

### 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<br>Kambale bought 7book 7LK 1Nadine<br>‘Kambale bought a book for Nadine.’ | b. Kámbale ágúlira Nadíné <b>y’</b> ekitábu<br>Kambale bought 1Nadine 1LK’ book<br>‘Kambale bought Nadine a book.’ |
|---|--|

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

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| (2)a.* Kámbale ágúla ekitábú <i>kyo</i><br>K. 3s.buy book.7 LK.7 | b.* Kámbale ágúla <i>kyo</i> ekitábu<br>Kambale 3s.buy LK.7 book.7 | c. Kámbale ágúla ekitábu<br>Kambale 3s.buy book.7<br>‘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 phi-features with the subject of the sentence:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| (3)a. Kámbalé átuma ebarúhá <b>yó lúbálúba</b><br>Kambale sent 9letter 9LK quickly<br>“Kambale sent the letter quickly.” | b. ábaná móbakáya okokalási <b>kó ba-tyâ</b><br>2children 2went 17school 17LK 2thus<br>“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.

| <i>copular sentence</i>  | <i>inverted copular sentence</i>  |
|--|---|
| (5) a. <b>emíberé</b> yé baná <b>yo</b> problémé néne<br>cl9.behavior of children 9COP problem big<br>“The behavior of the children is a big problem.” | b. <b>eproblémé</b> nené y’ <b>émíberé</b> ya bána<br>cl9.problem big 9COP behavior of children<br>“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):



- 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 IDENTIFIED: | form of copula/linker             | CONTEXT                                | sample sentences:   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Ni</b>                   | invariant ni                      | predicational                          | Kámbale <b>ni</b> mugalí:mu<br>Kambale COP teacher<br>‘Kambale is a teacher.’   |
| <b>“yo”</b>                 | class marker +pronominal “o”      | a variety of contexts                  | Kámbale <b>yo</b> mugalí :mu<br>Kambale COP teacher<br>‘Kambale is the teacher.’<br>‘Kambale is the one who is the teacher.’<br>‘It is Kambale who is the teacher.’   |
| <b>Ne</b>                   | 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.’  |
| <b>“Iwa”</b>                | class marker + associative marker | identificational copular constructions | olutú <b>Iwá</b> lunô<br>11nest AGR-assoc 11here<br>‘Here is the nest.’   |
| ∅                           | ∅                                 | adjectival predicates                  | oyó ngátambá náye ∅ uwéne<br>1that 1 <sup>st</sup> .walk with.1 1.nice<br>‘My colleague is nice.’   |
| <b>mo</b>                   | invariant mo                      | embedded smallish clauses              | Kámbale mwálie enyamá <b>mó</b> nyíbisi<br>Kambale ate 9meat MO 9raw<br>‘Kambale ate meat raw.’<br><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. eZaire yê Kó :ngo  
 24Zaire COP Congo  
 ‘Zaire is the CONGO.’ (Uttered to correct a mistaken belief)  
 b. Munábwi:rê 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, (síkyá 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' ényáma ( ... 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:

Baker, M. 2003. Agreement, Dislocation and Partial Configurability. \*Baker, M. & Collins, C. 2006. Linkers & vP structure. *NLLT* \*Chomsky, N. 2013. Problems of projection. *Lingua* \*Den Dikken, M. 2006. *Relators and linkers: the syntax of predication, predicate inversion, & copulas*. MIT monograph \*Hedberg, N. 1988. The discourse function of cleft sentences in spoken English. Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the LSA (Linguistic Society of America). \*Kayne, R. 1994. *The antisymmetry of syntax*. MIT monograph. \*Moro, A. 2000. *Dynamic antisymmetry*. MIT monograph. \*Richards, N. 2010. *Uttering trees*. MIT monograph. \*Schneider-Zioga, P. 2013. 'The Syntax of the Linker in Kinande: Breaking symmetry.' manuscript CSU, Fullerton.