ABHANDLUNGEN FÜR DIE KUNDE
DES MORGENLANDES
Band 91

Explorations in Ethiopian Linguistics: Complex Predicates, Finiteness and Interrogativity

Edited by
Ronny Meyer, Yvonne Treis
and Azeb Amha

Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft

Harrassowitz Verlag

ABHANDLUNGEN FÜR DIE KUNDE
DES MORGENLANDES

Im Auftrag der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
herausgegeben von Florian C. Reiter

Band 91

2014

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

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Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.dnb.de abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the internet at http://dnb.dnb.de.

For further information about our publishing program consult our website http://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de

Printed on permanent/durable paper.
Printing and binding: Hubert & Co., Göttingen
Printed in Germany

ISSN 0567-4980
ISBN 978-3-447-10214-8

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Multiple Exponence in the Long Prefix Conjugation of the Transversal South Ethio-Semitic Languages

Maria Bulakh
Russian State University for the Humanities

Abstract

The phenomenon of one-to-many correspondence between a grammatical meaning and its morphological realization within one word, referred to as *multiple exponence*, is well-known cross-linguistically. This article deals with this phenomenon in the Transversal South Ethio-Semitic (TSES) languages and focuses on the evolution of the analytic constructions involving the long prefix conjugation (LPC) form of the main verb and the auxiliary verbs **hallawa* and **nabara*. The original analytic constructions had double marking of person, once on the main verb and once on the auxiliary verb: ****yə-sabr-u*** *hallaw-**u***, with the 3PL agreement markers *yə-...-u* on the main verb and *-u* on the auxiliary verb. The common trend is to eliminate one of the redundant morphemes, either throughout the paradigm or in certain slots only. The exhaustive survey of the TSES paradigms going back to combinations of the LPC with **hallawa* and **nabara* enables examination of various patterns of dealing with multiple exponence and various degrees of toleration of multiple exponence. The general tendency to avoid repetition of formally similar morphemes and to tolerate double marking by way of disparate exponents can be observed.[1]

1 Introduction

The languages discussed in this article – Amharic, Argobba, Harari and the three East Gurage languages Zay, Wolane, and Silt'e – are Transversal South Ethio-Semitic (TSES) languages. This term was introduced by Hetzron (1972:6 f.) as a name of a genealogical sub-branch within South Ethio-Semi-

1 I am most grateful to the Russian Foundation for Humanities (RFH/РГНФ) for supporting this investigation (grant #12-04-00092a). Warm thanks go to the anonymous reviewers of the draft version of the paper for their careful reading, corrections and insightful comments. Needless to say, all the errors are mine.

tic (SES) which, in turn, is a genealogical unit within Ethio-Semitic (ES) (cf. also fn. 4).

The present article focuses on the paradigm of the long prefix conjugation (LPC), which is called *imperfect* in traditional grammars of Ethio-Semitic languages, and *imperfective* in modern descriptive works. The term *long prefix conjugation* (opposed to *short prefix conjugation* = traditional jussive, and to *suffix conjugation* = traditional perfect) is preferred here as unambiguous reference to the form rather than to the meaning.[2] The paradigm of the simple LPC is marked by a special verb base and a set of pre- and circumfixes to mark person, gender and number:[3]

(1) a. *yə-säbər* AMHARIC
3SG.M-break\IPFV
'he breaks'

b. *tə-säbr-i*
2SG.F-break\IPFV-CIRC
'you (SG.F) break'

c. *yə-säbr-u*
3PL-break\IPFV-CIRC
'they break'

In all TSES languages, the LPC has two subtypes, traditionally called *simple* (e.g. Amharic *yəsäbər* 'he breaks') and *compound* (e.g. Amharic *yəsäbrall* 'he breaks').[4]

The semantic content of the compound LPC in modern TSES languages can be tentatively described as non-past. Usually, the aspectual meaning of the imperfective is also attributed to the compound (as well as simple) LPC in modern descriptive works (cf. Meyer 2005:183 ff., 2006:117 for Zay and

2 Note that in the language examples, however, the long prefix conjugation is glossed as IPFV for the sake of consistency within the volume.

3 Throughout the article, the terms *prefix* and *suffix* will be applied to both independent morphemes and parts of circumfixes. In the glosses, the meaning of a circumfix is indicated on the prefix, whereas the suffix is marked as CIRC.

4 The development of the compound LPC, which has replaced the simple LPC in the function of the basic exponent of non-past tense events, is one of the most significant arguments for positing the genealogical unity of TSES (Hetzron 1972:38 ff.). However, this feature is apparently a relatively recent phenomenon that developed independently in individual languages or groups of languages. Notably, it is absent in Ancient Harari, and thus, its presence in Modern Harari is to be attributed to areal diffusion (Wagner 2011:1259). Other common innovations postulated by Hetzron for TSES can be explained by a period of areal affinity rather than by inheritance from a common ancestor language. This is why in the present article the term TSES will be applied as a cover label for Amharic, Argobba, Harari and East Gurage without implying that they constitute a genealogical unit.

Wolane; Wetter 2010:151 ff. for Argobba of Ṭollaha). Indeed, a verb in the form of the compound LPC usually refers to an unbounded situation in the present. However, if the verb refers to a situation in the future, it may well designate a bounded action:

(2) a. *zuhur əsseggädäll* ARGOBBA OF ṬOLLAHA
'one says the midday prayer'
(present time reference, unbounded)

b. *lägan kämise ənnahedäšənna bäyya*
'Tell her: tomorrow we shall take you to Kämise'
(future time reference, bounded) (Wetter 2010:153)

The simple LPC forms occur either in subordinate clauses or in analytic constructions involving various auxiliaries, of which the combination with the past-tense auxiliary **nabara* is the most important and most integrated into the tense-aspect system of TSES. In the modern TSES languages, this construction is the basic exponent of past imperfective. It is opposed to the suffix conjugation (SC) paradigm, which is the exponent of the perfective.

The compound LPC goes back to an analytic construction "simple LPC + non-past tense auxiliary **hallawa*" (cf. Hetzron 1972:38 ff. and Voigt 1977:336 ff. for a detailed overview of the compound LPC paradigms and comparable analytic constructions in Gəʿəz, Tigre and Tigrinya). The use of the verb **hallawa* as an auxiliary is restricted to the non-past tense. Its past tense counterpart is the auxiliary **nabara*. The construction "simple LPC + auxiliary **hallawa*" was thus once structurally parallel to "simple LPC + auxiliary **nabara*". In the course of time, it has achieved a higher degree of grammaticalization, which includes both the degree of morphological fusion between the main verb and the auxiliary, and the semantic generalization. Originally this construction expressed progressive or durative aspectual nuances in the present tense and was opposed to a more neutral simple LPC form. Eventually it ousted the simple LPC form in the main clause and took over its functions and semantics.

Still, some parallels can be traced in the development of both **hallawa*- and **nabara*-constructions in TSES. One of their common features is the phenomenon of multiple exponence and the tendency to avoid it, which is revealed in the evolution of both constructions in most of the TSES languages. It is this phenomenon that is in the focus of the present investigation.

The language specific reflexes of both **nabara* and **hallawa* are referred to as *auxiliary elements* (and, accordingly, glossed as AUX) – a term that, at

least when applied to **hallawa*, is used in a diachronic sense. Similarly, the distinction between the subject agreement markers of main verbs and those of auxiliary elements is to be understood in a diachronic sense. The two constructions, at any stage of their evolution, will be occasionally referred to as **hallawa*-construction and **nabara*-construction.

2 Multiple exponence

The phenomenon of one-to-many correspondence between a grammatical meaning and its morphological realization within one word or one syntactic construction, referred to as *multiple exponence* or *extended exponence* (cf. Matthews 1974:149 f.), has enjoyed a great deal of attention from the adherents of various linguistic theories in the last decades (cf., e.g. Caballero & Harris 2012:163 f. with further references). It has been observed (e.g. by Anderson 2001) that multiple exponence is frequently a result of grammaticalization of analytic (periphrastic) constructions, and that in the course of time it tends to be eliminated, in full accordance with the principle of economy (cf., e.g. Kiparsky 2005; Kibrik 1992:188; for an English summary cf. Testelets 2008:318).

In earlier works, the term *multiple exponence* was usually applied to synthetic forms. The more recent trend is to make this term applicable to the domain of syntax as well (as in Caballero & Harris 2012:166). The theoretical aspects of this expansion – in particular, a precise definition that would draw a borderline between multiple exponence and morphological agreement – remain to be elaborated. Still, this latter approach is fruitful for the present investigation because it legitimizes the inclusion of **nabara*-constructions among the forms to be analyzed. These collocations, usually treated as analytic forms in the modern TSES languages, exhibit the same tendency to avoid multiple exponence which is observed in the more grammaticalized **hallawa*-constructions. Of course, the deletion of redundant morphemes in an analytic construction with **nabara* should be regarded as the first stage of its grammaticalization into a synthetic form.

Multiple exponence is widespread in the languages of the world. However, there is at least one subtype of multiple exponence that occurs only rarely. This subtype, labeled *exuberant exponence* (cf., e.g. Harris 2008), is double marking of the same grammatical meaning by means of two phonetically identical morphemes within one word. The data from the TSES languages confirm the existence of special constraints on exuberant exponence: in some of the paradigms considered in the present investigation, only exuberant exponence is eliminated, whereas other cases of multiple exponence,

in which formally different morphemes with the same grammatical meaning are employed, remain intact (cf. Section 6.3).

3 Multiple exponence in **hallawa-* and **nabara-*constructions

Obviously, the original analytic **hallawa-* and **nabara-*constructions had double marking of subject agreement: once on the main verb and once on the auxiliary verb. Thus, the form ****tə-**sabr-**i** hallo-**ki***, a presumable predecessor of the Amharic form in (3), contains the 2SG.F AGRS marker **tə-...-i* on the main verb and in the same function **-ki* on the auxiliary verb. In this particular case, the double marking is preserved in modern Amharic:

(3) *tə-säbr-iy=allä-š* AMHARIC
2SG.F-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) break'

The TSES languages exhibit a strong tendency to get rid of multiple exponence in the **hallawa-* and **nabara-*constructions. The evolution of the analytic constructions with **hallawa* and **nabara* is frequently accompanied by the loss of some of the AGRS morphemes, either on the auxiliary or on the main verb. However, a lot of variation can be observed as far as the realization of this general tendency is concerned. Even within one language, multiple exponence may be dealt with in different ways in each of the two constructions or even in different slots of one paradigm. Thus, in the Amharic compound LPC, the suffixal element of the AGRS marker of the main verb is deleted in the 3PL (4) but is preserved in the 2SG.F, shown in (3) above (cf. Leslau 1995:341; for a detailed discussion cf. Diertani & Eilam 2010).

(4) *yə-säbr=all-u* AMHARIC
3PL-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they break'

The 3PL forms with double marking are sometimes found in modern texts as a dialectal feature (cf. Goldenberg 1977:494).

It is the purpose of the present investigation to survey the paradigms of **hallawa-* and **nabara-*constructions in all TSES languages, to analyze various strategies of eliminating multiple exponence and to identify the factors that may favor the deletion or preservation of the redundant morphemes.

Of course, multiple exponence is not confined to these two constructions in TSES. Other verbal paradigms exhibiting the same phenomenon were not

included in the present investigation. Most of them are not omnipresent in TSES and/or are still non-grammaticalized periphrastic constructions. The compound gerund in Amharic and Argobba is the most attractive object of analysis; a future investigation of multiple exponence in this domain will undoubtedly yield interesting results. A cursory glance at these paradigms suggests that their development follows the same principles as those detected in the course of the present investigation.

4 Multiple exponence and syncretism

Syncretism, i.e. lack of distinction between certain forms within a paradigm (cf. Baerman, Brown & Corbett 2005), can be viewed as a phenomenon opposite to multiple exponence. Whereas multiple exponence involves morphological superfluity, syncretism appears as a shortage of morphological means. If multiple exponence emerges as a result of morphological fusion between two paradigms (as in the case of the constructions under scrutiny, between paradigms of the main verb and its auxiliary) and one of these paradigms is syncretic, one could expect multiple exponence to be preserved as a means of distinguishing the originally syncretic forms.

Indeed, in TSES, when an auxiliary is grammaticalized and merges with a preceding main verb, the AGRS morphemes on the auxiliary are not always redundant. In certain cases, these additional morphemes can make the paradigm more distinctive: they can serve to disambiguate some slots of the paradigm that had been syncretic. Consider the Amharic 2SG.M and 3SG.F forms in (5), homophonous in the simple LPC but distinctive in the compound LPC due to the auxiliary AGRS suffixes.

(5) *Simple LPC* AMHARIC

a. *tə-säbr*
2SG.M;3SG.F-break\IPFV
i. ‘you (SG.M) break’
ii. ‘she breaks’

Compound LPC

b. *tə-säbr=allä-h*
2SG.M;~~3SG.F~~-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-2SG.M
‘you (SG.M) break’ vs.

c. *tə-säbr=allä-äčč*
~~2SG.M~~;3SG.F-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3SG.F
‘she breaks’

The omission of the AGRS suffixes *-h* and *-äčč* would lead to a loss of grammatical distinctiveness. Interestingly, the data from TSES testify that such cases of newly introduced disambiguation are still to be considered as instances of multiple exponence: the AGRS suffixes in such positions are eliminated as easily as in the rest of the paradigm. This is exemplified by the Amharic **nabara*-construction, where the AGRS suffixes of the auxiliary are consistently dropped:

(6) *tə-säbr* *näbbär* AMHARIC
2SG.M;3SG.F-break\IPFV AUX.PST
i. 'you (SG.M) were breaking'
ii. 'she was breaking'

Compare the paradigm with preservation of multiple exponence (see also Section 6.1):

(7) *tə-säbr* *näbbär-k* AMHARIC
2SG.M;~~3SG.F~~-break\IPFV AUX.PST-2SG.M
'you (SG.M) were breaking'

vs.

tə-säbr *näbbär-š*
~~2SG.M~~;3SG.F-break\IPFV AUX.PST-3SG.F
'she was breaking'

In order to account for this phenomenon one has to remember that syncretism between 2SG.M and 3SG.F is an archaic feature of the prefix conjugation in Semitic, and that it is easily tolerated in the daughter languages. Notably, it is omnipresent in the simple LPC of TSES.[5] Even if, in the course of evolution, disambiguation is by chance achieved, as in the TSES **hallawa*- and **nabara*-constructions, the information on person-gender-number of the subject is rather perceived as superfluous and can be easily omitted again.

On the contrary, if any of the old paradigmatic oppositions is endangered, the additional AGRS morphemes on auxiliaries are readily employed as

5 The question why the homophony between these two verbal forms was allowed in the protolanguage lies beyond the scope of the present paper. In their fundamental work, Baerman, Brown & Corbett (2005:104 f.), who classify this type of syncretism as partial polarity, make no claims as to whether it is ever preferred to other types of syncretism. In fact, they admit that polarity effects in various languages of the world may be purely accidental.

means to reinforce the archaic ones. Thus, in some of the TSES languages the prefixal subject markers **ʔə-* (1SG) and **yə-* (3SG.M;3PL) are no more distinguished in **hallawa-* and **nabara-*constructions: in East Gurage they merge into **yə-*, in Argobba of Ṭollaha they are dropped altogether and thus shift to a single zero-marker opposed to overt prefixal elements in the other slots of the paradigm. Both in East Gurage and in Argobba of Ṭollaha this merger leads to *block syncretism* (Stump 2001:217 f.) between 1SG and 3SG.M *prefixes* but does not result in the coincidence of the 1SG and 3SG.M *forms*. The AGRS markers on the auxiliary are effectively used to avoid the obviously undesirable whole-word syncretism:[6]

Compound LPC ZAY

(8) a. 1SG *yə-näḳəl=ā-h*^{w}
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-take\IPFV=AUX.NPST-1SG
'I take'

b. 3SG.M *yə-näḳəl=äl-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-take\IPFV =AUX.NPST-3SG.M
'he takes' (Meyer 2005:159)

*Simple LPC + *nabara*

c. 1SG *yə-näḳəl* *nār-ux*
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-take\IPFV AUX.PST-1SG
'I used to take/I was taking'

d. 3SG.M *yə-näḳəl* *nār-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-take\IPFV AUX.PST-3SG.M
'he used to take/he was taking' (Meyer 2005:160)

Compound LPC SILT'E

(9) a. 1SG *i-nakt=ā-hu*
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-beat\IPFV=AUX.NPST-1SG
'I beat'

b. 3SG.M *i-nakt=ān-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-beat\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3SG.M
'he beats' (Gutt 1997:922)

6 For convenience's sake, the term *whole-word syncretism*, i.e. homophony of word-forms, as opposed to *block syncretism*, i.e. syncretism of morphemes (cf. Stump 2001:217 f.), will also be applied to **hallawa-* and **nabara-*constructions (albeit the more appropriate term for the latter would be *whole-construction syncretism*).

*Simple LPC + *nabara*

c. 1SG *i-ḳaba* *nār-ku*
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-paint\IPFV AUX.PST-1SG
'I was painting'

d. 3SG.M *i-ḳaba* *nār-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-paint\IPFV AUX.PST-3SG.M
'he was painting' (Gutt 1997:922)

Compound LPC ARGOBBA OF ṬOLLAHA

(10) a. 1SG *ø-säbr=əll-äw*
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-1SG
'I break'

b. 3SG.M *ø-säbr=äll-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3SG.M
'he breaks' (Wetter 2010:400)

*Simple LPC + *nabara*

c. 1SG *ø-zeyyər* *əmbär-ew*
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-greet\IPFV AUX.PST-1SG
'I used to greet'

d. 3SG.M *ø-zeyyər* *əmbär-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-greet\IPFV AUX.PST-3SG.M
'he used to greet' (Wetter 2010:403)

In Zay (8) and Argobba (10) as well as in the **hallawa*-construction of Silt'e (9a–b), the 1SG and 3SG.M slots are not the only positions where the AGRS markers of the auxiliary are preserved. Still, a highly illustrative example of the direct connection between the distinctiveness of AGRS markers of the main verb and the auxiliary is provided by Silt'e, where the AGRS markers of the auxiliary **nabara* are dropped throughout the paradigm except for 1SG (cf. (9c) and Section 6.1). However, a paradigm in which the auxiliary is only marked for subject agreement in one single person (1SG) is not expected to be stable. Indeed, in Wolane, the closest relative of Silt'e, the AGRS markers of **nabara* are dropped even in the 1SG, so the **nabara*-construction, unlike the **hallawa*-construction, is characterized by whole-word syncretism between 1SG and 3SG.M:

Compound LPC WOLANE

(11) a. 1SG *yə-säbr=ā-ʷh*[7]
1SG;~~3SG.M~~-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-1SG
'I break'

b. 3SG.M *yə-säbr=ān-ø*
~~1SG~~;3SG.M-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3SG.M
'he breaks' (Meyer 2006:97)

*Simple LPC + *nabara*

c. 1SG/3SG.M *yə-näksə* *när*
1SG;3SG.M-bite\IPFV AUX.PST
i. 'I used to bite'
ii. 'he used to bite'

Obviously, the tendency to preserve the morphological distinction was outweighed in Wolane by the urge towards leveling the paradigm.

It should be observed that the merger between the prefixal elements **ʔə-* and **yə-* in itself is likely a direct result of the integration of the auxiliaries with their AGRS morphemes into the verbal paradigms. The tendency of merging these two morphemes, due to their phonological similarity, is observed in many languages throughout Semitic, and various morphological replacements can be employed to avoid it and thus to preserve the paradigmatic distinction (cf. Rubin 2007). In the **hallawa-* and **nabara*-constructions of East Gurage, as soon as the distinction was secured by the AGRS markers of the auxiliaries, the natural tendency to merge **ʔə-* and **yə-* was no longer constrained.

Thus, the two synchronically very similar occurrences of block syncretism – *yə-* for 1SG/3SG.M and *tə-* for 2SG.M/3SG.F – exhibit striking dissimilarity in the pattern of interaction with the AGRS suffix of the auxiliary. This dissimilarity can only be explained in diachronic terms. The archaic 2SG.M/3SG.F whole-word syncretism, an inherent feature of the Semitic prefix conjugation, is easily tolerated, thus newly introduced disambiguation is not welcome and can be abandoned by means of deletion of the redundant AGRS morphemes. On the contrary, the 1SG/3SG.M whole-word syncretism is usually avoided: the innovative block syncretism of the 1SG/3SG.M prefixes is counterbalanced by the innovative distinctive AGRS morphemes of the auxiliaries, which are not perceived as redundant, and hence, are not deleted.[8]

7 This verb also occurs in the variant *yə-säbr=ā-w*.

8 In Zay, an alternative compound LPC is found, with the suffix *-ā* (Meyer 2005:148),

For a similar case of preservation of multiple exponence in order to avoid innovative whole-word syncretism, cf. Section 6.2.

5 Preservation of multiple exponence throughout the paradigm

Among the **hallawa-* and **nabara*-constructions in the TSES languages, consistent preservation of multiple exponence is found only in Argobba of Ṭollaha. In this dialect, multiple exponence is preserved in both constructions.[9]

(12) *Compound LPC* ARGOBBA OF ṬOLLAHA

a. *ø-säbr=əll-äw*
1SG-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-1SG
'I break'

b. *ə-säbr=əll-əx*
2SG.M-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-2SG.M
'you (SG.M) break'

c. *ə-säbr-u=ll-uxum*
2PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) break'

d. *ø-säbr-u=ll-äy*
3PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they break' (Wetter 2010:400)

*Simple LPC + *nabara*

e. *ø-zeyyər* *əmbär-ew*
1SG-greet\IPFV AUX.PST-1SG
'I used to greet'

f. *ə-zeyyər* *əmbär-ex*
2SG.M-greet\IPFV AUX.PST-2SG.M
'you (SG.M) used to greet'

---

which is likely to be a further simplification of **hallawa*. In this paradigm, the auxiliary has no personal markers of its own. Remarkably, it has a lacuna in the 1SG form – a fact that can be easily accounted for by the lack of means to sustain the distinction between 1SG and 3SG.M.

9 In Argobba of Ṭollaha, the AGRS prefixes **ʔə-* and **yə-* are replaced by zero. This development cannot be explained as an elimination of redundant AGRS morphemes, since the zero morphemes are meaningful elements structurally opposed to the overt prefixes in the rest of the paradigm. The introduction of zero morphemes only leads to a lack of distinction between 1SG and 3SG.M subject markers (cf. Section 4).

g. *ə-zeyyər-u* *əmbär-exum*
2PL-greet\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST-2PL
'you (PL) used to greet'

h. *ø-zeyyər-u* *əmbär-äy*
3PL-greet\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST-3PL
'they used to greet' (Wetter 2010:403)

6 Elimination of multiple exponence

Apart from Argobba of Ṭollaha, all TSES languages demonstrate some degree of constraint on multiple exponence which is manifested by the deletion of certain AGRS morphemes.

By what means is the elimination of multiple exponence achieved? The most straightforward way is to drop one of the redundant morphemes. The considered data shows that the morphemes to be deleted are not chosen randomly. Rather, a certain hierarchy of elements subject to deletion can be established.

In the first place, the choice of the morpheme to be eliminated depends on the type of the morpheme itself. In the constructions under scrutiny, the AGRS morphemes of the auxiliary are (at least diachronically, but in most cases also synchronically) suffixes, whereas the proto-forms of the AGRS morphemes of the main verb are prefixes or circumfixes.

The investigation shows that the elimination of multiple exponence in TSES *never* involves deletion of the prefixes. In contrast, the omission of suffixes is not infrequent, either on the main verb, or on the auxiliary.

I will use the term *suffix multiple exponence* to refer to the preservation of AGRS suffixes both on the main verb and on the auxiliary. Since ARGS prefixes are never deleted, one can establish the following implicational hierarchy: if the LPC contains suffix multiple exponence, it necessarily contains other types of multiple exponence, that is, involving only prefixes of the main verb and suffixes of the auxiliary. The reverse does not hold: in some paradigms, multiple exponence is restricted to verbal forms with AGRS prefixes on the main verb and AGRS suffixes on the auxiliary. Thus, suffix multiple exponence is less tolerated in TSES than multiple exponence involving a prefix and a suffix.

For the sake of brevity, I will refer to the slots of the paradigm where the main verb *can* attach an AGRS suffix as *positions of suffix multiple exponence*, that is, positions where such multiple exponence is possible. There is a certain variation among TSES languages concerning the number of such positions. The main verb AGRS suffixes going back to Proto-ES are 2SG.F **-i*

and 2/3PL *-*u*. In Argobba and East Gurage, the innovative 1PL suffix *-*na* is introduced in the LPC. Thus, in all TSES languages positions of suffix multiple exponence include 2SG.F, 2PL and 3PL, whereas in Argobba and East Gurage this list is expanded by 1PL.

6.1 Total elimination of multiple exponence by full deletion of the AGRS morpheme of the auxiliary

Total elimination of multiple exponence by means of full deletion of the AGRS morpheme of the auxiliary is registered in **nabara*-constructions only.

In Amharic, the analytic forms "simple LPC + auxiliary *näbbär*" usually mark subject agreement only once, on the main verb, whereas the auxiliary remains indeclinable:

(13) a. *yə-sära* *näbbär* AMHARIC
3SG.M-work\IPFV AUX.PST
'he was working'

b. *yə-sär-u* *näbbär*
3PL-work\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST
'they were working'

According to Leslau (1995:316), the AGRS marking of the auxiliary is not altogether dropped but preserved as optional. The same phenomenon can be observed in a number of other analytic constructions involving the simple LPC (cf. Leslau 1995:321, 323, 326, 332, etc.).[10]

The **nabara*-construction in Wolane (cf. Section 4) is likewise characterized by the full deletion of the AGRS markers on the auxiliary.

The same strategy may be suspected for Argobba of Aliyu Amba. Unfortunately, in Leslau's (1997:49) description only 3SG.M forms with **nabara* are given, as in (14), so it remains uncertain whether the auxiliary is conjugated or not.

(14) *yə-hed* *əmbär* ARGOBBA OF ALIYU AMBA
3SG.M-go\IPFV AUX.PST
'he used to go' (Leslau 1997:49)

10 According to Baye Yimam (p.c.), the forms with multiple exponence are more usual for early Amharic texts and for rural Amharic.

However, the fact that the auxiliary is given in its shortened form, rather than *əmbär-a*, with the overt 3SG.M morpheme *-a* (cf. Leslau 1997:36), seems to imply the deletion (obligatory or optional, as in Amharic) of the person markers on the auxiliary.

Incomplete elimination or selective preservation of multiple exponence is a means to maintain paradigmatic distinctiveness. In Silt'e, the auxiliary verb *nār* (< **nabara*) has no AGRS marking except for the 1SG (Gutt 1997:922). The principle of this distribution is quite transparent. The 1SG marker of the auxiliary is not a redundant morpheme since it serves to maintain the opposition between 1SG and 3SG.M, as was shown in (9c) vs. (9d) above. Such a strategy is apparently very rare and one can expect that the general principles of paradigmatic leveling will sooner or later overrule the tendency towards preservation of the morphological distinction. Notably, in Wolane, the auxiliary verb of the **nabara*-construction is indeclinable (Meyer 2006:118), despite the same syncretism in the prefixes of the main verbs (cf. also Section 4).

6.2 Elimination of suffix multiple exponence by deleting the AGRS suffixes of the main verb

The full deletion of the suffixal elements of the main verb is recorded in Harari before the reflex of the non-past auxiliary **hallawa* (on the variation in 2/3PL forms cf. Section 6.4):

(15) a. *ti-säbr-ā-š* HARARI
2SG.F-break\IPFV-AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) break'

b. *ti-säbr-ā-k̲u*
2PL-break\IPFV-AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) break'

c. *yi-säbr-āl-u*
3PL-break\IPFV-AUX.NPST-3PL
'they break' (Leslau 1958:19)

Among the positions of suffix multiple exponence in Harari, the 2SG.F deserves special attention. The suffixal element of the 2SG.F AGRS marker **tə-…-i* has phonetically coincided with the epenthetic vowel *-i* serving to avoid a consonant cluster. Compare the two forms of the simple LPC in (16):

(16) a. *tič̣ämḳi* HARARI
ti-č̣ämḳ-^{j}
2SG.F-squeeze\IPFV-CIRC
'you (SG.F) squeeze'

b. *tič̣ämḳi*
ti-č̣ämḳ[-i]
2SG.M-squeeze\IPFV[-EPV]
'you (SG.M) squeeze'

As a result, in the simple LPC the only trace of the 2SG.F suffix *-i* is palatalization, which affects final or even non-final alveopalatal consonants (cf. Leslau 1958:17 f.):

(17) a. *tilämğ̌i* HARARI
ti-lämd-^{j}
2SG.F-learn\IPFV-CIRC
'you (SG.F) learn'

b. *tilämdi*
ti-lämd[-i]
2SG.M-learn\IPFV[-EPV]
'you (SG.M) learn'

At the morphemic level, one can postulate a complex 2SG.F morpheme that combines the prefix *ti-* and the process of palatalization *-^{j}*, which obtains a surface realization only if the verb contains at least one palatalizable consonant, as in (17a) vs. (16a).

Absence of palatalization in the compound forms of the LPC is therefore a proof that the suffixal element *-^{j}* was really omitted:

Simple LPC HARARI

(18) a. *tisägğ̌ile*
ti-sägd-^{j}=le
2SG.F-prostrate\IPFV-CIRC=PURP
'in order that you (SG.F) prostrate'

vs.

Compound LPC

b. *tisägdāš*
ti-sägd=ā-š
2SG.F-prostrate\IPFV=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) prostrate' (Cohen 1931:278, 280)[11]

According to Cohen (1931:278), the suffix of the main verb is likewise omitted in the **nabara*-construction of Harari:[12]

(19) a. *tisägdi nārši* HARARI
ti-sägd[-i] nār-š
2SG.F-prostrate\IPFV[-EPV] AUX.PST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) were prostrating'

b. *tisägdi nārḫu*
ti-sägd[-i] nār-ḫu
2PL-prostrate\IPFV[-EPV] AUX.PST-2PL
'you (PL) were prostrating'

c. *yisägdi nāru*
yi-sägd[-i] nār-u
3PL-prostrate\IPFV[-EPV] AUX.PST-3PL
'they were prostrating'

However, Abdurahman & Wagner (1998:21 f.) have recorded alternative forms for 2/3PL (cf. Section 6.4).

The compound LPC given by Leslau (1997:50) for Argobba of Aliyu Amba is also characterized by the consistent deletion of the AGRS suffixes of the main verb and the preservation of the suffixes of the auxiliary **hallawa*; for the variation in 1PL cf. Section 6.4.

Incomplete elimination of suffix multiple exponence through selective preservation of suffix multiple exponence is a means to maintain paradigmatic distinctiveness. In the compound LPC of Amharic, the redundant suf-

11 Cohen's transcription was standardized in accordance with the one adopted by Leslau (1958).

12 During a short stay in Harar in November 2012 I had the opportunity to check this data. Bahar Ali (a 28-year-old teacher of Harari in the Elementary School of Harar), to whom I am infinitely grateful for his cooperation and hospitality, provided me with the full paradigm of the verb *lämädä* 'teach', in which palatalization was absent both in **hallawa*- and **nabara*-constructions: *tilämdāš* 'you (SG.F) teach', *tilämdi nārši* 'you (SG.F) were teaching'.

fixes of the main verb rather than those of the auxiliary are dropped. Only some slots of the paradigm are affected by this process. The suffix *-u* of the main verb is omitted both in 2PL (the AGRS suffix on the auxiliary is *-aččəh*^{w}) and in 3PL (the AGRS suffix on the auxiliary is *-u*), whereas the 2SG.F suffix *-i* is preserved, being doubled by the auxiliary suffix *-š*.

Simple LPC AMHARIC

(20) a. *tə-säbr-i*
2SG.F-break\IPFV-CIRC
'you (SG.F) break'

b. *tə-säbr-u*
2PL-break\IPFV-CIRC
'you (PL) break'

c. *yə-säbr-u*
3PL-break\IPFV-CIRC
'they break'

Compound LPC

d. *tə-säbr-iy=all-äš*
2SG.F-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) break'

e. *tə-säbr=all-aččəh*^{w}
2PL-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) break'

f. *yə-säbr=all-u*
3PL-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they break' (cf. Leslau 1995:301, 341)

A detailed description of multiple exponence in Amharic was presented by Diertani & Eilam (2010). In their opinion, the preservation of the 2SG.F suffix of the main verb is dictated by the weakness of distinctive force of the 2SG.F suffix of the auxiliary.[13] Indeed, the 2SG.F suffix *-š* is phonetically close to

13 There is another possible explanation offered by Orin Gensler (p.c.): the 2SG.F suffix is less subject to elimination because of the palatalization. In verbs with a final palatalizable consonant, the 2SG.F suffix fuses with the root: *təläbšəyalläš*/*təläbšalläš* < **tə-läbs-i=allä-š* 2SG.F-wear\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-2SG.F 'you (SG.F) wear'. Due to the lack of a clear-cut boundary the suffix of the main verb resists deletion. However, in Harari (see above) the same conditions do not provide any obstacle to the elimination of the 2SG.F marker.

the 3SG.F suffix *-äčč* which, moreover, can shift to *-äšš* in the speech of some informants. In Diertani & Eilam (2010) this process of deaffricatization is defined as recent and/or dialectal. If their explanation is correct, the preservation of multiple exponence is triggered by the same factor as in East Gurage (cf. Sections 4 and 6.1): phonetic similarity of two personal markers favors preservation of the additional morphemes which help to keep the distinction between two verbal forms. The only difference is that in Amharic we deal with the (tendency towards) block syncretism of the AGRS *suffixes* of the *auxiliary*, while in East Gurage multiple exponence is preserved because of the block syncretism of the AGRS *prefixes* of the *main verb*.[14]

6.3 Elimination of exuberant exponence by selective deletion of the AGRS suffixes of the auxiliary

The East Gurage languages have developed a common strategy of dealing with multiple exponence in the compound LPC. The AGRS suffixes are deleted on the auxiliary rather than on the main verb. Their pattern is thus different from the one adopted in Amharic compound LPC:

(21) a. *yə-säbr-w=ān* WOLANE
3PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST

b. *yə-säbr=all-u* AMHARIC
3PL-break\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they break'

In all East Gurage languages, the redundant morphemes are dropped in some positions of the paradigm, but preserved in others. There are four positions of suffix multiple exponence in East Gurage: 1PL, 2SG.F, 2PL, 3PL. The deletion takes place in the 1PL and 3PL only. It can be argued that in East Gurage the redundant AGRS suffix of the auxiliary (which is the regular SC AGRS marker) is preserved unless it is phonologically identical with the suffixal element of the AGRS marker of the main verb. Indeed, the AGRS suffixes of the main verb differ from the AGRS suffixes of the auxiliary in 2SG.F (**-i* vs. **-aš*) and 2SG.PL (**-u* vs. **-kum*) but are identical in 1PL (**-na*) and 3PL (**-u*).

14 For a different interpretation cf. Goldenberg (1977:494): the AGRS suffix *-u* of 2/3PL main verbs is deleted because it is phonologically identical with "the end of the auxiliary". This rule is less convincing since it goes across the morphological borders. As the cumulative data of TSES show, the deletion of the redundant markers is usually morphologically conditioned.

Thus, in Wolane, double marking is tolerated in 2PL, but the auxiliary verb lacks the AGRS marker in 1PL and 3PL:

(22) a. *tə-säbr-w=ā-hum* WOLANE
2PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) break'
but:
b. *yə-säbr-ən=ān*
1PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST
'we break'
c. *yə-säbr-w=ān*
3PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST
'they break' (Meyer 2006:97, 108 f.)

The subtype of multiple exponence which employs identical morphemes, labeled *exuberant exponence* in contemporary linguistics, appears to be indeed extremely rare cross-linguistically (cf., e.g. Harris 2008). The constraint on exuberant exponence (but not on other types of multiple exponence) is thus a typologically predictable feature. Indeed, an instance of the same strategy (avoidance of exuberant exponence, but toleration of other types of multiple exponence) can be found in Amharic in another segment of verbal morphology, namely in the compound gerund (Diertani & Eilam 2010).

In Zay, the constraint on exuberant exponence is observed in the **nabara*-construction. The auxiliary verb preserves the AGRS morphemes throughout the paradigm, except for the 1PL and 3PL, i.e. the forms in which the AGRS markers of the main verb coincide with those of the auxiliary:

(23) a. *tineḳil nāriš* ZAY
tə-näḳl-^{j} nār-š
2SG.F-take\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) used to take/took' – but
b. *yunoḳul nār*
yə-näḳl-^{w} nār
3PL-take\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST
'they used to take/took' (Meyer 2005:160 f.)

In Zay, the vocalic suffixes **-i* and **-u* came to be realized by palatalization and labialization, respectively (marked as ^{j} and ^{w}), applied to all the vowels of

the word. As a result, the deletion of the reflex of *-*u* in 3PL cannot be proved. The labialization in the auxiliary in (24) can be triggered by one or two AGRS markers. The morphophonemic structure given by Meyer (2005:160) clearly implies exuberant exponence:

(24) *yunoḳulol* ZAY
yə-näḳl-^{w}=äl-^{w}
3PL-break\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they take' (Meyer 2005:160)

However, the overt constraint on exuberant exponence in the **nabara*-construction in Zay as well as in Silt'e and Wolane favors an alternative interpretation, according to which the compound LPC paradigm in Zay is subject to the same constraint. Indeed, the change *ä* > *o* in the auxiliary could have been triggered by the AGRS morpheme of the main verb, after the redundant marker of the auxiliary was omitted:

(25) a. *yunoḳulol* ZAY
yə-näḳl-^{w}=äl
3PL-take\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST
'they take'

b. *tunoḳulōhum*
tə-näḳl-^{w}=ā-hum
2PL-take\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) take' (Meyer 2005:160)

The labialization as part of the AGRS circumfix of the main verb in (25b) affects the vowel of the auxiliary, while the absence of a second labialization morpheme is evident.

There is only one TSES language which apparently tolerates exuberant exponence in one position of the paradigm while it avoids any kind of suffix multiple exponence in the rest of the paradigm. In Argobba of Aliyu Amba, a form with exuberant exponence is recorded in the 1PL:

(26) *ə-sädb-ən=äll-ən* ARGOBBA OF ALIYU AMBA
1PL-insult\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-1PL
'we insult' (Leslau 1997:50, fn. 2)

In the rest of the paradigm, the AGRS suffixes of the main verb are consistently deleted even if they do not formally coincide with the AGRS suffixes of the auxiliary:

(27) *tə-sädb=äll-əhum* ARGOBBA OF ALIYU AMBA
2PL-insult\IPFV=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) insult' (Leslau 1997:50)

This asymmetry may be due to the fact that the 1PL suffix of the main verb is younger than other AGRS suffixes. Unlike 2PL and 3PL suffixes, the 1PL suffix *-ən* does not go back to the Proto-SES stage. Rather, its introduction is a recent process, obviously connected with the merging of 1SG and 1PL prefixes.[15] The introduction of the 1PL suffix into the system of AGRS markers of Argobba could sporadically extend into the compound LPC forms, thus ruining the original principle of constraint on suffix multiple exponence in this paradigm. Notably, the form with exuberant exponence is recorded only as a variant of more usual forms without AGRS suffix of the main verb (cf. Section 6.4).

On the elimination of exuberant exponence in object-marked paradigms cf. Section 7 (and cf. also Section 7 on the relative paradigm in Harari, with potential preservation of exuberant exponence).

6.4 Variation within paradigms

According to Abdurahman & Wagner (1998:21 f.), the AGRS morphemes are consistently preserved on the auxiliary of the Harari **nabara*-construction except for the 2/3PL forms, where optional deletion of the suffixes takes place. Notably, these are the only forms where overt AGRS suffixes of the main verb appear (on the reflex of 2SG.F **-i* in Harari cf. Section 6.2), in other words, the only positions of synchronically valid suffix multiple exponence in this language.

In 2/3PL, all three possibilities of dealing with multiple exponence apparently coexist as free variants: the double marking can be preserved (28a), or the AGRS suffix can be omitted on the main verb (28b) – as in Cohen's paradigm[16] – or on the auxiliary (28c).

15 In the simple LPC, the opposition **əl-säd(ə)b/*ən-säd(ə)b* 'we insult' vs. **ə-säd(ə)b* 'I insult' is replaced by *əl-sädb-ən* 'we insult' vs. *əl-säd(ə)b* 'I insult'. In the compound LPC, the 1SG prefix *ə-*, when taken over into the 1PL form, apparently causes the introduction of the same innovative suffix *-ən*.

16 Cf. Section 6.2. The same strategy is observed in the paradigm provided to me by

(28) a. *yi-ṭṭaraḥ-u* *nār-u* HARARI
3PL-be_called\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST-3PL
'they used to be called'

b. *yi-tlamad-i* *nār-u*
3PL-be_educated\IPFV-EPV AUX.PST-3PL
'they used to be educated'

c. *y-adgrābg-u* *nāra*
3PL-take\IPFV-CIRC AUX.PST
'they used to take it here and there'

Thus, the paradigm in question varies between fully preserving multiple exponence and constraining suffix multiple exponence.

In the compound LPC paradigm of Argobba of Aliyu Amba, suffix multiple exponence is avoided by means of deletion of AGRS suffixes of the main verb. The only position where alternative forms have been recorded is 1PL, where, alongside the form in (29a), the form with suffix multiple exponence is available, as in (29b):

(29) a. *əl-*[17]*sädb=äll-ən* ARGOBBA OF ALIYU AMBA
1PL-insult\IPFV=AUX.NPST-1PL

b. *ə-sädb-ən=äll-ən*
1PL-insult\IPFV-CIRC=AUX.NPST-1PL
'we insult' (Leslau 1997:50 with fn. 2)

The form in (29b) is all the more interesting since it involves formally identical morphemes (cf. Section 6.3).

7 Multiple exponence in the compound LPC with object pronouns and other inserted elements

In Amharic and Harari, insertion of object suffixes (or AGRO morphemes, as they are sometimes called) into compound LPC forms changes the system of subject agreement markers drastically, so that one has to speak of a special subtype of the compound LPC paradigm. I will call it *object-marked compound LPC*,[18] opposed to *neutral compound LPC*.

Bahar Ali: *tilämdi nārḫu* 'you (PL) were learning'; *yilämdi nāru* 'they were learning'.

17 This prefix has the optional variant *ən-*.

18 This term will be applied to paradigms in which the object suffix is the *only* element which divides the main verb and the auxiliary element. The Harari paradigms where several elements are inserted will be treated separately.

The object-marked compound LPC paradigms also display a tendency toward elimination of multiple exponence. However, the strategy of dealing with multiple exponence implemented in an object-marked paradigm usually differs from the one of the neutral paradigm. Thus, the object-marked compound LPC paradigms in Amharic and Harari offer additional material relevant for the present investigation.[19]

As outlined in Section 6.2, in Amharic the suffixes of the main verb are deleted in the neutral compound LPC, with the exception of 2SG.F. In the object-marked compound LPC, all the AGRS suffixes of the main verb are preserved. As for the AGRS suffix of the auxiliary, it is preserved throughout the paradigm except for 3PL:

(30) a. *tə-nägr-i=ňň=allä-š* AMHARIC
2SG.F-tell\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) tell me'

b. *tə-nägr-u=ňň=all-ačč̣əhu*
2PL-tell\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) tell me' – but

c. *yə-nägr-u=ňň=all*
3PL-tell\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST
'they tell me'

Thus, the object-marked compound LPC paradigm of Amharic manifests a constraint on exuberant exponence, which is avoided by means of deleting the AGRS suffixes of the auxiliary (cf. Section 6.3).

The same strategy is adopted in the object-marked paradigm of Harari:

(31) a. *ti-gädl-i=ň=ā-š* HARARI
2SG.F-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) kill me'

19 I was unable to find full paradigm of the object-marked compound LPC for Argobba of Aliyu Amba, Zay, Silt'e and Wolane. In the East Gurage languages, however, no difference in the AGRS marking of neutral and object-marked paradigm is to be expected. These languages preserve the AGRS suffixes of the main verb in the neutral paradigms, and the same strategy is in all probability implemented in the object-marked paradigms as well. In Argobba of Ṭollaha, the differences in the AGRS marking of neutral and object-marked paradigms are irrelevant to the present investigation: both paradigms consistently preserve multiple exponence (cf. Wetter 2010:180–188, 387–394).

b. *ti-gädl-u=ň=ā-k̲u*
2PL-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) kill me'

but:

c. *yi-gädl-u=ň=āl*
3PL-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST
'they kill me' (Leslau 1958:78)

Unlike in the neutral compound LPC, the 2SG.F AGRS marker *ti-...-i* in the object-marked paradigm is distinct from the 2SG.M marker *ti-*:

(32) *ti-gädl=äň=ā-k̲* HARARI
2SG.M-kill\IPFV=OJ.1SG=AUX.NPST-2SG.M
'you (SG.M) kill me'

Interestingly, according to Leslau's paradigm, no palatalization occurs in the object-marked compound LPC, whereas it is recorded in the object-marked simple LPC paradigm. Compare (33) vs. (31a):

(33) *tigädyiň* HARARI
ti-gädl-ɨ=ň
2SG.F-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.1SG
'you (SG.F) kill me' (Leslau 1958:77)

Conversely, a paradigm with an inserted AGRO morpheme and a question marker, offered in Abdurahman & Wagner (1998:171), suggests the absence of the overt 2SG.F AGRS suffix marker, but its preservation as a palatalization trigger:

(34) *čigäğlānaš ~ tigäğlānaš* HARARI
ti-gädl-ɨ=ā=n=a-š
2SG.F-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.3SG.M=Q=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'Do/will you (SG.F) kill him?'

Both in Amharic and Harari, besides the object suffixes, other elements can be inserted between the main verb and auxiliary. In some cases the insertion is accompanied by the same rearrangement of the AGRS morphemes as in the object-marked paradigm. This is apparently the case in Amharic, where the

deletion of the 3PL suffix of the auxiliary described above occurs also if a particle, rather than an object suffix, is inserted, as shown in (35a) vs. (35b):

(35) a. *yə-nägr-u=mm=all* AMHARIC
3PL-tell\IPFV-CIRC=and=AUX.NPST
'and they will tell'

b. *yə-nägr=all-u*
3PL-tell\IPFV=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they will tell' (Leslau 1995:887)

In Harari, the constructions with inserted elements are more widespread than in Amharic and exhibit considerable variation as far as the elimination of multiple exponence is concerned. Some elements, like *-n* (question marker) and *-t* 'only', do not change the neutral AGRS marking at all:

(36) a. *ti-katb=īt=a-š* HARARI
2SG.F-write\IPFV=only=AUX.NPST-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) only write'

b. *ti-katb=īt=a-ḫu*
2PL-write\IPFV=only=AUX.NPST-2PL
'you (PL) only write'

c. *yi-katb=īt=al-u*
3PL-write\IPFV=only=AUX.NPST-3PL
'they only write' (Abdurahman & Wagner 1998:170, 173 f.)

Certain combinations of inserted elements follow the object-marked paradigm, where multiple exuberance is constrained. In addition to (34), consider the following examples:

(37) a. *tigadlōnaḫu* HARARI
ti-gadl-u=ā=n=a-ḫu
2PL-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.3SG.M=Q=AUX.NPST-2PL
'Do you (PL) kill him?'

b. *yigadlōnal*
yi-gadl-u=ā=n=al
3PL-kill\IPFV-CIRC=OJ.3SG.M=Q=AUX.NPST
'Do they kill him?' (Abdurahman & Wagner 1998:171)

Still other combinations exhibit variation in the 3PL. Thus, they vacillate between the total preservation of multiple exponence and the constraint on exuberant exponence:

(38) a. *tikībbāmēš* HARARI
ti-kīb-i=b-ā=m=ē-š
2SG.F-testify\IPFV-CIRC=MAL-OJ.3SG.M=NEG=AUX.NPST.NEG-2SG.F
'you (SG.F) do not testify against him'

b. *tikībbōmēḫu*
ti-kīb-u=b-ā=m=ē-ḫu
2PL-testify\IPFV-CIRC=MAL-OJ.3SG.M=NEG=AUX.NPST.NEG-2PL
'you (PL) do not testify against him' – but

c. *yikībbōmēl(-u)*
yi-kīb-u=b-ā=m=ēl(-u)
3PL-testify\IPFV-CIRC=MAL-OJ.3SG.M=NEG=AUX.NPST.NEG(-3PL)
'they do not testify against him'

(Abdurahman & Wagner 1998:184 f.)

Note that the AGRS suffix of the auxiliary in (38c) is optional.

A great deal of variation is also observed in the relative paradigm, marked by the inserted relative marker *z*-. According to Leslau (1958:19 f.), it consistently preserves multiple exponence. However, the paradigm given by Cohen (1931:281) is formed after the neutral AGRS paradigm with total elimination of multiple exponence.[20] Cohen (1931:281) and Abdurahman & Wagner (1998:187) note variation in the 3PL position, where the redundant morphemes can be preserved or dropped on the main verb. If the variation is indeed restricted to the 3PL position, we deal with still another remarkable case of preservation of exuberant exponence in the absence of other types of multiple exponence (cf. 6.3).

8 Conclusions

The reflexes of **hallawa*- and **nabara*-constructions in the TSES languages exhibit various degrees of toleration of multiple exponence, which can be arranged in the following way:

20 The same strategy is observed in the relative paradigm of the verb *lämädä* 'learn' provided to me by Bahar Ali: *ʔilämdi-z-āḫ* (1SG), *tilämdi-z-āḫ* (2SG.M), *tilämdi-z-āš* (2SG.F), *yilämdi-z-āl* (3SG.M), *tilämdi-z-āt* (3SG.F), *nilämdi-z-āna* (1PL) *tilämdi-z-āḫu* (2PL), *yilämdi-z-ālu* (3PL).

(1) Full toleration of multiple exponence
(2) Constraint on exuberant exponence
(3) Constraint on suffix multiple exponence
(4) Total constraint on multiple exponence

Multiple exponence, which undoubtedly was present in the source constructions, is fully preserved only in one variety, namely in Argobba of Ṭollaha. This may be considered an additional indication of the general conservatism of this variety in comparison to the other TSES languages.

Total avoidance of multiple exponence is only achieved by means of deleting AGRS morphemes on the auxiliary, as in the Amharic **nabara*-construction. The elimination of multiple exponence through the deletion of prefixed AGRS morphemes of the main verb is not attested in TSES.

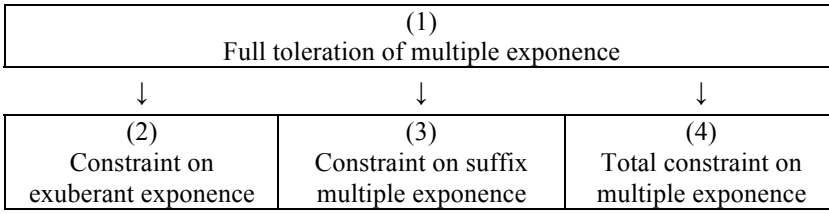
Two alternative principles that can govern the deletion of the suffixes of the main verb can be observed. One of them is the constraint on multiple exponence of suffixes, which leads to the omission of all main verb AGRS suffixes. The second principle – the constraint on exuberant exponence – leads to the deletion of only those main verb AGRS suffixes that are formally identical to the corresponding AGRS suffixes of the auxiliary. Both strategies apparently realize the same general tendency to avoid the repetition of formally similar morphemes and to tolerate double marking by way of dissimilar exponents.

It remains to be stated that the hierarchy sketched above should not be understood as a successive chain of states accompanying the process of grammaticalization. Rather, any of the types (2)–(4) can develop directly from type (1). This is supported by the patterns of variation: in Harari **nabara*-constructions, oscillation between (1) and (3) can be observed, whereas some Harari paradigms of the compound LPC with inserted elements offer instances of variation between (1) and (2) (cf. Sections 6.4 and 7).

Moreover, as long as the constraint on the deletion of the AGRS prefixes remains valid, the systems with deleted main verb suffixes (that is, belonging to the type (3)) cannot further develop into (4).

Thus, the diachronic arrangement of these four types within TSES can be represented as three alternative paths of evolution from type (1):

Figure 1: Types of Multiple Exponence



Abbreviations

*	Reconstructed form (mostly proto-ES, but also forms of recent stages)	LPC	Long prefix conjugation
		M	Masculine
		MAL	Malefactive
j	Palatalization	NEG	Negation
w	Labialization	NPST	Non-past tense
1, 2, 3	First, second, third person	OJ	Object
AGRO	Object agreement	PL	Plural
AGRS	Subject agreement	PST	Past tense
AUX	Auxiliary verb/element	PURP	Purposive
CIRC	Suffixal part of a circumfix	Q	Question
		SC	Suffix conjugation
EPV	Epenthetic vowel	SES	South Ethio-Semitic
ES	Ethio-Semitic	SG	Singular
F	Feminine	TSES	Transversal South Ethio-Semitic
IPFV	Imperfective aspect		

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