

Locative features of Laro, a Nuba Language of Sudan

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Laro is a Niger-Kordofanian language spoken in the Nuba Mountains east of Kadugli in the regional state of Southern Kordofan. Laro is closely related to the languages of Heiban, Otoro and Kwalib. There are 25,000-50,000 speakers including those in the homeland and those displaced to major cities of Sudan.

Laro is a noun class system with 10 noun classes, and has prefixes and suffixes. Demonstratives and adjectives agree with the head noun. Laro has an 8- vowel system: [i, u, ə] are [+ATR], [ɪ, ʊ, ɛ, ɔ, a] are [-ATR]. The [ATR] sets are not mixed in the same word. Laro is a tonal language with high and low tone, with rising and falling tone also occurring on monosyllabic words.

*Locatives commonly occur along with prepositions in the same word. Prepositions indicating direction occur as prefixes and locatives usually occur as suffixes. The preposition **g-** 'to' shows agreement with common nouns and the preposition **nd-** 'to' shows agreement with proper nouns. Initial high tone can take the place of prepositions in words with initial velars consonants. Locatives primarily indicate location but may also indicate the time of day. The locatives **-ala** 'above, on top of', **-alu** 'on ground level', and **-anu** 'under ground level, in, under' are suffixes, and can be affixed to nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, and adverbs, their vowels harmonised with the vowels in the root. The locative **nono** 'around, surrounding' is not affected by vowel harmony and is therefore considered an independent locative.*