

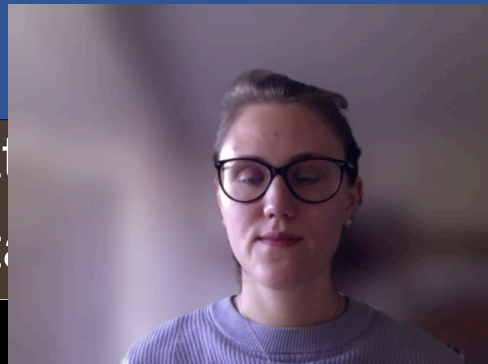


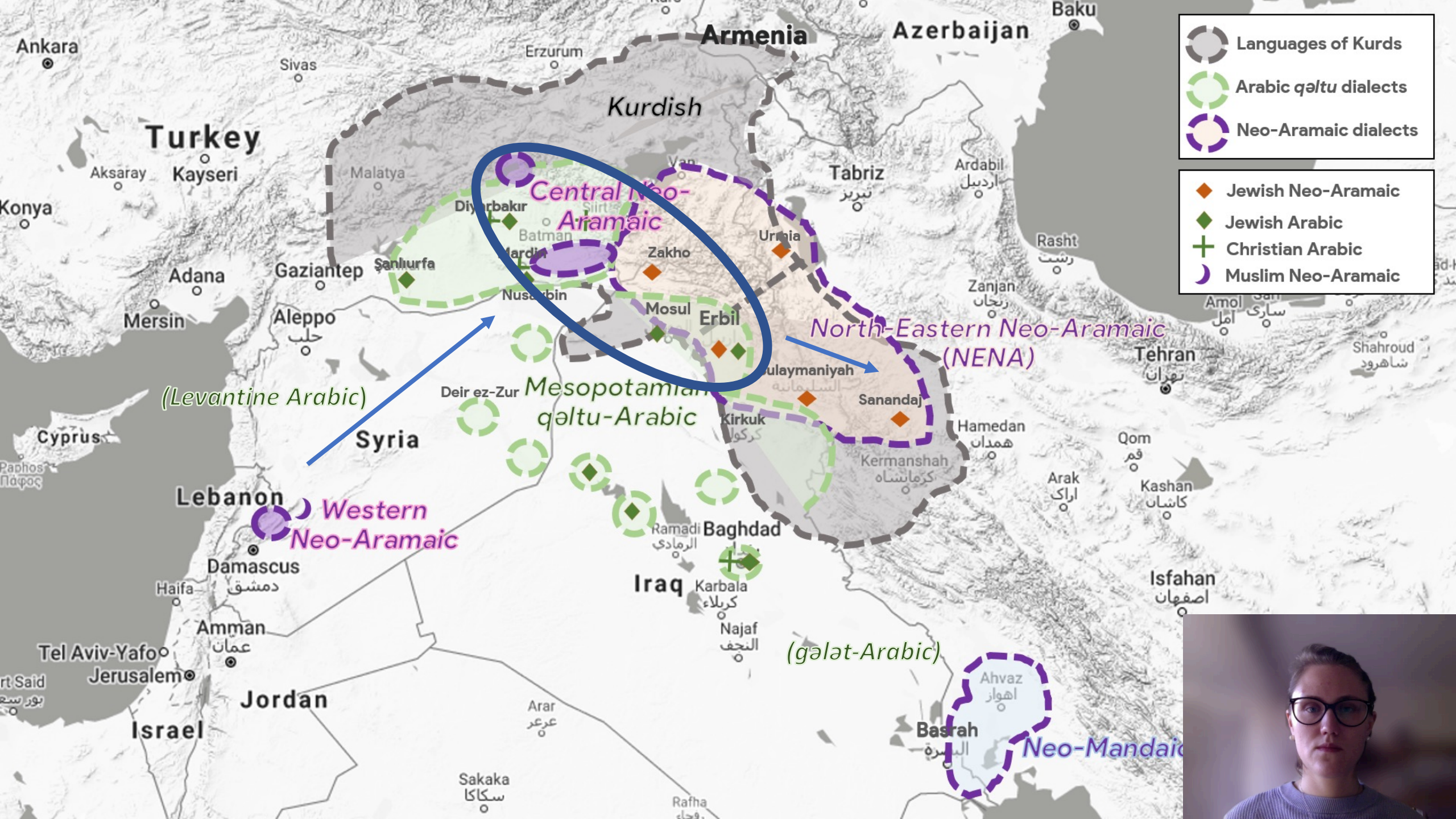
*(North-)Eastern Neo-Aramaic
Copulas and Their Clauses*



Grammatical Snippets, Feb 2022





Dr Dorota Molin

Languages of Anatolia,
Iran, and Mesopotamia





-  Languages of Kurds
-  Arabic *qeltu* dialects
-  Neo-Aramaic dialects

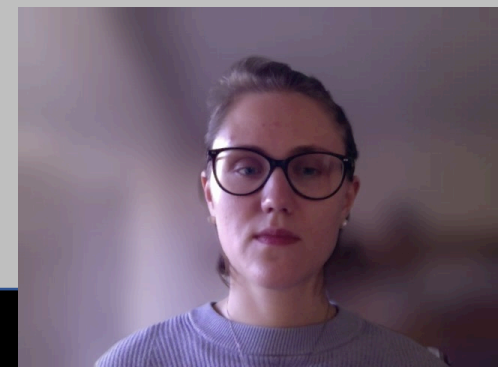
-  Jewish Neo-Aramaic
-  Jewish Arabic
-  Christian Arabic
-  Muslim Neo-Aramaic

(Levantine Arabic)

(*qalat*-Arabic)



1. Usage of copula



With predicates other than non-finite verbs

- Verbal clauses based on the Infinitive: continuous aspect (> general present)

ile (bə)dməxə 'He is sleeping.'

- Verbal clauses with the resultative participle: perfect (>preterit)

ile əθyɑ 'He has arrived.'

- Adverbial predicates

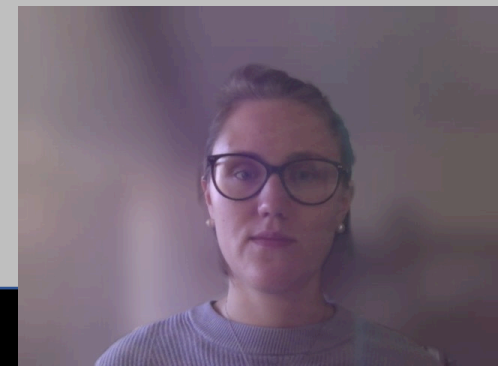
ile go beθɑ 'He is in the house.'

- Adjectival predicates

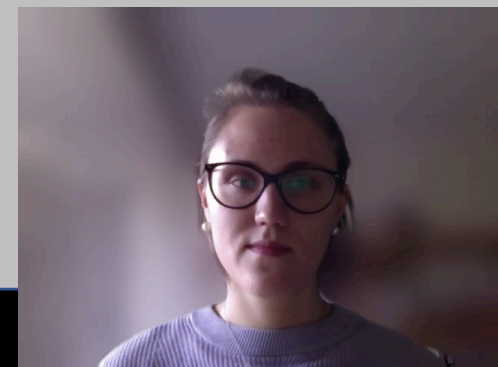
nasax=*ile* 'He is sick today.'

- Nominal predicates

doxtor=*ile* 'He is a doctor.'



2. Morphology



Eastern Neo-Aramaic: pronominal > verbal East > West

Ṭuroyo Aramaic (Mardin villages, Turkey)

1sg *ũno b-u-bayto* =no
I in-the-house I.am

1pl. *aħna* =na

2sg. *hat* =hat

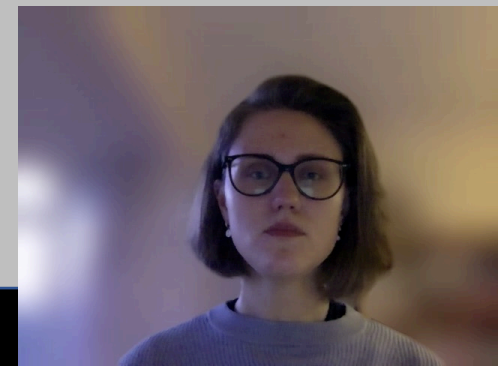
3ms. *huwe* =yo

3fs. *hiya* =yo

3pl. *hanne* =ne

1st & 2nd:

enclitic personal
pronouns



North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic

Jewish in north-western Iraq (Duhok)

Pronouns & copula

1ms. *ana*
א

1pl. *axni*

2fs. *ahat*

2ms. *ah-ət*

3ms. *awa*

3fs. *aya*

3pl. *ani*

=*wən*

=I.am

= *wax*

=*wat*

=*wət*

=*(i)le*

=*(i)la*

=*(i)lu*

haw-ən

'I (ms.) may be'

haw-ax

haw-ət

hawy-at

haw-e

hawy-a

haw-e

mahuya-le

'she gives birth to him'

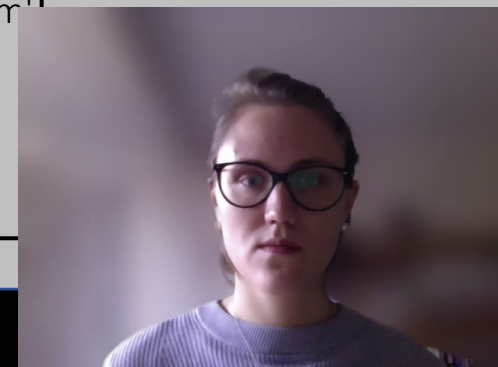
mahuya-la

mahuya-lu

Verbal affixes

Subject suffixes

Object suffixes

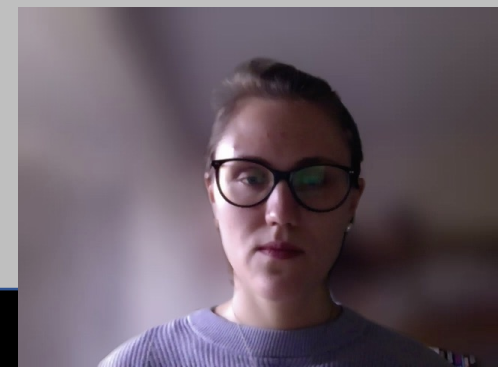


North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic: increasingly verbal in the East

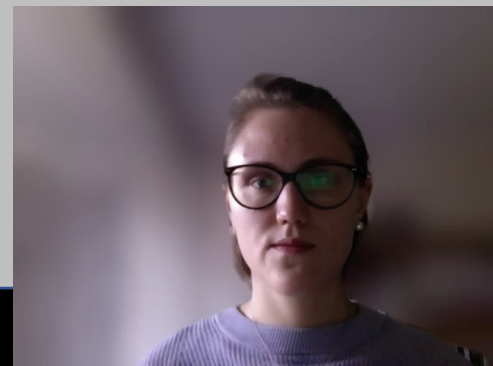
Jewish in West Iran (Sanandaj)

	Pronoun	copula	verbal inflection
1ms.	<i>ana</i> ʾ	= <i>y-ena</i> I.am.MS	<i>haw-éna</i> be-1MS
1pl.	<i>axni</i>	= <i>y-ex</i>	<i>haw-éx</i>
2fs.	<i>āt</i>	= <i>y-at</i>	<i>hawy-át</i>
3ms.	<i>o</i>	= <i>y(-e)</i>	<i>haw-e</i>
3fs.	<i>o</i>	= <i>y-a</i>	<i>hawy-a</i>
3pl.	<i>oni</i>	= <i>y-en</i>	<i>haw-en</i>

Correspondence with subject
suffixes throughout



3. Syntax: copula type and position



Copula position and type

- Position: pre- or post-predicate

ile
he.is

go beʋa
in-the-house

doxtor=ile
doctor=he.is

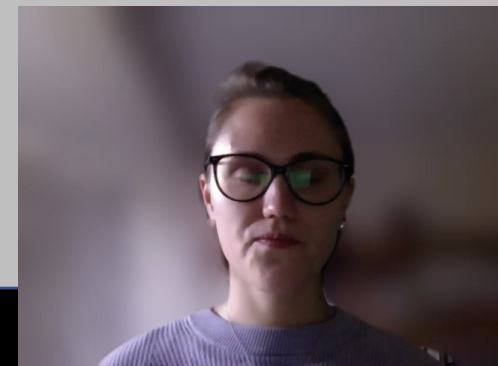
- Type: 'deictic' and 'basic'

wele
look.he.is

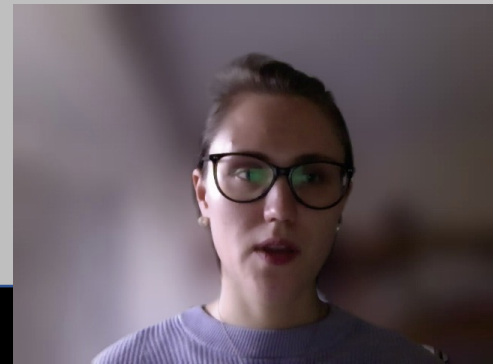
go beʋa
in-the-house

doxtor=ile
doctor=he.is

- 'Deictic': always pre-predicate
- 'Basic': pre- or post-predicate



4. Signalling semantics and/or pragmatics



Pragmatic & semantic features of copula clauses

Predicate semantics

contingent state > stable state > permanent property

Discourse pragmatics

thetic (event only) > categoric (topic + comment)

Predicate type

verbal & adverbial > adjectival > adjectival, nominal

‘(Look,) he has fallen!’ ‘(And now) he is all bruised.’ ‘(That’s because) he’s suc



Semantics mapping on copula clauses: general tendency

contingent state	>	stable state	>	permanent property
thetic			>	categorical
verbal & adverbial	>	adjectival	>	adjectival, nominal

Copula position

Pre-predicate



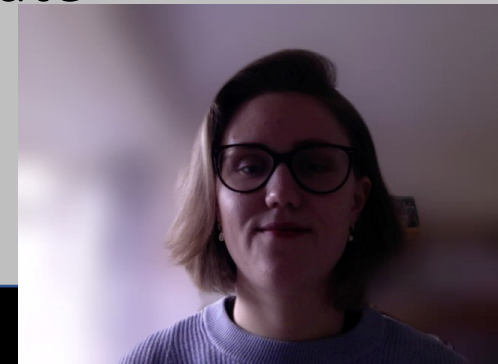
post-predicate

Copula type

deictic



basic



Differences between NENA varieties

contingent state	>	stable state	>	permanent property
thetic		>		categorical
verbal & adverbial	>	adjectival	>	adjectival, nominal

Dialect group A:

Pragmatically determined

Dialect group B:

Grammaticalized



Group A: pragmatic choice

contingent state	>	stable state	>	permanent property
verbal & adverbial	>	adjectival	>	adjectival, nominal
thetic ('all-new inform.)	>			categorical

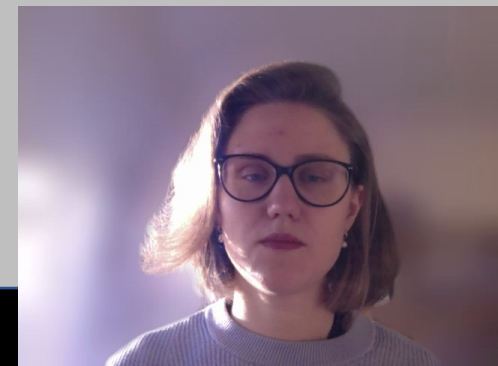
Freedom to encode pragmatics and semantics:

pre-predicate copula selected for contingent state (or theticity), basic copula can also be pre-predicative

Christian N-W Iraq (Barwar): decrease of pragmatic 'saliency'

Khan (2008)

<i>hole</i> (bə)q̣tala	>	<i>ile</i> q̣tala	>	<i>q̣talaε=le</i>	'he is killing'
DEIX.COP_PRED		COP_PRED		PRED=COP	



Group B: obligatory

contingent state	>	stable state	>	permanent property
verbal & adverbial	>	adjectival	>	adjectival, nominal
thetic ('all-new inform.)	>		>	categorical (topic+comment)

Jewish N-W Iraq (Duhok): obligatory

Grammaticalized: for verbal & adverbial predicates, deictic copula_predicate must be used, even for stable states when they are verbal

awa *d-wele* *skina axxa*
he DEIX.COP PRED here

'It is he who I



5. Language contact



Morphological parallels with Iranian

- Convergence resulting in a partial resemblance of subject indexes due to Kurdish

1ms. *ana*
'I'

=*wən*
=I.am

haw-ən
'I (ms.) may be'

- But: only in the 1st & 2nd persons in NENA
- The similarity with verbal suffixes due to convergence, not shared origin



Positional parallel with Iranian and Arabic: enclitic copula

SUBJ PRED=COP

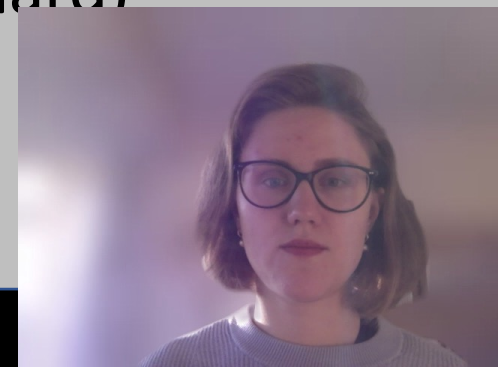
ez piçûk =im
I small =I.am

'I am small.' parallels

SUBJ OBJ VERB order of verbal clauses

ez te di-bîn -im (Northern Kurdish, standard)
1SG.DIR 2SG.OBL IND-see.PRES 1SG

'I see you.'



Parallel with Iranian and Arabic: pre-predicate deictic/contingent state copula

- Pre-predicate deictic contingent state copula in Iranian, Aramaic and Arabic
- Northern Kurdish: *ezafe* > copula

Khan (2018), data by Hiwa Asadpour

SUBJ(=)COP	PRED
<i>Ergin yê</i>	<i>di-hêt</i>
Ergin is.MS	DEIX-COME.PRS.3MS

‘I am small.’

- NENA (in Northern Kurdish area) *dedicated* copula type, hist from ‘There, him!’



Morphological parallels of Central Neo-Aramaic and local Arabic: copula clearly pronominal

Siirt Arabic (Siirt, Turkey)

anā *fə-l-bayt* = *na*
I in-the-house = I.am

1pl. *nəḥne* = *nəḥne*

2ms. *ante* = *ante*

3ms. *ūwe* = *we*

3fs. *īye* = *ye*

3pl. *anne* = *(ə)nne*

Lahdo (2009: 74)

local
Aramaic

Lahdo (2009: 74)

Arabic < Aramaic < K



Parallel with Baghdadi (Christian) Arabic: 'object-like' copula

Christian Baghdad Arabic Abu-Haidar (1991: 80)

1sg. ana *yā-ni* *-ni*

3ms. *hūwe* *yā-nu* *-nu*

NENA of northern Iraq

1ms. ana =wən --

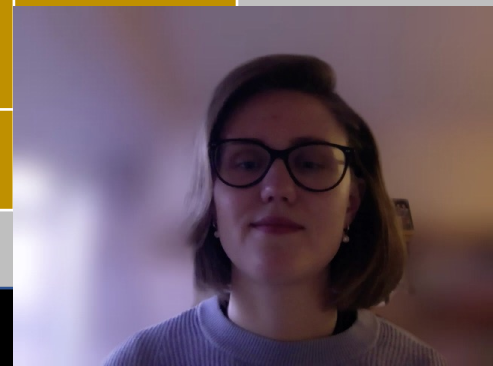
3ms. *awa* =(i)*le* *-le*

- BUT: In NENA restricted to the 3rd persons



Copula: degrees of convergence (Molin & Noorlander, presentation 2021)

	subject-focus without agreement	independent pronouns	bound pron. copula	3 rd person theme object	quasi-verbal	verbal	obligatory	obligatory clause-final
Syr. Arab.	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
West. NA	-	+	+ (proclitic)	-	+	-	-	-
Mesop. qəltu-Arab.	-	(+/-)	+	+	+	-	-	-
Central NA (SE Turkey)	-	(+/-)	+	+	+	-	-	-
NENA (SE Turkey)	-	(+/-)	+/-	-	+	-	-	-
NENA (NW Iraq)	-	(+/-)	-	+/-	+	-	-	-
Easternmost Jewish NENA	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
Most of Kurdish	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	





Thank you!

