NubiaFEST 2020 Old Nubian Crash Course Day 5 – Sentences and Subordination

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Topic/Focus

Topic marker **-ⲉⲓⲟⲛ** (variants **-ⲟⲛ**, **-ⲗⲟⲛ**, **-ⲕⲟⲛ**, **-ⲛⲟⲛ**, **-ⲣⲟⲛ** marks the topic of the clause, which is information **already known** to the listener. The topic marker always marks the first constituent of a clause.

Focus marker **-ⲗⲟ/ⲗⲱ** marks the focus of the clause, which is **new information**.

Topic/Focus

(1) SC 17.22–23 ⲇⲟⲩⲛ̄ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲧⲗⲟ ⲥ̣ⲁⲗⲗⲱ ⲇⲟⲩⲁ̄ⲣⲁ· ⲥⲁ[ⲗⲗⲟⲛ] ⲧ̄ⲗ̄ⲓⲗⲁⲗⲟ [ⲇ]ⲟⲩⲟ̄ⲛⲁ·

joun~jour-t-lo   *sal-∅-lō*   *dou-ar-a-∅*
cause~INT-NMLZ-LOC word-NOM-FOC exist-PST1-PRED
sal-l-∅-on   *till-ila-lo*   *dou-on-a*
word-DET-NOM-TOP God-DAT-FOC exist-PST1.2/3SG-PRED

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.' (Jn 1:1)

Topic/Focus

(2) M 9.16–10.8 ⲕⲩⲣⲓⲁⲕⲉⲛ ⲟⲩⲕⲟⲩⲣ ⲉⲓⲛⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲛ· ⲁ̄ⲡⲟⲅⲅⲗ̄ ⲇⲓ̄ⲡⲡⲇ̄ⲇⲱ ⲕⲉⲇⲁ ⲕⲓⲥⲛⲁ· ⲕⲟⲣⲉⲕˋ ⲉⲧ̄ⲛⲓⲁ· ⲙⲁⲛ ⲇⲓ̄ⲡⲡⲓⲗⲁⲉⲓⲟⲛ ⲡⲁⲣⲑⲉⲛⲟⲥⲟⲩ ⲅ̄ⲥ̄ⲥⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁⲛ ⲕⲥ̄ⲥⲉⲗⲗⲟ ⲅⲟⲛⲇ̄ⲁⲣⲁ· ⲧⲁⲣⲓⲁ̄ⲉⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲟⲣⲁ ⲕⲓⲥⲛⲁ· ⲕⲟⲣⲉⲕˋ ⲉⲧ̄ⲛⲓⲁ·

kuriake-n	*oukour ein-in-non*		*apogg-il-∅*	*dipp-id-dō*
Sunday-GEN	day	be-PRS.2/3SG-TOP	boatsman-DET-NOM	village-DET-SUPE
ked-a	*ki-s-n-a*		*kore-k*	*eit-ni-a*
ascend-PRED	come-PST2-2/3SG-PRED		sacrament-ACC	receive-SUBORD.SG-PRED
man	*dipp-ila-eion*	*parthenosou ŋissou maria-n*		*kisse-l-∅-lo*
DEM.DIST	village-DAT-TOP	virgin holy Mary-GEN		church-DET-NOM-FOC
ŋonj-ar-a	*tari-a-eion*	*tor-a*	*ki-s-n-a*	*eit-ni-a*
stand-PST1-PRED	3SG-DAT-TOP	enter-PRED	come-PST2-2/3SG-PRED	receive-SUBORD.SG-PRED

'As it was Sunday, the sailor went up to the village to receive the sacrament. In that village stood the church of the Holy Virgin Mary. There he entered to receive the sacrament.'

Obligatory Focus Marking

The focus marker is obligatory on nominal predicates in a main clause:

(3) P.QI 2 21.ii.9–11 ⲓⲱⲥⲏⲫⲓ ⲥⲟⲩⲧⲟⲩⲉ ⲇⲁⲩⲟⲩⲗ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲁⲗⲟ

Iōsēphi soutoue dauoul-∅　　*matar-a-lo*
Iōsēphi scribe　great.DET-NOM witness-PRED-FOC

'Iōsēphi, the Great Scribe, is witness.'

Obligatory Focus Marking

The focus marker is obligatory on negative verbal predicates in a main clause:

(4) St 5.12–6.3 ⲥⲁⲗⲟⲩ ⲁⲓ̈ⲕⲁ ⲉ̄ⲅⲓ̣ⲇⲓⲥⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲉⲕⲕⲉⲛⲇⲉ ⲟⲩⲣⲟⲩⲉⲓⲟ̄
    ⲇⲉⲕⲕⲓⲅⲣ̄ⲙ̄ⲥ̄ⲥⲉⲗⲟ·

salou ai-ka   egid-is-ou   ouek-k-ende   our-ou-eio
word 1SG-ACC ask-PST2-J one-ACC-NEG.CONJ 2PL-J-LOC
dekk-igir-mis-s-e-lo
conceal-CAUS-NEG-PST2-1SG.PRED-FOC

'I did not conceal from you any word which you asked me.'

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Temporal Clauses

- Bare temporal clauses
- Temporal clause with suffix
    - With -ⲗⲟ 'when';
    - With -ⲗⲟ ⲕⲟⲛⲟ 'after';
    - With ⲕⲁⲗⲟ 'since,' lit. 'north, downstream'.
- Temporal clause with conjunction
    - With ⲕⲉⲗⲗⲱ 'as';
    - With ⲡⲁⲅⲟⲩ(ⲕⲁ) 'until'.

Temporal Clauses

(5) a. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲛ̄˙: 'While the boatsman speaks, . . . '

b. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛ˙: 'When the boatsman speaks/spoke, . . . '

c. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛⲛⲟ˙: 'When the boatsman spoke, . . . '

d. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛⲛⲟ ⲕⲟⲛⲟ˙: 'After the boatsman spoke, . . . '

e. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛ ⲕⲁⲗⲟ˙: 'Since the boatsman spoke, . . . '

f. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛ ⲕⲉⲗⲗⲱ˙: 'As the boatsman spoke, . . . '

g. ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ︦ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛ ⲡⲁⲅⲟⲩ(ⲕⲁ): 'Until the boatsman spoke, . . . '

Conditional Clauses

(Non-)coreferential bare conditional clause with ⲁ̄ⲗⲉⲥⲛ̄ 'if':

(6) ⲁ̄ⲗⲉⲥⲛ̄ ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲗ̄ ⲁⲓ̈ⲕⲁ ⲇ̄ⲁⲅⲉⲛ̄· ⲉⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲉ: 'If the boatsman kicks me, I go home.'

(7) ⲁ̄ⲗⲉⲥⲛ̄ ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲓⲕⲁ ⲇ̄ⲁⲅⲉⲓⲣⲓ· ⲉⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲉ: 'If I kick the boatsman, I go home.'

Conditional Clauses

Non-coreferential bare conditional clause with **-ⲕⲟ/-ⲕⲁ** and locative **-ⲗⲟ**:

1SG	**-ⲕⲟ-ï-ⲟ**
2/3SG	**-ⲕⲟ-ⲛ-ⲛⲟ**
1/2PL	**-ⲕⲟ-ⲟⲩ-ō**
3PL	**-ⲕⲟ-ⲁⲛ-ⲛⲟ**

(8) ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲗ̄ ⲁïⲕⲁ ⲇⲁⲅⲉⲓⲕⲟⲛⲛⲟ· ⲉⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲉ: 'If the boatsman kicks me, I go home.'

(9) *but* *ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲓⲕⲁ ⲇⲁⲅⲉⲓⲕⲟïⲟ· ⲉⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲉ

Final Clauses

Coreferential final clause with -ⲛⲓ̄ (sg.)/-ⲛⲟⲩ̄ (pl.)

(10)   ⲉⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲉ· ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲓⲕⲁ ⲇ̄ⲁⲅⲉⲓⲛⲓ̄ⲁ·: 'I go home in order to kick the boatsman.'

Final Clauses

Non-coreferential final clause with **-ⲕⲟ/-ⲕⲁ**, locative **-ⲗⲟ**, and predicate marker **-ⲁ**:

1SG	**-ⲕⲟ-ï-ⲟ-ā**
2/3SG	**-ⲕⲟ-ⲛ-ⲛⲟ-ā**
1/2PL	**-ⲕⲟ-ⲟⲩ-ō-ā**
3PL	**-ⲕⲟ-ⲁⲛ-ⲛⲟ-ā**

(11)   ⲥⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩⲣⲟ· ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲓⲕⲁ ⲇ̄ⲁⲅⲉⲓⲕⲟⲛⲛⲟⲁ̄·: 'We go home so that you kick the boatsman.'

Causal Clauses

Causal clauses are formed by a bare temporal clause with the conjunction ⲇⲟⲩⲣⲣⲱ; -ⲗⲉ ⲇⲟⲩⲛ/ⲗⲟ ⲇⲟⲩⲛ; or ⲗⲟ ⲇⲱⲁ̄.

(12)   ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲁ̄ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛ ⲇⲟⲩⲣⲣⲱ⁚: 'Because the boatsman spoke, . . . '

(13)   ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲁ̄ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛⲛⲉ ⲇⲟⲩⲛ· : 'Because the boatsman spoke, . . . '

(14)   ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅⲁ̄ⲗⲟⲛ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛⲛⲟ ⲇⲱⲁ̄· : 'Because the boatsman spoke, . . . '

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British Museum Or. MS 6805

British Museum Or. MS 6805 containing *The Miracle of Saint Mina*. As a result of the colonialist heritage that continues to dominate British Museum policy, these images are not publicly available despite scholars having acquired them for their own research with public money. I'd be happy to share these high-res images with anyone who asks me.

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(15) M 1.1–3 ⲅⲟⲕⲕⲟⲣⲁ ⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥⲛ̄ ⲙⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲟⲥⲟⲩ ⲉ̄ⲥ̄ⲥⲟⲩ ⲙⲏⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲁⲩⲥⲁⲗⲱ·

   ŋokkor-a   khristos-in   marturosou ŋissou mēna-na
   miracle-PRED Christ-GEN martyr   holy   Mina-GEN

   au-s-a-lō
   make-PST2-PRED-FOC

   'This is a miracle that Saint Mina, the martyr of Christ,
   performed.'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(16) M 1.4–5 ⲧⲁⲗⲛ̄ ⲧⲟⲕⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲅⲉ̄ⲗⲟ ⲁ̄ⲙⲏ̄·

till-in   tokinnaue-lo amē(n)
God-GEN peace-LOC   amen

'In the peace of God, amen.'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(17)   M 1.5 ⲟⲛⲧⲁⲕⲣⲁⲅⲟⲩⲉ̄ⲕⲉ

on-tak-r-a-goue-ke
love-PASS-PRS-PRED-PL.PRED-2PL

'Beloved!'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(18) M 1.5–8 ⲉⲧⲧⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲉⲗⲗⲟ ⲇⲓⲡⲡⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲉⲗⲗⲁ ⲇⲟⲩⲁ̄ⲣⲁ· ⲁ̄ⲗⲉⲍⲁⲛⲇⲣⲉⲛ·
ϣⲓ̄ⲕⲅⲟⲩⲗⲁ·

eittou   ouel-∅-lo   dippou ouel-la   dou-ar-a
woman one-NOM-FOC village one-DAT exist-PST1-PRED

alexandre-n   šik-gou-la
Alexandria-GEN district-ground-DAT

'There was a woman living in a village, in the district of
Alexandria.'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(19) M 1.8–11 ⲧⲁⲣⲟⲛ ⲙⲓⲣⲁ ⲁ̄ⲅⲉⲛⲇⲉ ⲟⲩⲛⲛⲁⲣⲁ ⲙⲉⲛⲛⲁⲗⲱ· ⲅⲁⲕˋⲉⲛⲇⲉˋ ⲁⲥⲕⲉⲛⲇⲉ·

> *tar-∅-on*   *mir-a*   *ag-ende*   *ounn-ar-a*
> 3SG-NOM-TOP barren-PRED sit-NEG.CONJ bear-PST1-PRED
> *men-n-a-lō̄*   *ŋak-ende*
> not.be-PRS.2/3SG-PRED-FOC   son.ACC-NEG.CONJ
> *as-k-ende*
> daughter-ACC-NEG.CONJ

'She remained barren and bore neither son nor daughter.'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(20) M 1.11–2.2 ⲉⲓⲯⲧ̄ⲧⲟⲩ ⲅⲟⲩⲕⲧⲗⲱ ⲇⲓⲉⲓⲕⲟⲛ ⲕⲟⲁ̄ⲗⲟ ⲉ̄ⲛⲟⲛⲁ· ⲥⲉⲩⲁⲧⲧⲕⲟⲛ ⲕⲟⲛⲙⲉⲛⲛⲁⲗⲱ·

> *eiñittou ŋoukt-lō   diei-k-on*
> wealth abundance.NMLZ-LOC be.many-ACC-TOP
>
> *ko-a-lo   en-on-a   seu-att-k-on*
> have-PRED-FOC be-PST1.2/3SG-PRED inherit-NMLZ-ACC-TOP
>
> *kon-men-n-a-lō*
> have-NEG-PRS.2/3SG-PRED-FOC

'In abundant wealth she possessed much, but she had no heir.'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(21) M 2.2–4 ⲉⲛ̄ ⲅⲉⲉⲛ̄ ⲇⲟⲩⲣⲓⲁ̄ ⲉⲓⲇⲉⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲁⲛ︥ ⲁ̄ⲉⲗ̄ⲗⲁ ⲙⲁⲓ̈ⲕⲁⲣⲓⲥⲛⲁ·

    ein   *ŋeein*   *jouri-a*   *ei-a-eion*   *tan*
    DEM.PROX thing.GEN cause-DAT say-PRED-TOP 3SG.GEN

    aeil-la   *maik-ar-is-n-a*
    heart-DAT afflict-TR-PST2-2/3SG-PRED

    'Talking about this thing hurt her heart.'

The Miracle of Saint Mina

(22)   M 2.5–10 ⲧⲁⲛ ⲅⲟⲅⲗⲁ ⲇⲟⲩⲁ̄ⲣⲁ ⲙ̄ⲕ̄ϣⲁⲛⲅⲟⲩⲕⲕⲉⲧⲁⲗⲗⲉⲉⲓⲟⲛ
ⲙⲉⲓⲣⲁⲅⲟⲩⲉ̄ⲗⲱ ⲉⲓⲥⲥⲁⲛⲁ· ⲙⲉⲇϫⲟⲩⲛⲏ̄ ⲧⲁⲉⲓⲅⲟⲩⲗ· ⲧⲟⲩⲉⲓⲅⲟⲩⲗ·
ⲇⲟⲩⲧⲣⲁⲡⲓⲅⲟⲩⲗⲱ ⲕⲓⲉⲥ̄ⲕⲗ̄ⲗⲱ·

tan	*ŋog-la*	*dou-ar-a*	*miššan-gou-k-ketalle-eion*
3SG.GEN	house-DAT	exist-PST1-PRED	all-PL-DET-also-TOP
meir-a-goue-lō		*eis-s-an-a*	
barren-PRED-PL.PRED-FOC		be-PST2-3PL-PRED	
medjou-ni-n	*taei-gou-l-∅*		*touei-gou-l-∅*
servant-PL-GEN	girl.PL-PL-DET-NOM		cow.PL-PL-DET-NOM
doutrap-igou-lō	*kieiskillō*		
fowl-PL-LOC	until.LOC		

'Also all who lived at her house were barren, the servant girls, the cows, up to the fowls.'

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