

Applicative Constructions and the Reemergence of a Functional Preposition

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Data and Questions: There are triples of triadic constructions in Amharic, an Ethio-Semitic language spoken mainly in Ethiopia, in which the three constructions are differentiated from each other minimally by the placement of their prepositional (P) element(s) as in (1). The first two constructions (cf. 1a,b) can form a pair with respect to the presence/absence of an applicative element in the verbal complex. Baker (1988) couches applicative constructions in terms of prepositional incorporation (PI), i.e., the movement of a free-standing preposition into the verbal complex. Thus, for Baker (1988), (1b) is derived from (1a) by the movement of *bä*. Baker's applicative-via-movement approach would give a straightforward account for the (1a&b) pair especially when the applicative and the P elements are homophonous, minimally differentiated by gemination and the presence of a vowel, *ä*: *bä/-bb-* (cf. 1a,b). However, the construction in (cf. 1c) poses a problem for Baker's approach: there are two P elements simultaneously present inside and outside the verbal complex. (1c) is equivalent to the Chichewa locative construction from Alsina and Mchombo (1990) with respect to the simultaneous presence of two P elements (cf. 2). Baker (1992) treats the triadic construction with an indirect object of the Locative theme as an exceptional case. In Amharic, however, constructions with various types of an indirect object can be realized with two P elements (call them P doubling constructions) as in (1c&3). Thus, the Amharic P doubling constructions pose a problem for Baker's applicative-via-movement approach. Marantz (1993) and Pylkkänen (2002) have a different approach for applicative constructions: the applicative element inside the verbal complex is a realization of a functional head, Appl, projecting in the functional layer of the verbal domain and introduces an applied argument. For applicative-via-projection approaches, the simultaneous presence of the applicative and the P elements in one structure is not a serious problem since the two are not syntactically identical elements unlike for applicative-via-movement ones. However, it would not offer any perspective on the homophony between the two elements as in Amharic. It would be a mere coincidence. The Amharic cases are hard to be conceived as a coincidence; there are two matching pairs and the pair-mates are systematically altered by gemination and *ä*-insertion: *bä/-bb-* and *lä/-ll-* (cf. 1c&3). Thus, The Amharic P-doubling constructions are not in total accord either with the applicative-via-movement or applicative-via-projection approaches. **Ideas and Approaches:** Based on the simultaneous presence of the free-standing preposition and the applicative elements and the homophony between them in the Amharic applicatives, the paper tries to combine the applicative-via-movement and applicative-via-projection approaches by arguing that: (i) the structure of a prepositional phrase (PP) is complex, including a functional preposition, call it little *p*, along with a lexical one, call it big P, as in (4a); (ii) in P doubling constructions, the functional preposition reemerges/incorporates into the functional layer of the verbal domain and projects there once again (cf. the underlined part in 4b) and its second projection delivers the applicative semantics just as the Applicative head does. **Analyses:** A question might arise: is one of the two P elements a copy of another? The answer is no. The pair can be formed by two different P elements as in (5). Thus, the pair of the prepositional elements in the Amharic applicatives are formed by two separate P elements. It is observed in German that PP can include two prepositional elements as in (6). Huybregts and van Riemsdijk (2001) describe the post-nominal prepositional element in (6) as a functional preposition that encodes 'the orientation of the path'. 'The path' itself is defined by the lexical preposition. I adopt their complex PP structure and claim that, in the Amharic P-doubling constructions, the functional preposition reemerges into the verbal domain while the lexical one stays put inside PP. After it reemerges into the verbal domain, the functional preposition projects once again to deliver the applicative semantics. The functional and lexical prepositions can be homophonous in Amharic because they are both prepositional in nature and share some morphological realizations. The present paper describes the applicative element of the canonical non-doubling applicative constructions also as a remerged functional preposition that originates from PP whose lexical preposition is realized phonologically null. Thus, the paper offers a perspective for applicative constructions in general: applicative constructions are derived by the reemergence of a functional

preposition into the verbal domain.

- (1) a. aster bet-u-n **ba**-mätrəgiya-w țärräg-äčč
 Esther house-Det-Acc **with**-broom-Det cleaned-Sub.3FS
 ‘Esther cleaned the house with the broom’
 b. aster mätrəgiya-w-ən bet-u-n țärräg-äčč-**bb**-ät
 Esther broom-Det-Acc house-Det-Acc cleaned-Sub.3FS-**with**-Ob.3MS
 ‘Esther cleaned the house with the broom’
 c. aster **ba**-mätrəgiya-w bet-u-n țärräg-äčč-**bb**-ät
 Esther **with**-broom-Det house-Det-Acc cleaned-Sub.3FS-**with**-Ob.3MS
 ‘Esther cleaned the house with the broom’
- (2) alenje a-ku-luk-**ir**-a **pa**-mchenga mikeka (Chichewa: Locative)
 hunters Sp-Past-weave-**Appl**-Asp **on**-sand mats
 ‘the hunters are weaving mats on the beach’
- (3) a. aster **lä**-yodit mägəb-u-n sär-äčč-**ll**-at (Benefactive)
 Esther **for**-Judith food-the-Acc cooked-Sub.3MS-**for**-Ob.FS
 ‘Esther cooked the food for Judith’
 b. mäkwonən-u **bä**-johanəs färräd-ä-**bb**-ät (Malefactive)
 judge-Det **against**-John judged-Sub.3MS-**against**-Ob.3MS
 ‘the judge judged against John’
 c. aster **bä**-țäräppeza-w qom-äčč-**bb**-ät (Locative)
 Esther **on**-table-Det stood-Sub.3FS-Ob.3MS
 ‘Esther stood up on the table’
- (4) a. [_{PP} P [_{PP} P ...]] b. [_{PP} P ... [_{VP} V ... [_{PP} P [_{PP} P ...]]]
- (5) yəh səra **lä**-aster bəzu gize wässäd-ä-**bb**-at
 this work **for**-aster much time took-Sub.3MS-**up**-Ob.3FS
 ‘this work took up much time for Esther’
- (6) a. die Schnecke kroch **auf** das Dach hin-**auf/uber/unter** (German)
 the snail crept **onto** the roof Prt-**onto/over/under**
 ‘the snail crept (up/over/down) onto the roof’
 b. ... **auf** den berg **auf** (Swiss German)
up the mountain **onto**
 ‘up onto the mountain’

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