## [LINKERS IN KINANDE] Patricia Schneider-Zioga (California State University, Fullerton) & Ngessimo Mutaka (University of Yaounde 1, Cameroon)

#### A. The Issue.

The Bantu language Kinande has a cross-linguistically rare particle called the *linker* (Hyman 1985 (class lectures), & Mutaka 1986) that occurs between internal arguments of the verb and sometimes also between arguments of the verb and adjuncts. The linker (LK) agrees in noun class with the DP that immediately precedes it:

| (1) a. Kámbale ágúlira ekitábú <b>kyo</b> Nadíne | b. Kámbale ágúlira Nadíné <b>y'</b> ekitábu |
|--|---|
| Kambale bought 7book 7LK 1Nadine                 | Kambale bought 1Nadine 1LK' book            |
| 'Kambale bought a book for Nadine.'              | 'Kambale bought Nadine a book.'             |

The linker is absent when constructions involve only a single post-verbal XP:

| (2)a.* Kámbale ágúla ekitábú kyo | b.* Kámbale ágúla kyo ekitábu | c. Kámbale ágúla ekitábu   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| K. 3s.buy book.7 LK.7            | Kambale 3s.buy LK.7 book.7    | Kambale 3s.buy book.7      |
|                                  |                               | 'Kambale bought the book.' |

Baker and Collins (2006) propose that the purpose of the linker is to license the Case of a following nominal expression in the verb phrase. However, a Case theoretic solution cannot be correct as demonstrated by the fact that the linker can be followed by adverbs and other expressions whose distribution is not regulated by Case. Although many adverbs derive from nouns in Kinande, the post-linker adverb in (3a) clearly does not. (3b) involves a post-linker predicate which agrees in phifeatures with the subject of the sentence:

| (3)a.Kámbalé átuma ebarúhá <b>yó lubálúba</b> Kambale sent 9letter 9LK quickly | b. ábaná móbakáya okokalásí <b>kó ba-tyâ</b><br>2children 2went 17school 17LK 2thus |  |
|--|---|--|
| "Kambale sent the letter quickly."   | "The children went to school thus (e.g. without eating)"                            |  |

These data also indicate that Richards' (2010) approach to the linker is inaccurate. Richards proposes that the distribution of the linker is regulated by a condition he calls *distinctness*, which prevents syntactic entities that are too similar to each other from occurring within the same phase. He specifically proposes that the problem is the occurrence of two XPs in the same domain (phase) that are too similar to linearize since they both bear the label DP. Richards proposes that the linker splits the domain into two phases so that spell out is not faced with the problem of linearizing two non-distinct XPs. However, the examples in (3) involve XPs with distinct labels: DP and AdvP and thus Richards' theory predicts that no linker should occur, contrary to fact.

### B. Our view.

We argue (together with Schneider-Zioga 2013) that the linker in Kinande behaves like a copula and is primarily a *linker* in the sense of den Dikken (2006). For den Dikken, a *linker* is the functional morpheme which connects a predicate to the subject in inverted contexts. Following Hedberg (1988), inversion creates a topic-focus structure. Here is an example of predicate inversion from English:

- (4) a. John is [the culprit] (uninverted predicate)
  - b. [*The culprit*] is John. (inverted predicate)

The following examples illustrate inversion in Kinande when a copular clause is involved. Note that a copula that is identical to the linker in DOCs (bold-faced) occurs.

| copular sentence                                 | invertea copular sentence   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| (5) a. <b>emí</b> beré yé baná yo problémé néne  | b. <b>eproblémé</b> nen <b>é y' êmí</b> ber <b>é</b> ya b <b>á</b> na |  |  |
| cl9.behavior of children 9COP problem big        | cl9.problem big 9COP behavior of children                             |  |  |
| "The behavior of the children is a big problem." | "A big problem is the behavior of the children."                      |  |  |

(See Schneider-Zioga (2013) for the motivation for inversion in double object constructions being based on a dynamic interpretation of labeling along the lines of Chomsky (2013).)

- **C.** Evidence for our view. Linker constructions share a number of properties with copular constructions and especially with predicate inversion constructions:
  - The most compelling support of the *linker* analysis is the fact that, cross linguistically, copular inversion constructions are immune to Minimal Link Condition (MLC) effects and so are linker constructions (see, e.g., den Dikken (2006) for an account of MLC immunity in copular inversion constructions):

- (6) a. Kambale is the teacher  $\rightarrow$  The teacher is [Kambale is the teacher] (MLC not respected)
  - b. Kámbale vo mugalímu → Omugalimu yo [Kambale <del>vo mugalimu</del>]

Kambale 1LK 1teacher 1teacher 1LK Kambale

Just as these copular examples do not abide by the MLC, neither do examples involving the linker that separates phrases within DOC/applied linker constructions:

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(7) agulira [ LK Marya [ir [ -gul- ekitabu ] → agulira [Marya LK Marya [ir [ -gul- ekitabu ]
   3sg.buy.appl LK Mary appl -buy- 7book 'He bought Mary a book.' (MLC not relevant)
   agulira [ LK Marya [ir [ -gul - ekitabu ] → agulira [ekitabu LK Marya [ir [ -gul - ekitabu ]
                                             3sg.buy.appl book LK Mary appl -buy-book
                                            'He bought a book for Mary.' (MLC not respected)
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Baker & Collins (2006) specifically propose that the MLC does not hold in Kinande in order to account for the fact that the theme can precede the goal in DOCs in Kinande. Although their proposal captures the facts, it is a conceptually unsatisfying solution. The MLC, as a presumably third factor principle, should not be subject to parameterization that depends on a language specific instantiation of UG. Moreover, it is empirically inaccurate to parametrically exempt Kinande from the MLC: we will present data primarily from small clauses that demonstrate that the MLC is operative in Kinande. If the Kinande linker is a copula, there is no need to propose a parameterization of the MLC in Kinande with all of its attendant problems. Instead, whatever accounts for the possibility of predicate inversion in copular constructions across languages (cf. e.g., den Dikken 2006) will account for the possibility of the theme preceding the goal/benefactive where linkers are involved.

Also compelling is the fact that in inverted constructions, only post inverted copular/post linker position can carry

(8) a. The culprit is JOHN;

b.\*The CULPRIT is John

c. eproblémé nené y'êmíberé y'abána;

c. eprobleme nene y'emibere y'abana

9problem big 9LK'9behavior of children

'The biggest problem is the behavior of the children.' \*'It is the biggest problem that is the behavior of the children.' As is true of inversion in sentential copular clauses, contrastive focus appears to be limited to post linker positions in verb phrases:

(9) a. áh'ekitábú kyó BÁNA; b.\*aha BANA b'ekitabu gave 7book 7LK CHILDREN gave 2CHILDREN 2LK'book

'He gave the book to the CHILDREN (not to the adults).'

If the linker is a copular *linker*, the distribution of contrastive focus falls out directly.

Post linker definite pronouns are impossible, just as post copular definite pronouns are impossible.

(10) a. \*Kambale ni/yo ivê b. \*atumira Kambale vo bo/ibô Kambale COP/COP he.

send.appl Kambale 1Lk them (clitic)/them(tonic)

\*'He sent Kambale them.' \*'Kambale is he.'

- Whereas the linker is normally obligatory between a DP and Locative XP (Baker & Collins 2006), we note that it is optional in certain cases. The obligatoriness/optionality would fall out directly if the linker were a copula. It is obligatory when Pylkkanen's high applicatives (a relation between an individual and an event) are involved:
- (11) Kámbale mo-a-téta-gul-a e-ri-túnda \*(ry') omo-sóko. (=(31b) Baker & Collins 2006)

Kambale Aff-1S-Neg/Past-buy-Fv Aug-5-fruit Lk.5 Loc.18-market

'Kambale didn't buy the fruit in the market.'

On our analysis, these are straightforward cases of inversion. The work of den Dikken (2006) provides extensive justification for the obligatoriness of copulas/linkers when predicate inversion is involved. In contrast, the linker is optional just in case it denotes a predication relation between an individual (internal argument) and a location:

(12) Kámbale ówa Marya (y') omokisomo.

Kambale heard 1Mary 1LK 18church

'Kambale heard Mary in church.' (=Mary is in the church, Kambale need not be.)

It has been observed in the literature that in non-matrix non-inverse predicational constructions (e.g.: I consider John (to be) the culprit), the copula is optional. In contrast, in the inverse constructions that are possible in this context, the copula is required (e.g.: I consider the culprit \*(to be) John).

- Finally, the linker and certain instances of the copula are morphologically identical in Kinande. This is illustrated by the following copular sentences:
- (13) a. omupresident yo Barack Obama (specificational copular construction)

1 president 1LK 1Barack Obama

'The president is Barack Obama.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Evidence from vowel harmony domains, which we will present in our talk, allows us to distinguish between enclitic pronouns and linkers.

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b. Kámbale yo mugalí :mu. (specificational: non-inverted)1Kambale 1LK 1teacher

'Kambale is the teacher.'

**D. Expansion of the investigation.** This final property prompts us to establish a more complete paradigm of copular sentences in Kinande including specificational, identificational, equative, and predicational copular sentences to solidify the picture of copulas and the linker in Kinande. In work still in progress, we have identified a number of copulas/linkers in Kinande. We do not investigate here the two inflected copulas –li, and –bya, noted in Mutaka (2009):

(14)

| COPULAS/LINKERS<br>IDENTIFIED: | form of<br>copula/linker             | CONTEXT                                | sample sentences:   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Ni                             | invariant ni                         | predicational                          | Kámbale <b>ni</b> mugalí:mu<br>Kambale COP teacher<br>'Kambale is a teacher.'   |
| "yo"                           | class marker<br>+pronominal "o"      | a variety of contexts                  | Kámbale yo mugalí :mu Kambale COP teacher 'Kambale is the teacher.' 'Kambale is the one who is the teacher.' 'It is Kambale who is the teacher.'  |
| Ne                             | class marker + ne                    | locative predicate                     | olutú lu- <b>ny</b> ' ómó múty'o :yu.<br>11nest 11-COP 18-3-tree 3-this<br>'A nest is in this tree.'  |
| "lwa"                          | class marker +<br>associative marker | identificational copular constructions | olutú <b>lwá</b> lunô<br>11nest AGR-assoc 11here<br>'Here is the nest.'   |
| Ø                              | Ø                                    | adjectival predicates                  | oyó ngátambá náye Ø uwéne<br>1that 1 <sup>st</sup> .walk with.1 1.nice<br>'My colleague is nice.'   |
| mo                             | invariant mo                         | embedded smallish clauses              | Kámbale mwálíe enyamá <b>mó</b> nyíbísi<br>Kambale ate 9meat MO 9raw<br>'Kambale ate meat raw.'<br>Kámbale ábirikira Maryá <b>mo</b> musíre<br>Kambale called Mary MO 1idiot<br>'Kambale called Mary an idiot.' |

As a natural result of examining copular constructions, we have also begun to establish prosodic properties that correlate with the syntactic instantiation of information structure, and in particular of focus in Kinande. We intend to use these generalizations concerning the relation between prosody and syntax in copular constructions to help us better understand information structure in the verb phrase of sentences involving linkers. At this point we have found in copular constructions (a) a lowered high or mid tone that marks focus, as well as (b) high tone that marks focus under certain circumstances.

The discovery of a mid-tone marker is particularly striking, as Kinande is not described as having a mid tone. The mid or lowered high tone occurs only when the post copular constituent is particularly emphasized. The examples we have at this point that show this are equational copular sentences:

(15) a. eZaíre yê Kó :ngo

24Zaire COP Congo

'Zaire is the CONGO.' (Uttered to correct a mistaken belief)

b. Munábwi:ré ni Pási :ka.

today COP Easter

'Today is EASTER.' (Uttered to correct a mistaken belief)

We also found that a high tone marks focus on the non-head of a post copular noun phrase:

(16) ekyó ni kitábu ky'ágé, (síkya Nadíne)

7that COP 7book 7-associate'my

'That is MY book (not Nadine's).'

Notice the tone on the last vowel. Whether the sentence is followed by something or not, that H tone remains, presumably to mark emphasis. This high tone is not present when the possessive is not emphasized:

(17) ekyó ky'ékitábu kyage, (bútsira ecompúter yage)

7.that COP 7book 7-associate'my (not computer my)

'That is my BOOK, not my computer.'

This part of the investigation will not only shed light on focus at the PF interface in Kinande, it will also contribute to a greater understanding of the phrasal phonology of Kinande.

Finally, our investigation of copular constructions reveals that Kinande does not always require upward/specifier head agreement. That is, in certain copular constructions, when the subject and predicate are mismatched in phi-features, an agreeing (linker) copula agrees with the post copular expression:

(18) ekyó tutásóndiré kó na háké, ry'érilangira Kámbalé mo mutamí :ri

7that we.not.need at all 5COP 5.see Kambale LK 1drunk

'What we do not need at all is to see Kambale drunk.'

In (18) the copula agrees with the noun class of the head of the post copular constituent. Here are a few more examples involving pseudo clefts. In these examples, the agreeing linker copula agrees with the post copular (focused) constituent:

(19) a. ebyálya ebyó nyánzire kutsibú w' ámatímo

8food 8that I.like strongly 6COP 6bananas

'The food that I like best is bananas.'

cf. also: Ebyálya ebyó nánzire kutsibú bó buhóti ( ... is beans)

Ebyálya ebyó nánzire kutsibú ló lukondi ( ... is sauce made from boiled beans)

Ebyálya ebyó nánzire kutsibú y' ênyáma ( ... is meat)

These examples also demonstrate that agreement in Kinande is not only with dislocated constituents.

We will present accurate empirical generalizations concerning the conditions under which agreement is post copular and we will relate this to the syntax of agreement in linker constructions in the verb phrase. We are still developing our understanding of this phenomenon, which we uncovered during the course of our systematic investigation of copular constructions.

In sum, our main focus is on the presentation of evidence that the linker behaves like a copula. Moreover, we broaden the empirical domain of inquiry to include other types of copular constructions in Kinande. Therefore, our research furthers the aims of Afranaph in that we: (a) provide further insight into the linker in Kinande through our linker-as-copula approach; (b) introduce a new perspective from which to investigate symmetric and non-symmetric double object constructions across African languages; (c) establish an essentially new empirical area of documentation for Kinande, namely, copular constructions.

Some further repercussions of our developing investigation of copular constructions in Kinande:

- (1) We establish there are a number of copulas in Kinande, with unique semantic specializations. The copulas we uncover demonstrate that one relator (the identificational copula involving the associative marker)—cuts across nominal and verbal categories. Because the copulas are semantically specialized, their distribution and syntax potentially offer evidence bearing on issues in the copula literature such as whether copulas are semantically ambiguous and whether copular inversion actually exists. Moreover, the wealth of copulas in Kinande is of interest for diachronic research in Bantu languages.
- (2) We introduce new data bearing on the properties of the syntax/prosody interface in Bantu languages.
- (3) We demonstrate that agreement in Kinande is neither restricted only to a specifier/head configuration (upwards agreement) nor is it restricted only to dislocated constituents (Baker 2003), contra proposals in the literature.

### **Selected References:**

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