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Complex predicates as source constructions for non-canonical affixation

Peter Arkadiev

Universität Potsdam

alpgurev@gmail.com, https://peterarkadiev.github.io/

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What it is about

- A verbal complex predicate (VCP) is a monoclausal construction with a single set of argument positions, consisting of at least two verbs (or "verb-like" items). These two verb-like items either

  (i) both belong synchronically to the class of verbs, or

  (ii) combine a lexical verb (L-verb) with a grammatical element (G-verb) which can also be used as a full verb in other contexts.

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- The components of a VCP start out as independent morphosyntactic and phonological words.
- In the process of grammaticalisation (or lexicalisation) the components of a VCP may undergo univerbation, i.e. become a single word (phonological, morphosyntactic, or both).

Anderson 2006: Ch. 6, Bowern 2008, Lehmann 2020

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Andersen 1987; Bowern 2008; Haspelmath 2011; Lehmann 2020

What it is about

- Univerbation of complex predicates is one of the recognised and cross-linguistically recurrent pathways of development of affixes from lexical material.

Bybee et al. 1994; Anderson 2006: Ch. 6; Givón 2015

What it is about

Central Tibetan (Sino-Tibetan > Bodic; DeLancey 2004: 1592)

(1) a. *kho phyin-byas bzhag-pa_red* clause-chaining
he go-NFIN put-PFV
'He went and put it there.'

b. *kho phyin bzhag-pa_red* VCP
he go put-PFV
'He has gone.'

c. *kho phyin-zhag* verb+affix
he go-INFR.PFV
'He has left (I infer).'

NFIN – nonfinite, PFV – perfective

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- What has attracted comparatively less attention is the fate of affixal material occurring on the constituents of the VCP undergoing grammaticalisation and univerbation.
- Most of the discussion revolves around the notion of decategorialisation presupposing that the grammaticalising element (i.e. G-verb) loses all or most of its own inflectional potential and internal morphological structure.

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Loss of inflection by the G-verb in univerbation

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What it is about

- This is however clearly not always the case.
- The position and/or form of the morphological material arisen through univerbation of VCPs often goes back to the inflection of the original G-verb.
- This is unsurprising given the typologically recurrent pattern where it is the G-verb that is inflected in the VCP, the L-verb being invariable (e.g. a non-finite form).

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Kunuz (Nubian; Egypt, Sudan; Abdel-Hafiz 1988):
'give' > benefactive

(2) a. *buru* *ay-gi* *kita:p-ki* *de:s-s-u*
girl 1SG-OBJ book-OBJ give.1-PST-3SG
'The girl gave me the book.' (Abdel-Hafiz 1988: 231)

b. *ay* *it-ti* *ka:-g* *tir-s-i*
1SG man-OBJ house-OBJ give.2/3-PST-1SG
'I gave the man the house.' (ibid.)

OBJ – objective case

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Person-based suppletion

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(3) a. *id ay-gi ba:p-ki alle-de:s-s-u*
man 1SG-OBJ door-OBJ repair-BEN.1-PST-3SG
'The man repaired the door for me.' (ibid.: 114)

b. *it-ti b a:p-ki kop-tir-s-i*
man-OBJ door-OBJ close-BEN.2/3-PST-1SG
'I closed the door for the man.' (ibid.)

BEN – benefactive, OBJ – objective case

What it is about

Person-based suppletion retained in morphologisation

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Parameters to consider

1. Which of the components of the complex predicate bear inflectional affixes: L-verb, G-verb, both.
2. Orientation of these affixes with respect to the stems of each of the relevant components:
   m-L, L-m; m-G, G-m
3. Order of L-verb and G-verb: L G, G L

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inflected verb	orientation	L G	G L
inflection on L	prefixes	m-L G	G m-L
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inflection on G	prefixes	L m-G	m-G L
	suffixes	L G-m	G-m L
inflection both on G and L	prefixes	m-L m-G	m-G m-L
	suffixes	L-m G-m	G-m L-m
	pref-G, L-suff	L-m m-G	m-G L-m
	G-suff, pref-L	m-L G-m	G-m m-L

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	suffixes		
	pref-G, L-suff		
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To check all the logically possible types for actual occurrence can be subject of a separate investigation.

Straightforward cases

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Straightforward cases

- L(-m) G-m > L-suff-m
- typologically apparently the most frequent situation

Ukrainian (Danylenko 2011): ‘take’ > future

(3) **pysa-ty* *im-u* > *pysa-tym-u*
write-INF take-PRS.1SG write-FUT-1SG
‘I shall write’

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- m-G (m)-L
- apparently less common

Bemba (Atlantic-Congo > Bantu, Zambia; Givon 2015: 120)

(5) a. *a-a-lí-kaana* *uku-boomba*
3SG-REM-PST-refuse INF-work
'S/he refused to work (long ago).'

b. *a-a-lí-kaanaa-boomba*
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Straightforward cases

- m_1-L G-m_2 > m_1-L-suff-m_2

West Circassian (North West Caucasian > Circassian, Russia; cf. Arkadiev, to appear): 'be joined' > frequentative

(5) a. *qə-s-ɑ-ʔʷe* *ze-pə-tə-ʁ*
CSL-1SG.IO-3PL.ERG-say REC.IO-LOC:front-stand-PST

b. *qə-s-ɑ-ʔʷe–ze.pə.tə-ʁ*
CSL-1SG.IO-3PL.ERG-say–FREQ-PST
'they used to tell me' (AdCorp)

~ c. *qə-s-ɑ-ʔʷɑ-ʁ*
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(6) a. *qə-s-a-ʔʷa-ʁ*
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CSL – cislocative, ERG – ergative, IO – indirect object

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REC – reciprocal

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  > periodic multiple exponence (Harris 2017: 55-59, 113-150)

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- L-m_1 G-m_1 > L-m_1-suff-m_1

Pengo (Dravidian > South Dravidian, India; Steever 1984)

V-PST-SBJ + 'be'-NPST-SBJ > perfect

(6) a. **huṛ-t-aŋ man-n-aŋ >*
see-PST-1SG be-NPST-1SG

b. *huṛ-t-aŋ-n-aŋ*
see-PST-1SG-PRF-1SG
'I have seen.'

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'I have seen.'

NPST – non-past

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'I have seen.'

NPST – non-past, PRF – perfect

Less straightforward cases

- m_1-G m_1-L > m_1-pref-m_1-L

Alur (Nilotic > Western Nilotic, Uganda; Ringe 1953: 28-29):
'be' > progressive

(7) a. **à-bèdò à-marò* >
1SG-be/PST 1SG-love/PST

b. *à-bèd-à-marò*
1SG-PROG.PST-1SG-love/PST
'I was loving.'

Less straightforward cases

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Alur (Nilotic > Western Nilotic, Uganda; Ringe 1953: 28-29): 'be' > progressive

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PROG – progressive

Less straightforward cases

- m_1-L m_1-G > m_1-L-m_1-suff

Bezhta (Nakh-Daghestanian > Tsezic, Russia; Khalilova 2022: 93): ‘die’ > completive

(8) a. *kid biλo-ʁa j-ohda-jo*
girl house-APUD F-work-PST
‘The girl worked at home.’

b. *kid biλo-ʁa j-ohda-j-uʁo-jo*
girl house-APUD F-work-F-die-PST
‘The girl finished working at home.’

Less straightforward cases

- m_1-L m_1-G > m_1-L-m_1-suff

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b. *kid biƛo-ʁa j-ohda-j-uʁo-jo*
girl house-APUD F-work-F-die-PST
‘The girl finished working at home.’

APUD – apudessive case, F – feminine

Less straightforward cases

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Bezhta (Nakh-Daghestanian > Tsezic, Russia; Khalilova 2022: 93): ‘die’ > completive

(9) a. *kid biƛo-ʁa j-ohda-jo*
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‘The girl worked at home.’

b. *kid biƛo-ʁa j-ohda-j-uʁo-jo*
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APUD – apudessive case, F – feminine

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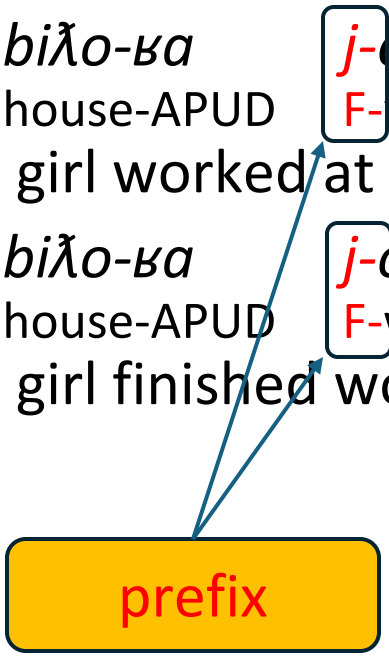

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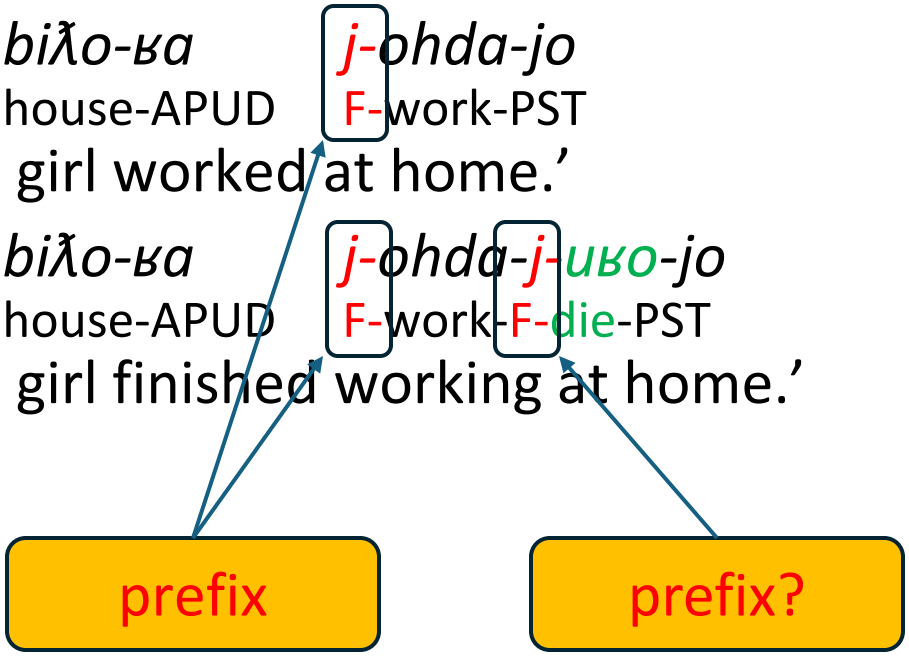

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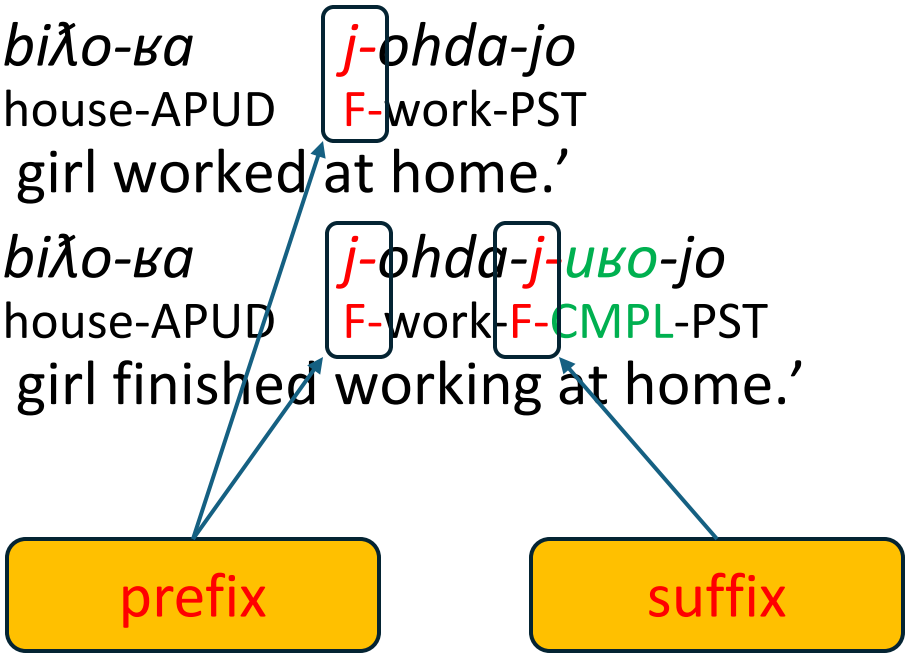

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Less straightforward cases

- Affixalisation in counterposition (Stump 2022: 26 et passim) yields both multiple exponence and ambifixation.
- Ambifixes: affixes able to occur both as prefixes and as suffixes depending on some condition.
- “Canonical” ambifixation requires that affixes occur either as prefixes or as suffixes, i.e. without multiple exponence.
- Such cases also arise through univerbation of VCPs.

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inflected verb	orientation	L G	G L
inflection on L	prefixes	m-L G	G m-L
	suffixes	L-m G	G L-m
inflection on G	prefixes	L m-G	m-G L
	suffixes	L G-m	G-m L
inflection both on G and L	prefixes	m-L m-G	m-G m-L
	suffixes	L-m G-m	G-m L-m
	pref-G, L-suff	L-m m-G	m-G L-m
	G-suff, pref-L	m-L G-m	G-m m-L

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inflected verb	orientation	L G	G L
inflection on L	prefixes	m-L G	G m-L
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inflection on G	prefixes	L m-G	m-G L
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inflection both on G and L	prefixes	m-L m-G	m-G m-L
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Fairly well-attested across the world

Less straightforward cases

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	suffixes	L-m G	G L-m
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	G-suff, pref-L	m-L G-m	G-m m-L

Clear cases not yet in my database

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- m-L vs. L m-G > L-m-suff: morphological split

Tabasaran (Nakh-Daghestanian > Lezgic; Russia, Azerbaijan; Magometov 1965: 290-310; Babaliyeva 2023: 33-34):

(10) a. *d-ap'-nu*
PRF-do-PFV.CVB
'having done'

a.' *dar-ap'-i*
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	object prefixes		**‘show’**		**object suffixes**	
	Sg	Pl	Sg	Pl	Sg	Pl
1/2	*wa-*	*ma-*	*was*	*mas*	*-(w)an/r*	*-man/r*
3	zero		*as*	*nis*	*-en/r*	*-nin(ta)*

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- m-L vs. L m-G > L-m-suff: lexical split
- Oppositions between a closed class of simplex verbs with object prefixes and a potentially open class of complex verbs with object suffixes originating from compounds or serialisation is well-attested across the Papuan languages of New Guinea (Suter 2012, Windschuttel 2018).
- Other potentially similar cases:
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Discussion

- VCPs constitute not only a frequent source of grammatical affixes, but also an important type of environment where such non-canonical and still rarely discussed morphological phenomena as multiple exponence and ambifixation arise.

Discussion

- Univerbation of VCPs is a ubiquitous process occurring in many language families all over the world:
  - it is unsurprising that both multiple exponence and ambifixation are attested in many unrelated languages across the world (Harris 2017; Stump 2022; Arkadiev 2024);
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- Typologically rare structures are those that
  - arise from less frequently occurring source constructions;
  - develop through several steps;
  - more frequently undergo leveling or simplification.

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- Periodic multiple exponence can only emerge if both L-verb and G-verb in a VCP inflect for the same feature(s).

➢Does not seem to be an extremely common situation.

- Multiple exponence is subject to "externalisation of inflection" and other processes leading to obliteration or leveling.

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- In ambifixation, it is not infrequently the case that prefixation and suffixation are distributed unevenly, one of them being a restricted and another a productive pattern (e.g. in many languages of New Guinea, Windschuttel 2018).
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This notwithstanding,

- both multiple exponence and ambifixation are typologically well-attested phenomena;
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Thank you for you attention!
Merci pour votre attention!

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