

Nilo-Saharan Linguistics Colloquium, 4-6 August 2021

Nubian panel

The Tagle Copula *-nd*

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Abstract

Tagle has several copulas which occur in a variety of constructions, including predicate nominal, predicate adjective, and predicate locative clauses. The Tagle copulas show all essential properties of verbs such as agreement suffixes crossreferencing person and number of subject, variation for tense/aspect/mood, and a clause-final position.

Most copulas encode stative relations between the subject and the complement. They comprise *-nd* ‘be’ and the locative copulas *fɔr* (sng) / *fɛr* (plr) ‘be at, exist’, *kɔn* (sng) / *kɔn-ɛr* (plr) ‘be in’, *ɔk* (sng) / *ɔk-ɛr* (plr) ‘be on a horizontal surface’, and *kúy* ‘be on a vertical surface or elevated place’. Another copula, *nɛ* ‘become, get’ expresses dynamic relations, i.e., changes of state, e.g. ‘Ali became a man’.

The focus of the presentation will be on the copula *-nd* which in predicate nominal clauses expresses a variety of stative relations, including attribution (‘Ali is tall’), class-membership and identity (‘Ali is a farmer’), equation (‘Ali is the winner’), and possession (‘this book is Ali’s’). In addition, the copula *-nd* is used as a focus marker.