Extended Exponence in Cross-Linguistic Perspective

In Batsbi (also known as Tsova-Tush), a language if the Nakh group of the Nakh-Daghestanian language family, markers of gender-number agreement can occur simultaneously in several positions in a single verb form, as illustrated in (1), where these markers are glossed CM.

(1)   tišiⁿ c'a   daħ   **d**-ex-**d**-o-**d**-anŏ
        old   house(d/d).ABS PV   CM-destroy-CM.TR-PRES-CM-EVIDI
        'They are evidently tearing down the old house.'

The use of more than one morpheme to encode a feature or feature bundle (here gender and number) has been called extended exponence or multiple exponence. The existence of extended exponence poses a challenge to morpheme-based accounts of morphology, as observed by Matthews (1972, 1974). Relying on the notion of feature-form biuniqueness, post-Bloomfieldian linguistics conceives of features as being expended or used up once they are realized by one morpheme. Yet such repetition, sometimes with allomorphic variation, is found not only in several of the languages of the Nakh-Daghestanian family, but in languages around the world. The pattern in (1), with more than two morphemes encoding gender and number, raises questions of typological distribution (for example, so such patterns occur only in languages of certain types?), diachronic origin (how and why do such patterns originate?), and linguistic theory (how can we account for systems of this type?).

The goal of this research is a comprehensive and integrated account of extended exponence of all types. Specifically, this involves (a) characterization of the extent of variation of the pattern, (b) a statement of constraints on the pattern, if any, (c) discussion of the relation of the pattern to a variety of theoretical proposals, and (d) a description of the origins of these patterns in the languages studied.

Selected publications from this project:

Exuberant Exponence in Batsbi. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 27:267-303. 2009.

Clitics and Affixes in Batsbi. *Representing Language: Essays in Honor of Judith Aissen*, ed.
        by Gutiérrez-Bravo, Rodrigo, Line Mikkelsen and Eric Potsdam, 137-155. California
        Digital Library eScholarship Repository. Linguistic Research Center, University of
        California, Santa Cruz. 2011. http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0vf4s9tk

Perception of Exuberant Exponence in Batsbi: Functional or Incidental? Alice C. Harris and
        Arthur G. Samuel. *Language* 87: 447-469. 2011.

Language Contact and the Origins of Multiple Exponence in Archi Pronouns. Alice C. Harris and Andrei Antonenko. *Languages and Cultures in the Caucasus: Papers from the International Conference "Current Advances in Caucasian Studies"*, ed. by Vittorio Springfield Tomelleri, Manana Topadze, and Anna Lukianowicz, with Oleg Rumjancev, 223-243. München: Verlag Otto Sagner. 2011.

A Working Typology of Multiple Exponence. Gabriela Caballero and Alice C. Harris. *Current issues in morphological theory: (Ir)regularity, analogy, and frequency*, ed. by Ferenc Kiefer, Mária Ladányi, and Péter Siptár, 163-188. [Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 322.] Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 2012.

Multiple Exponence. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2017.