìlá-wó**   **le**   **dzìgbé**   **né**   **mì!]**
    see-PART   parent-PL   be.at   diaspora   DAT   PRO.2PL
    'Look, you have parents in the diaspora!' (=95)

97. **kpɔ̀-lá**   **[dzìlá -wó**   **le**   **mìɛ̀**   **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**   **míɛ́**   **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

	LOC+DAT-OBL	**DAT-OBL LOC.POSS**
Constituent order	S V CPL DAT-OBL	S V CPL DAT-OBL
Complement	bare noun	modifiable noun
Possessee	+meronymic	-meronymic
poss. meaning	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).