The Linker in Kinande Re-examined

Patricia Schneider-Zioga

1. Introduction: why re-examine the linker?

The Bantu language Kinande has a particle called the *linker*[1] that occurs between internal arguments of the verb and, under certain conditions, between adjuncts or between an internal argument and an adjunct. The linker (LK) agrees in noun class[2] with the DP that immediately precedes it. The following examples illustrate the occurrence of the linker in a benefactive applicative construction (1) and in a double object construction (DOC) (2):

(1)   a.   Kámbale ágúlira   Nadíné *y'*   ekitábu
              1Kambale 3SG.bought.APPL   1Nadine 1*LK* 7book
              'Kambale bought Nadine a book.'

        b.   Kámbale ágúlira   ekitábú *kyo*   Nadíne
              1Kambale 3SG.bought.APPL 7book 7*LK*   1Nadine
              'Kambale bought Nadine a book.'

(2)   a.   Jacky ahá   Nadíné *y'*   ekitábu
              1Jacky 3SG.gave 1Nadine 1*LK*   7book
              'Jacky gave Nadine a book.'

        b.   Jacky ahá   ekitábú *kyo* Nadíne
              1Jacky 3SG.gave 7book 7*LK* 1Nadine
              'Jacky gave Nadine a book.'

The arguments separated by the linker can occur in either order without a change in meaning.

The linker is absent in simple sentences which have only a single internal argument and nothing else. Its obligatory absence is illustrated in (3a,b&c) where it can neither precede nor follow the single argument of the transitive verb:

(3)   a. *Kámbale ágúla   ekitábú *kyo*
           1Kambale 3SG.bought 7book 7*LK*

        b. *Kámbale ágúla   *kyo* ekitábu
           1Kambale 3SG.bought 7*LK* 7book

[1] This term was first introduced for the phenomenon by L. Hyman, class lectures (1985), and in Mutaka, seminar presentation (1986).

[2] Kinande, as is typical of Bantu languages, has a rich system of noun classes. Specifically, 20 different forms of agreement are possible, corresponding to the different combinations of gender and number that are available in Kinande for Bantu noun classes 1-19 and class 24.

    c.   Kámbale ágúla   ekitábu
        1Kambale 3SG.bought   7book
        'Kambale bought the book.'

This distribution would suggest that the linker is relevant to arguments since its occurrence seems to depend on the number of arguments in the verb phrase. In line with this, Baker and Collins (2006) propose that the linker has a Case theoretic function. Specifically, they propose that the linker assigns Case to the XP that follows it and thus licenses that XP. They further propose that the noun phrase immediately preceding the linker receives Case directly from the verb. A linker would then not be necessary with transitive verbs that have a single internal argument since the noun phrase would receive its Case directly from the verb.

However, a Case theoretic solution cannot be entirely correct as demonstrated by the fact that the linker can, and often must, occur when an expression follows it that does not need Case. In the following examples we see that the linker is followed by adverbs, the distribution of which is not regulated by Case theory:

(4)   a.   Kámbalé átuma   ebarúhá **yó**   lụbálụ́ba
           1Kambale 3SG.sent 9letter   9 **LK** quickly
           'Kambale sent the letter quickly.'

    b.   ábaná   móbakáya oko kalásí **kó**   ba-tyâ
          2child   2.went   17 school 17**LK** 2-thus
          'The children went to school thus (e.g. without eating)'

Although many adverbs derive from nouns in Kinande, the post-linker adverb in (4a) clearly does not. The first vowel in the adverb in the example is [+ATR] which means it does not involve the similar looking noun class marker lu-. The linker also obligatorily precedes other adverbs that are clearly not nominal, such as *ndeke* 'well,' whose tonal pattern indicates it is an adverb. (4b) involves a post-linker predicate which agrees in phi-features with the subject of the sentence. A predicate is not in need of Case. These data indicate that Baker and Collins's (2006) Case theoretic approach to the linker is empirically inadequate.

The other approach to the linker in the literature is that of Richards (2009, 2010). Richards proposes that the distribution of the linker is regulated by a condition he calls *distinctness*. Under Richards' approach, the linker occurs because two noun phrases within the same spell out domain are too similar to each other for the grammar to linearize them. Specifically, both phrases bear the label DP. Therefore if, as Richards argues, the labels of projections are what the grammar refers to in order to determine linear order, the occurrence of two DPs in the same domain presents an irreflexivity problem: which DP precedes? For the grammar to resolve this, Richards conjectures that the phrase headed by the linker provides a phase boundary when faced with an irreflexivity problem such that one DP is spelled out in the domain of the most immediate phase. The other DP, which occurs in the specifier of the hypothesized phase-defining linker phrase, is spelled out later in a higher phase and therefore linearization problems are avoided. Despite this non-Case dependent approach, Richards cannot account for the obligatory presence of the linker in the sentences in (4). If *distinctness* is a condition that the grammar cares about, and in Kinande *distinctness* cares only about labels, then the same examples that show Baker and Collins' (2006) Case theoretic proposal is empirically wrong also show that Richards' (2009, 2010) *distinctness* account cannot work to account for the linker in Kinande. This is because the examples in (4) involve XPs with distinct labels: DP and AdvP. Therefore, since the labels are distinct, *distinctness*, and hence, the linker phrase, should not be relevant to these examples; nonetheless, a linker is required in such a situation.

The previous discussion establishes that the linker is neither primarily a Case assigner nor is its purpose to establish *distinctness* of labels. In this paper, I propose that the linker is a type of copula. More specifically, it generally behaves like a *linker* in the sense of Den Dikken (2006). *Linkers* in this

sense are involved in inverse copular/predication constructions. Following Hedberg (1988, 2007) they create a topic focus structure.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 1, I addressed why linkers should be re-examined in Kinande. In section 2, I introduce evidence that the linker is a copula. In this section I also demonstrate that the linker behaves like a copula in copular inversion constructions under certain circumstances. In addition, I discuss the apparent free word order within the verb phrase in Kinande and argue that it does not violate the Minimal Link Condition (MLC). Thus, contra Baker & Collins (2006), it is not necessary to conclude that the MLC is parameterized and that Kinande, as a parametric option, does not adhere to the MLC. Instead, Kinande simply displays the word order variation that is typical of copular inversion. In section 3, I summarize the discussion and present a conclusion.

2. The copular view
2.1. Pronominal copulas

The linker is phonologically identical to three other lexical items in Kinande. One of the identical lexical items is the copula that occurs in certain copular sentences in the present tense. The syntax of this and other copulas in Kinande is explored in detail in Schneider-Zioga and Mutaka (2014). The following two sentences illustrate an equative and inverse copular construction. The third sentence in this example illustrates the linker that agrees with the same noun class for comparison:

(5)   a.   Barack Obáma **y'**   omupresidâ   {copula, for class 1=**y(o)**}
            1Barack Obama 1COP 1president
            'Barack Obama is the president/the one who is president.'

        b.   Omupresidá **yo**   Barack Obáma   {inverse copular}
            1president   1COP 1Barack Obama
            'The president is Barack Obama.'

        c.   ágúlira   Barack Obámá **y'**   ekitábu   {linker, for class 1= **y(o)**}
            3SG.bought.APPL   1B. O.   1**LK** 7book
            'He bought Barack Obama a book.'

The second identical lexical item is the focus/cleft marker that occurs immediately after the first phrase in the CP. The example in (6a) illustrates the focus marker and the one in (6b) illustrates the linker:[3]

(6)   a.   Ekitábu **kyo**   Kámbale   ágúla   {FOCUS marker, for class 7=**kyo**}
            7book 7FOC   1Kambale   3SG.bought
            'It is a book that Kambale bought.'

        b.   Kámbale   ágúlira   ekitábú **kyo**   Nadíne   {linker, for class 7= **kyo**}
            1Kambale 3SG.bought.APPL   7book 7**LK**   1Nadine
            'Kambale bought Nadine a book.'

The linker is also very similar to a third lexical item, the enclitic pronoun:

---

[3] Although my consultants translate this as a cleft, it does not behave like a cleft in that it does not create a domain that is opaque to extraction. In this property, it contrasts with obvious clefts in the language, which involve a tensed copula and a relative pronoun. Such clefts create islands for extraction. See Schneider-Zioga (2007) for discussion.

(7)   Nadíne   ágúlá-***kyô***   {clitic pronoun, for class 7=***kyo***;
        1Nadine   3SG.bought-7pro   linker for class 7= ***kyo*** (see (6b))}
        'Nadine bought it.'

The similarity to the clausal copula and the focus marker makes the linker look verbal. However, the data in (7) suggest that the linker might be pronominal. In fact, there are some notable differences between the linker (together with the verbal copula and the focus marker) and clitic pronouns. The first difference is that there are arbitrary morphological gaps that make the pronoun and linker (and clausal copula and focus marker) non-parallel. For example, although there is a linker 'yo' which expresses agreement with class one nominals, there is no class one enclitic 'yo.' There is, irrelevantly, an enclitic 'yo' that expresses agreement with class four, class nine, or class 24 nominals:

(8)   Nadíne   álángirá-***yô***
        1Nadine   3SG.saw-9/4/24pro/*1pro
        'Nadine saw it (e.g., a cow).' '*Nadine saw him/her.'

In contrast, the linker, as well as the copula and focus marker, can express agreement with a class one nominal. This is evident for the clausal copula and linker from the examples in (5).[4] The following sentences illustrate this property for the focus marker:

(9)   a. Maryá ***yo***   Kámbale   álángira
           1Mary 1FOC 1Kambale   3SG.saw
           'MARY (is the one that) Kambale saw.'

        b. ***Yo***   Kámbale   álángira
           1FOC   1Kambale 3SG.saw
           'HE/SHE is the one Kambale saw.'

     The second difference between the linker and the clitic pronoun concerns facts related to vowel harmony, which occurs within the verb phrase when linkers are involved versus when post verbal clitics are involved. Consider the following sentences where the additive focus marker **na** "also/and" focuses the theme in a double object construction with the order Goal Theme:

(10)   a.   Kámbale mwáhéré ábana   abó   ***bé***   n' ebíkene
             1Kambale 3SG.gave 2child   2those   2*LK*   and 8yam
             'Kambale gave those children also YAMS.'

        b.   Kámbale mwáhéré ábana abó   ***bá*** n'   amagétse
             1Kambale 3SG.gave 2child 2those   2*LK* and 6water
             'Kambale gave those children also WATER.'

        c.   Kámbale mwáhéré ábana abó   ***bó***   n' obuhóti
             1Kambale 3SG.gave 2child 2those   2*LK*   and 14bean
             'Kambale gave those children also BEANS.'

The linker typically undergoes elision of its final vowel and syllabifies as the onset of the following word when the following word begins with a vowel. However, the linker and following word cannot re-syllabify in these examples because the additive focus marker, which begins with a consonant, intervenes between the linker and the initial vowel of the following word. In this focus context, notice that the final vowel of the linker is not '-o' as it has been in all the previous examples when the

---

[4] Note that the linker cannot indicate agreement with a non-overt subject. This presumably is due to the relation of the linker to linearization and the role overt versus non-overt categories play in that area. Issues of linearization lie outside the scope of this paper, but are addressed in work in progress.

following word begins with a consonant. Instead, in the examples currently under consideration the final vowel of the linker varies depending on the initial vowel, called the *augment*, of the following DP.[5] In (10a) the augment of the theme is **e** and the final vowel of the linker is **e**; in (10b) the augment of the theme is **a,** and the final vowel of the linker is **a**; etc. That is, vowel harmony extends leftward beyond the post linker DP into the linker itself. Importantly, the harmony does not occur if a postverbal pronoun is involved instead of a linker:

(11) a. Kámbale mwáhéré **bó**   n' ebíkene
           1Kambale 3SG.gave 2them and 8yams.
           'Kambale gave them also YAMS.'

      b. *Kámbale mwáhéré **bé**   n' ebíkene
          Kambale 3SG.gave   2them+AUGMENT8 and 8yams

These phenomena illustrate that postverbal clitic pronouns and linkers are distinct. Therefore, although the linker (as well as the clausal copula and the focus marker) looks like an enclitic pronoun, its behavior displays some distinctions.

It is not unusual cross-linguistically for languages to have what could be called pronominal copulas.[6] For example, in colloquial Egyptian Arabic the present tense third person copula is pronominal under certain circumstances (Edwards 2006):

(12) il-bint *hiyya* l-mas'u:la
      the-girl **she**   the-responsible(FemSg)
      'The girl is the one responsible.'

The pronominal copula of Russian has been extensively discussed in the literature (Markman 2008, Pereltsvaig 2001, and others). The following example is from Markman (2008):

(13) Cookie *eto* tolstaja koshka   (=Markman's (1b))
      Cookie *this* fat   cat-nom
      'Cookie is the fat cat.'

The first evidence then that the linker is a copula is the fact that it looks morphologically like a (pronominal) copula. In the following sections, I will provide evidence that it also *behaves* like a copula.

2.2. Evidence in support of the copular view

The perspective that the linker is a type of pronominal copula illuminates several fundamental properties of the verbal constructions where linkers are found. The first property of constructions involving linkers that the copular view captures is the fact that two XPs must be involved for a linker

---

[5] An anonymous reviewer asks whether these vowel harmony facts indicate a type of agreement with the post linker XP. The agreement idea proposed by the reviewer is worth pursuing. The linker *does* appear to need to probe the post linker XP for certain features. Moreover, this harmony process does not appear to be purely phonologically motivated. Unfortunately, these and related issues cannot be explored in any depth in this article due to space limitations. They are, however, addressed in work in progress.

[6] As noted by an anonymous reviewer, there is an important cross-linguistic connection between pronouns and copulas that has not yet been fully identified. One possibility might be related to the fact that copular constructions organize linguistic information in terms of a consistent information structure. For example, inverse copular sentences have the consistent information structure of [[*topic*][*focus*]]. Pronouns are tightly linked to topicality as they very frequently must refer to old information, so information that is or was a topic. Exploring this question is part of a larger project on linkers and predication that I begin to address in work in progress. See also Schneider-Zioga & Mutaka (2014) for an overview of the organization of information structure in copular and related constructions in Kinande.

to occur. If the linker is a copula, there must by definition be a linking of XPs. That is what copulas do—they link two phrases.

The most typical type of predication involving the linker is a DOC/benefactive high applicative construction. High applicatives "denote a relation between an event and an individual [whereas] low applicatives … denote a relation between two individuals. (Pylkkänen 2003 p.19)" Following Pylkkänen (2003), the possibility of applicatives occurring with unergative verbs supports an analysis of a language having high applicatives. This is because an applied unergative clearly expresses a relation between an individual (the benefactee) and an event:

(14) Kámbale ását-ir-a   Maryâ
      1Kambale 3SG.dance-APPL 1Mary
      'Kambale danced for/instead of Mary.'

The fact that the applicative can also occur on verbs where no change of possession, that is, no relation between individuals,[7] is implied also supports the high applicative claim:

(15) Mary' áhúm-**ir**-a   Yoséfú yo   Kámbale
      1Mary 3SG.hit-**APPL**   1Joseph 1LK 1Kambale
      'Mary hit Kambale for Joseph.'

Following Pylkkanen and related work, high applicatives have the following structure:

(16)   [….T [vP EA [v' [v v] [ApplP Ben [Appl' APPL [VP V…]]]]]]]]

In addition, I analyze the verb *eriha* 'to give' as involving a high applicative despite the overt lack of an applied morpheme. An alternative analysis which would treat the verb as either involving a low applicative or otherwise an argument within VP along the lines of English "give" would make the wrong semantic predictions. In Kinande, the order *eriha* Goal Theme (17) does not imply a necessary relation between the individuals. That is, consistent with a high applicative analysis, this word order does not imply that the goal necessarily possesses the theme.

(17)   eríha Nadíné   *y'*   ekitábu
       5give 1Nadine 1*LK*'   7book
       'to give Nadine a book.'

I essentially follow Baker and Collins (2006) in locating the linker as the head of a phrase that is immediately subordinate to vP and that immediately dominates the VP and its related arguments and adjuncts[8] (where EA=external argument and IA=internal argument):

(18)   [….T [vP EA [v' [v v] [LKP [LK' ***LK*** [ApplP Ben [Appl' APPL [VP V (IA)]]]]]]]]]

One of the arguments below the linker phrase undergoes internal merge and occurs in the specifier of the linker phrase. In work in progress (Schneider-Zioga 2013), I argue that this movement is required in order to break symmetry and allow for linearization.[9] I will not discuss the motivation for the

---

[7] There is no relation of *have* or *be (at)* between Kambale and Yosefu. That is, Yosefu doesn't possess Kambale, nor does this sentence mean Yosefu "is at" Kambale or vice versa.

[8] My proposed structure below the linker differs somewhat from theirs, but in the point of the location of the linker phrase as separating the external argument from everything else, we are in agreement.

[9] Note that an applied morpheme itself is not enough to link two phrases in a predication relation following den Dikken (2006). This is because in his framework all predication is mediated by a functional head. Since the applied morpheme assigns a theta-role, it would not qualify as the right kind of head to mediate predication. The linker, due to its status as a functional category, can supply the right kind of structure to establish a predication relation.

movement to specifier of linker phrase further here since the focus of the current paper is on establishing the copular properties of the linker rather than on linearization.

2.2.1. The linker and the distribution of unaugmented nominals in Kinande

Nominals in Kinande (and many Bantu languages) can begin with a prefix that precedes the nominal class marker. This prefix, the augment, tends to mark specificity and to some extent also definiteness in Kinande. Progovac (1993) argues for Kinande that when the augment does not occur, the nominal must be licensed, with the most common licensing situation involving the nominal behaving as a negative polarity item (NPI).[10] NPIs cannot occur in subject position in Kinande (19a,b).[11] Instead, NPIs occur in postverbal position (19c,d):

(19)   a. *Múkali   sí-ánzire   Yohóni
            1woman NEG-3SG.like   1John

       b. O-múkali   sí-ánzire   Yoháni
           AUG-1woman NEG-3SG.like 1John
           'The woman didn't like John.'

       c. Yoháni sí-ánziré   múkali   (from: Progovac 1993)
           John   NEG-3SG.like   1woman
           'John doesn't like a(ny) woman.'

       d. Yoháni sí-ánzire   o-múkali   (from: Progovac 1993)
           1John NEG-3SG.like   AUG-1woman
           'John doesn't like the woman.''

Subject position in Kinande generally requires DPs, but unaugmented nominals are NPs.[12] This requirement on the subject position in Kinande has been noted by Baker (2003), Miyagawa (2010), Schneider-Zioga (1995, 2000, 2007), and others. The post verbal position allows NPs. Therefore, an NPI can occur in post verbal position if it is licensed by negation.

When DOCs or benefactive constructions occur, an NPI is no longer licensed in the immediate post verbal position despite the presence of c-commanding negation. The word order of the internal arguments involved plays no role:

(20)   a.*?Valinánde sí-áha   ***mundú***   yo e-kitábu
            1Valinande NEG-3SG.gave 1person 1LK AUG-7book
           'Valinande didn't give anyone a/the book.'

       b.* Yoháni sí-á-lí-tá-ha   ***kitábú*** ky'   o-mwána
           1John NEG.3SG.TNS.NEG.gave   7book   7 LK AUG-1child

---

[10] See Progovac (1993) for a discussion of the licensing contexts of unaugmented nominals, which includes also contrastive focus under the syntactic conditions outlined in her work. The following example from the online version of the Bible Society of Uganda New Testament in Kinande (1980) illustrates that an augmented nominal can be interpreted as indefinite and non-specific:
(i) Omugulu   nabya   mwana, nabya   ngabŭga ng' *o*-mwana… (1 Corinthian, 13:11)
    Time-period 1SG.was 1child, 1SG.was 1SG.spoke like *AUG*-1child
    'When I was a child, I spoke like ***a child***….'
Clearly there is still work to be done in establishing the exact distribution and function of augmented and unaugmented nominals in Kinande.

[11] See Schneider-Zioga (2007) for a more detailed description of the possibility of NPIs in subject position in Kinande.

[12] That there is a structural difference between unaugmented nominals and augmented XPs will be empirically established later in this paper where it is shown that unaugmented nominals cannot invert with pre-linker XPs. See also Schneider-Zioga & Mutaka (2014) for an in-depth discussion of the distribution of predicates in Kinande.

Instead, an NPI is licensed in the position immediately following the linker (regardless of word order of the internal arguments):

(21)   a.   Valinánde   sí-áha   e-kitábú   kyo ***múndu***
               1Valinande NEG-3SG.gave AUG-7book   7LK 1person (no augment)
               'Valinande didn't give the book to anyone.'

       b.   Yoháni   sialítáha (sy'alítáha)   ó-mwaná   yo ***kitábu***
               1John   NEG.3SG.TNS.NEG.gave   AUG-1child 1LK 7book
               'John didn't give the child any book.'

The distribution of NPIs follows directly if the linker is a copula. The subject, that is, the XP that occurs in the specifier of linker position must be[13] a DP. However, the post copular XP can be an NP, and thus can be an NPI. Progovac (1993) demonstrates that in Kinande, a superordinate negated verb that occurs outside the domain of a subordinate subject cannot provide the appropriate environment for an NPI to be licensed in subordinate subject position.[14] Along these same lines, it is not possible for the verb that is superordinate to the linker to provide the appropriate environment for an NPI in the specifier of linker phrase. Note furthermore that if there were copular inversion within the linker construction, the inverted XP which would surface in subject position in inversion constructions cannot be an NP by virtue of constraints on copular inversion, so examples such as (20b) are predictably ungrammatical. Of course, the requirement that subjects must be DPs has the same effect.

    Although an NPI is not possible immediately preceding the linker, a wh-word is. The wh-word is possible because there is also a focus position at the left edge of the verbal phrase, just as there is at the left edge of the clause. Recall that the linker is identical to the focus marker at the left edge of a clause (6). This ambiguity of lexical identity is evident in copular constructions. The pronominal copula can also be interpreted as a focus marker as can be noted in this ambiguous sentential copular sentence:[15]

(22)   Kámbale **y'** omugalímu
         1Kambale yo 1teacher
         'Kambale is the teacher' & 'It is Kambale who is the teacher.'

The linker appears to have the same ambiguity, as it is possible for a wh-word to occur in the initial position of the verbal phrase when an apparent linker occurs:

(23)   Valinánde ahá   ndí **yo** ekitábuú?
         1Valinande 3SG.gave 1who 1LK 7book
         'Who did Valinande give the book to?'

An NPI cannot occur in the pre-linker focus position (as opposed to the subject position), because it is not an appropriate semantic environment. We already saw that an NPI cannot occur in the specifier of Linker Phrase position since that position, like the clausal subject position, requires a DP.

    There is an additional possibility for the licensing of NPIs in DOCs/applied constructions in Kinande. Namely, the XP in the specifier of linker phrase position exceptionally can be an NPI just in case the post-linker XP is also an NPI:[16]

---

[13] I will refine this description shortly.

[14] In order for a subject to be licensed in this context, it must be immediately preceded by the predicate *hane* "there is."

[15] Note the anti-agreement effect such that the copula and agreement marker cannot co-occur.

[16] Baker & Collins (2006) report that the linker is ungrammatical in such contexts. However, my data essentially agree with that of Richards (2010) where the linker is obligatory when both XPs in the verb phrase lack augments. One consultant did allow the linker to be missing as an extremely marginal option. However, the other consultant accepted sentences such as (24) only if a linker occurred between the two phrases.

(24)   Yoháni sí-á-lí-táhá   ***mwaná***   *?(yo) ***kitábu***
         1John   NEG-3SG-TNS-NEG.gave 1child   1LK   7book
         'John didn't give any child any book.'

That is, it is possible for both parts of the predication to be NPs.[17] This would be the equivalent of a sentence such as the following:

(25)   A child is a joy.

Note that an inverse copular clause is impossible in such a case, as an inverted XP in subject position must be a DP:

(26)   *A joy is a child.

The copular analysis of linkers predicts that inversion would not be possible in case both XPs in the DOC/benefactive construction were NPs. The prediction is correct. A reversal of unaugmented NPs from the underlying *goal/benefactive theme* (recall the high applicative structure from (18)) to the inverted order *theme goal/benefactive* is highly ungrammatical, with or without the linker occurring. The following example is taken from Richards (2010):

(27)   *Sí-n-andisyáta-hek-er-a   ka-tébé (kó)   mú-kali   {=Richards (212b.)}
          NEG -1SG-FUT-carry-APPL-FV   12-pail (12LK) 1-woman
          'I will not carry any pail for any woman'

   In sum, restrictions on the distribution of augmentless XPs fall out straightforwardly from an analysis of the linker as a copula.

2.2.2. Restriction on inversion in applied & DOCs

   Restrictions on word order within the verb phrase can be captured if linker constructions involve copulas. Word order in applied and DOCs is generally quite free in Kinande. However, adverbials cannot invert with arguments in linker constructions, just as adjectives cannot invert in copular sentences. (28) and (29) illustrate the impossibility of inversion of adjectives with the subject in copular constructions:

---

[17] Why is the requirement that subject position be a DP suspended in (24)? Currently, the syntax of negative polarity in Kinande is not well understood (although Progovac's (1993) work is an important start). I tentatively suggest that Negative Polarity Items in Kinande undergo QR to the edge of the phase containing them since there appear to be some locality restrictions on the distribution of NPIs in Kinande. In that position, they would be within the scope of their licensor. This raising, I argue, "pushes" the subject out of the dedicated DP position in the case of DOCs/benefactive constructions, since the raising is presumably to the edge of the linker phrase, and thus allows for an NP to occur. This is then very similar to the possibility discussed in Schneider-Zioga (2007) of an NPI being licensed in subject position of a clause only if a wh-operator co-occurs:
(i) ékihi kyo   múkali sy-ángáhúka
     7what 7FOC   1woman NEG-3s.cook
     What didn't any woman cook?
     (or: 'What did no woman cook?')
There could not be a clausal example, parallel to (24), with an NPI in object position licensing an NPI in subject position since then the object NPI, which has undergone QR, does not raise beyond its phase (vP). If it were raised higher, it would no longer be in the scope of its licensor.

(28)   a. Mary is beautiful.
         b.*beautiful is Mary.

(29)   a. Maryá ni mubúya.
            1Mary is 1beautiful
            'Mary is beautiful.'

         b.*Mubuyá   ni Maryâ
            1beautiful is 1Mary

The parallel between adjective and adverbs is evident not only in the derivational relation between the two categories of lexical items across many languages, but also in question answer pairs involving adjectival predicates in copular sentences. If one wants to ask about Mary's appearance in order to receive the answer "Mary is beautiful," one does not ask the equivalent of "What is Mary?" Instead, one uses the adverbial wh-word and asks "How is Mary?"

(30)   a. Maryá ni mubúya
            1Mary is 1beautiful

         b. Maryá a-ly'   á-ti?
            1Mary 3SG-is(li) 3s-how
            'What is Mary'? A: 'beautiful'

(31) through (32) illustrate the impossibility of inversion of the adverb with the subject of the predication in the linker construction. The ungrammatical (31a), with order adverb theme, contrasts with the grammatical (31b), with order theme adverb:

(31)   a.* Kámbalé átumá   lubáluba ebarúha
             1Kambale 3SG.sent quickly   9letter
             'Kambale sent the letter quickly.'

         b. Kámbalé átuma   ebarúhá **yó**   lụbálụ́ba
             1Kambale 3SG.sent 9letter 9**LK**   quickly
             'Kambale sent the letter quickly.'

Note that if inversion were possible in the preceding examples, it would not be possible for a linker to occur. This is because the linker agrees with the XP that precedes it and the adverb in the preceding examples has no phi-features with which the linker might agree. Therefore, one might imagine that inversion would be possible with an adverb that had phi features since it would provide the linker something to agree with. (32) illustrates that inversion is impossible even if the adverb has features which could participate in agreement and thus could potentially be expressed. The adverb in these examples is the pronominal 'there', which belongs to class 24.

(32)   a. wátuma   ekitábú ky' eyo
             2SG.sent 7book   7 LK' 24there
             'You sent the book over.there.'

         b. *wátuma   eyó   y'   ekitábu
             2SG.sent 24there 24LK'   7book

In short, it is not possible for inversion of a subject and adjective to occur in sentential copular constructions and it is not possible for an adverb to precede an internal argument of the verb. This restriction falls out straightforwardly from a copular analysis of the linker.

2.2.3 The Minimal Link Condition (MLC)

If the linker is a copula, there is no reason to assume that the Minimal Link Condition (MLC) is parameterized. Word order facts in DOC and applied linker constructions in Kinande led Baker & Collins (2006) to propose that the MLC is parameterized and is set to 'inactive' in Kinande. Baker & Collins assume the following version of the MLC:

(33)   **Minimal Link Condition**:
         K attracts F if F is the closest feature that can enter into a checking relation with a sublabel of K (Chomsky 1995: 297).

The Minimal Link Condition captures the grammaticality judgments of sentences such as the following:

(34)   a. *[I wonder [CP what$_i$ [C^0 Q [IP who [VP bought ~~what~~$_i$]]]]]
         b.ok[I wonder [CP who$_k$ [C^0 Q [IP ~~who~~$_k$ [VP bought what]]]]

From the formal perspective of the MLC, the interrogative complementizer Q in the ungrammatical (34a) should have attracted the closest wh element *who*, instead of attracting the more deeply embedded *what*. The grammatical example in (34b) illustrates adherence to the MLC with the closest expression, 'who', being attracted to the interrogative complementizer Q.

Parameterizing the MLC, as Baker & Collins (2006) propose, is undesirable because the MLC seems to be a quite general third factor condition on computation. Therefore, it is odd that it would be parameterized within the faculty of language narrow. However, there is no evidence for suspension of the MLC in Kinande if linker constructions involve a copula.

If the linker is a copula, then the cases of theme preceding goal, the ones that apparently violate the MLC, are simply cases of copular inversion. It has been widely observed that copular inversion constructions are immune to Minimal Link Condition (MLC) effects. Consider the following example from English:

(35)   a. John is the culprit →
         b. The culprit is [John ~~is the culprit~~]   (disobeys MLC)

In the inversion in (35b), the DP "the culprit" has move past the subject "John" into a higher specifier.[18] It is well established that the MLC is active in English. Nonetheless, it does not come into play when copular inversion happens. There are various accounts in the literature of why this is true. However, an analysis of the lack of locality effects in copular inversion lies outside the scope of this paper. What is important here is that movements that appear not to adhere to the MLC are typical of copular inversion. With the copular inversion facts in mind, consider the alternate word orders in the applied constructions involving linkers. The example in (36b) does not violate the MLC. In that case, the benefactive moves directly into the specifier of the linker phrase. However, the example in (37b) does violate the MLC: the theme moves past the benefactive into the specifier of the linker phrase. Nonetheless, the sentence is grammatical.

(36)   a. agulira   [LK Marya [~~ir~~ [~~-gul-~~ ekitabu] →
             3SG.bought.APPL LK Mary   ~~APPL~~ ~~-buy-~~ 7book

         b. agulira   [Marya   LK ~~Marya~~ [~~ir~~ [~~-gul-~~ ekitabu]
             3SG.bought.APPL Mary   LK ~~Mary~~ ~~APPL~~ ~~-buy-~~ 7book
             'He bought Mary a book.'

---

[18] As pointed out by den Dikken (2006), copular inversion clearly involves A-movement as shown by the fact that inversion can undergo raising:

(i)   The culprit$_j$ seems [~~the culprit~~$_j$ to be$_k$ John ~~to be~~$_k$ ~~the culprit~~$_j$]

(37)   a. agulira   [LK Marya [ir [-gul- ekitabu] →
           3SG.bought.APPL   LK Mary APPL -buy- book

       b. agulira   [ekitabu LK Marya [i̶r̶[-̶g̶u̶l̶-̶ e̶k̶i̶t̶a̶b̶u̶]
           3SG.bought.APPL 7book   LK Mary   A̶P̶P̶L̶ b̶u̶y̶ 7̶b̶o̶o̶k̶
           'He bought a book for Mary.'

Given the view that the linker is a pronominal copula, the configuration in (37), where the theme has moved past the benefactive DP, is simply an example of copular inversion. There is therefore no need to parameterize the MLC.

3. Conclusions

In this study, I have introduced novel data that demonstrate that previous accounts of the syntax of the linker in Kinande are empirically inadequate. Specifically, I have established that neither Case theory, nor a linearization requirement that identically labeled phrases not be too close to each other can account for the distribution of the linker. I have proposed that the linker can be fruitfully analyzed as a copula. This accounts for the occurrence of the linker when a nominal co-occurs with an adverb within the verb phrase. It provides a way of interpreting a number of puzzling properties of the linker construction. In particular, the view that the linker is a copula reveals that Kinande offers no evidence that the MLC is parameterized.

References

Baker, Mark C. (2003). Agreement, dislocation, and partial configurationality. In Andrew Carnie, Heidi Harley & Mary Willie (Eds.), *Formal approaches to function in grammar* (pp. 107–32). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Baker, Mark, & Collins, Chris. (2006). Linkers and the internal structure of vP. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, 24*, 307-354.

Chomsky, Noam. (1995). *The minimalist program*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Den Dikken, Marcel. (2006). *Relators & linkers: The syntax of predication, predicate inversion, and copulas.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Edwards, Malcolm. (2006). Pronouns, agreement and focus in Egyptian Arabic. *SOAS Working Papers in Linguistics, 14*, 51-62.

Hedberg, Nancy. (1988). The discourse function of cleft sentences in spoken English. Paper delivered at the *Annual Meeting of the LSA* (Linguistic Society of America).

Hedberg, Nancy. (2007) Yes-No Questions, Information Structure, and Prosody. Paper presented at the *LIPP Symposium on Clause Syntax, Information Structures, and Discourse Pragmatics*, Munich, Germany, June 21-22.

Markman, Vita. (2008). Pronominal copula constructions are what? Reduced specificational pseudo-clefts. In Charles B. Chang & Hannah J. Haynie (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 26th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics* (pp. 366-374). Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Miyagawa, Shigeru. (2010). *Why Agree? Why Move? Unifying agreement-based and discourse configurational languages.* Linguistic Inquiry Monograph 54. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Pereltsvaig, Asya. (2001). *On the nature of intra-clausal relations: A study of copular sentences in Russian and Italian* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). McGill University, Montreal.

Progovac, Ljiljana. (1993). Non-augmented NPs in Kinande as Negative Polarity Items. In Sam A. Mchombo (Ed.), *Theoretical aspects of Bantu grammar 1* (pp. 257-270). Stanford, CA: CLSI.

Pylkkänen, Liina. (2008). *Introducing arguments*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Richards, Norvin. (2009). Locality and linearization: The case of Kinande. *Gengo Kenkyu***, 136**, 75–92.

Richards, Norvin. (2010). *Uttering trees*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Schneider-Zioga, Patricia. (1995). Specifier/head agreement in Kinande, *Cahiers Linguistique D'Ottawa, 23*, 67-96. University of Ottawa.

Schneider-Zioga, Patricia. (2000). Anti-agreement and the fine structure of the left edge. In Ruixi Ai, Francesca del Gobbo, Makie Irie, & Hajime Ono (Eds.), *Working Papers in Linguistics 6*, 94–114. Irvine: Department of Linguistics, University of California.

Schneider-Zioga, Patricia. (2007). Anti-agreement, anti-locality, and minimality: the syntax of dislocated subjects. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, 25(2),* 403-446.

Schneider-Zioga, Patricia (2013). The syntax of the linker in Kinande: Breaking symmetry. ms. CSU, Fullerton.

Schneider-Zioga, Patricia & Mutaka, Philip Ngessimo (2014). Technical report: Linkers and relators in Kinande. To appear in *Afranaph Technical Reports.* Retrievable from http://www.africananaphora.rutgers.edu/technical-reports-mainmenu-199

Selected Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference on African Linguistics

edited by Ruth Kramer, Elizabeth C. Zsiga, and One Tlale Boyer

Cascadilla Proceedings Project   Somerville, MA   2015

Web access and citation information

This entire proceedings can also be viewed on the web at www.lingref.com. Each paper has a unique document # which can be added to citations to facilitate access. The document # should not replace the full citation.

This paper can be cited as:

Schneider-Zioga, Patricia. 2015. The Linker in Kinande Re-examined. In *Selected Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*, ed. Ruth Kramer et al., 264-276. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #3144.