

THE COPULA SYSTEM IN PALENQUERO. AN OVERVIEW ON STATIVE PREDICATES.

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Palenquero is a Caribbean Spanish-based Creole spoken in San Basilio de Palenque (Colombia), that has known increasing documentation in the last forty years; although much descriptive work has been accomplished (Friedemann & Patiño 1983, Schwegler 1998) many aspects of its grammar have not yet been covered by a detailed study, one of which is surely the copula system.

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the various copulas present in Palenquero and to account for their syntactic and semantic distribution and compatibility with different kinds of stative predicates. Our assumptions are formulated by consulting primary data collected through elicitation from native speakers and secondary data from the Moñino-Maglia (2015) corpus and descriptive literature.

We show that the oppositional couple *tá/é* works with adjectival and nominal predicates, and, it has already been noticed by F&P (1983), coincides with the distribution of the Spanish *estar/ser*, being motivated semantically: in fact, *tá* is used with stage-level adjectival predicates and with locative predicates, while *é* is used with nominal and individual-level adjectival predicates.

We explore the sociolinguistic account of *sendá* (from the Spanish *sentar(se)* 'to sit'), especially in connection with the demographic variable of the age of the speakers. In particular, we argue that *sendá* has a sociolinguistically motivated distribution, since it is preferred by the social group of young speakers (12-30) in place of the *é* copula.

On these grounds, other points of theoretical and descriptive order are worthy to be enquired, for instance the origin of the copula *sendá* and the typological distribution of copulas that etymologically derive from the verb 'to sit'.

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