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## 24 Applicative constructions in Cushitic

**Abstract:** This chapter provides an overview of the morphology, syntax, and semantics of applicative constructions and applicative lookalikes in the five branches of Cushitic languages for which enough data show that such constructions exist: Central Cushitic, Northern Cushitic, and three groups within Eastern Cushitic (the Iraqw-Alagwa-Burunge cluster, Omo-Tana and Oromo). These constructions have hitherto been largely underestimated, or analysed differently. In general, applicative lookalikes predominate, and even though there is a good number of commonalities among the languages, each of them has developed its own system. The two main strategies used are preverbal constructions and periphrastic constructions, while morphological derivation is rather marginal. The most frequent semantic roles of applied phrases are beneficiary, instrument, and location (ventive, ablative); the roles of maleficiary and cause are marginal.

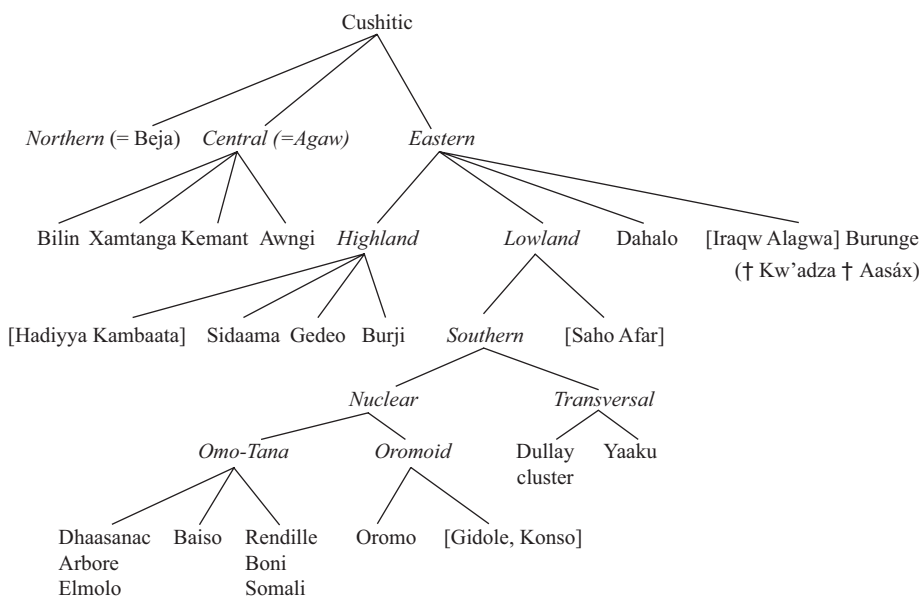
### 1 Introduction

Cushitic languages constitute one of the six branches of the Afroasiatic phylum, alongside Berber, Chadic, Egyptian, Omotic and Semitic. They are spread in Northeast and East Africa from southern Egypt, in the north, to Tanzania, in the south; the majority of these languages are spoken in Ethiopia. They are traditionally divided into three sub-branches: northern, central, and eastern, with further subdivisions as shown in Figure 1.

The number of speakers varies greatly from one language to the other. According to Ethnologue (Eberhard, Simons, and Fennig 2022), Oromo, which is also used as a lingua franca, has over 36 million speakers, Somali over 21 million. Afar, Beja, Hadiyya, Kambaata and Sidaama have between approx. 750,000 and 4,3 million speakers; Awngi, Xamtanga, Konso, and Iraqw between approx. 200,000 and 500,000 speakers (Ethnologue), while the number of speakers goes down to some 10,000 for e.g. Alagwa (Mous 2016: 1). Yaaku and Elmolo in Kenya are highly endangered with very few old (semi-)speakers left (even maybe none today for Elmolo), as well as Kemant and Bilin in Ethiopia, and probably also Dahalo, with a few hundred speakers left for the latter.

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**Figure 1:** The classification of Cushitic (adapted from Tosco 2000a: 89, 108; Mous 2012: 342) [† = extinct language].

Depending on the authors' stance about the status of dialects vs. languages, one counts between 30 and 45 Cushitic languages. For instance, Ethnologue distinguishes five Oromo languages and seven Somali languages, while other scholars count two languages, with dialectal variants.

A good proportion of the languages have gained national or official recognition during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They may even be taught at school in the countries where they are spoken, as is the case for most of them in Ethiopia, for Somali in Somalia, Afar in Eritrea (and Ethiopia), or Beja in Eritrea, while the same (and other) languages in other (or the same) countries still remain unscripted and non-official, as e.g. Beja in Sudan.

Language contact, and bi- or multilingualism between Cushitic languages, with various Ethio-Semitic languages (or with Arabic in Sudan and Egypt) are widespread, as well as with Omotic in Southwest-Ethiopia, Bantu and Nilotic languages in the south of the Cushitic domain, in Kenya and Tanzania. More often than not, language contact not only impacted the phonology and the lexicon, but also led to morphological borrowings, syntactic calques, and various convergence phenomena at the morphological level (Tosco 2000b, 2009; Crass and Meyer 2008; Vanhove 2012, 2020a).

Cushitic languages are morphologically rich, with suffixes (a majority), prefixes, infixes (rare), ablaut, stem alternations, reduplication and suprasegmental morphemes. They are predominantly verb-final. There is a robust noun-verb distinction. Verbal predicates can be finite, semi-finite or non-finite (converbs, relative verbs). Valency-changing derivation (causative, middle and/or passive) exists in almost all languages, as well as morphological devices to express pluractionality. Inchoative and verbalizing

morphological devices are also widespread. See Mous (2012) for a detailed typological profile of Cushitic.

The derived middle voice is often used with an auto-benefactive semantic value, among other senses as listed by Kemmer (1993). In several languages, the auto-benefactive value is even the most productive one. Mous (2004: 85) mentions Somali, Oromo, Afar, to which Kambaata (Treis 2023) and a few others could be added. Below is an example from Gedeo, where the auto-benefactive value is also productive.

(1) Gedeo (Eyob 2015: 278)

*mandɛ-i-tʃʃ-i*                      *abokatto*    *k'oʃʃʃ-ed-Ø-e*  
 person-EP-SG-NOM.M    avocado    collect-MID-3SG.M-PFV  
 'The man collected avocado for himself.'<sup>1</sup>

The auto-benefactive value of the middle voice won't be further dealt with in this chapter.

The term "applicative" is rarely used in Cushitic linguistics, except, as far as I know, in Heine (1980a), Kießling (1994), Mous (2016), and Darmon (2015), neither are "benefactive" or "malefactive" often mentioned in descriptions. Consequently, this chapter presents an endeavour to identify applicative constructions (or applicative lookalikes) in three branches where some constructions meet (part of) the criteria presented in Zúñiga and Creissels (this volume). This concerns central (§ 2.1) and northern Cushitic (§ 2.2) for periphrastic constructions with auxiliaries, parts of the eastern branch, the Iraqw-Alagwa-Burunge cluster (§ 3.1), and the Omo-Tana branch (§ 3.2) for constructions with preverbs, and marginally with verbal derivation (§ 4). From the available descriptions, it seems that the other branches only use the adjunct strategy with dative cases or adpositions. § 5 presents a possible lookalike in Oromo.

The definition provided by Zúñiga and Creissels in the introductory chapter, repeated below, is followed to identify applicative constructions (and their lookalikes):

The base construction (BC) and the applicative construction (AC) are related as follows:

- i) The predicates in both constructions are built upon the same root, but the one in the AC bears additional overt marking that distinguishes it from the one in the BC.
- ii) The participant encoded as S or A in the BC appears as S or A in the AC.
- iii) The AC includes a noun phrase in a role other than S or A, the applied phrase (AppP), which refers to a participant that either requires a non-core coding different from its coding in the BC or cannot be expressed at all in the BC. (Zúñiga and Creissels, this volume).

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this chapter, glosses have been harmonized whatever the system used by the authors. In particular, preverbs used with an applicative value are always glossed APPL. Whenever possible, preverbs relevant for the applicative domain have been hyphenated if they were not segmented in the source. Translations from German sources are mine. In the Iraqw-Alagwa-Burunge cluster's transcriptions, / corresponds to the voiced laryngalized pharyngeal fricative ʕ.

## 2 Periphrastic applicatives with auxiliaries

Following David Cohen's unpublished approach to auxiliaries (summed up in Simeone-Senelle and Vanhove 2003), several criteria are used to identify auxiliaries (also called verb-operators) within a verbal periphrastic construction, defined as a bi-verbal mono-clausal construction denoting a single event:

- (i) A verbal periphrastic construction, made of an auxiliary verb and a lexical verb, constitutes a morphosyntactic and semantic unit.
- (ii) Within the utterance, the syntactic scope of the auxiliary is the lexical verb, not the utterance.
- (iii) No coordinating or subordinating element can intervene between the two verbs.
- (iv) Both verbs have the same S (or A).
- (v) The P argument of the periphrasis, if any, is that of the lexical verb.
- (vi) The auxiliary usually undergoes desemanticization: its meaning is more general than that of the lexical verb, since it needs to combine with all (or many) semantic classes of verbs.
- (vii) Paradigmatic substitution is only possible for the auxiliary.

All these criteria point to the mono-clausal status of the periphrasis as opposed to bi-clausal constructions.

Note that finiteness and the autonomous properties of the two verbs are not criteria for the identification of auxiliaries. Thus, this broad characterization also includes what is traditionally termed SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS, minimally characterized as follows by Creissels (2010: 37): (a) no linking element is present between the verbs involved in the construction, and (b) none of the verbs involved in the construction is in a form implying a non-autonomous status. Such an approach of verbal periphrastic constructions is more in line with Shibatani's (2009) criticism of serial verb constructions "as a cross-linguistically valid type of construction" (Creissels 2010: 38) because they share many properties with other types of verbal periphrastic constructions.

### 2.1 Central Cushitic

For Xamtanga, Darmon (2015) reports four periphrastic applicative constructions with the following auxiliaries: *yīw-* 'give', *nāy-* 'give to the speaker / here', *bār-* 'leave, abandon', and *y-* 'say'.

#### 2.1.1 The auxiliary *yīw-* 'give'

In the first periphrastic construction, the lexical verb is in the converb form, followed by the auxiliary *yīw-* 'give', which conforms to the seven criteria mentioned in § 2 above. In

addition, Darmon (2015: 193) mentions language specific properties also showing that the applicative construction is a single event (and not several, as when converbs are used in dependent clauses): (i) only one converb can precede the finite ‘give’ verb, unlike in deranked subordinate clauses; and (ii) the negative marker on ‘give’ has scope over the whole construction (not only on ‘give’ if ‘give’ had been the verb of a matrix clause).

In Xamtanga, recipient, goal, and beneficiary semantic roles are systematically marked with a non-core coding, the dative case, but with the ‘give’ construction the recipient and goal interpretations are excluded. However, since the applied phrase has the same non-core marking as in the base construction (compare 2a, 2b and 2c), it does not comply with the third criteria of Zúñiga and Creissels’s definition. The ‘give’ construction could thus better qualify as an applicative lookalike of the privative-marking type, in which “the A[pplied] C[onstruction] predicate shows higher morphological complexity than the B[ase] C[onstruction] predicate—more precisely, an element analyzable as an applicative marker” (Zúñiga and Creissels, this volume). However, there are also cases in which the applied phrase cannot occur in the base construction (3), thus also meeting the third criterion of a well-behaved applicative construction. The syntactic marking of the arguments is a clear trace of the origin of the construction.

Semantically, what the auxiliary *yiw-* ‘give’ adds to the base construction is that the action is done in somebody’s interest, on somebody’s behalf, in his or her favour, showing that the semantic role of the dative argument is indeed that of a beneficiary. The ‘give’ auxiliary is restricted to transitive lexical verbs, and it may be contiguous to it (4), or not (2c–3). No examples with a pronominal applied phrase were found.

(2) Xamtanga

- a. *s’iqa kin-d-iŋ                      ŋin                      biz-n-u-n*  
     ten    learn-MEDP-NMLZ   house[ACC]   open-1PL-PFV-1PL  
     ‘We opened ten schools.’ (Darmon 2015: 150)
- b. *abin-i-z                      bir-id                      biz-i-č*  
     guest-DEF-DAT   door-DEF[ACC]   open-PFV-3SG.F  
     ‘She opened the door to the guest.’ (Darmon 2015: 194)
- c. *bir-id                      biz-ir                      šimir-yän-s                      yiw-i-č*  
     door-DEF[ACC]   open-3SG.F[CVB]   old.woman-DEF-DAT   give-PFV-3SG.F  
     ‘She opened the door for the old woman.’ (she did not manage to do it herself)  
     (Darmon 2015: 192)

(3) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 192)

- mi-dyän-t                      abiz                      Dawit-is                      yiw-u-n*  
 injera-DEF-ACC   finish[1SG.CVB]   Dawit-DAT   give-PFV-1SG  
 ‘I finished the injera for the sake of Dawit.’ (otherwise he would have been punished)

- (4) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 193)

$\eta i = x^{w}ir\ddot{a}-si$                        $\eta in$                        $t\ddot{a}ss$                        $yiw-i-y-\ddot{a}w=im$   
 3SG.M.POSS=child-DAT    house[ACC]    build[3SG.M.CVB]    give-PFV-NEG-3SG.M=MULCL  
 'He did not build a house for his son.'

### 2.1.2 The auxiliary *näy*- 'give to the speaker / here'

If the beneficiary is the speaker, i.e. a first person, Xamtanga uses a deitic 'give' auxiliary *näy*- 'give to the speaker / here' instead of *yiw*-.<sup>2</sup> The lexical verb is in the converb form, preceding the auxiliary, and no overt 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun is mentioned. This is a different case of an applicative lookalike construction, where the applied phrase is inherent to the meaning of the auxiliary.

- (5) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 194)

$\eta in$                        $t\ddot{a}ss$                        $n\ddot{a}y-u$   
 house[ACC]    build[3SG.M.CVB]    give.to.the.speaker-PFV[3SG.M]  
 'He built a house for me.'

### 2.1.3 The auxiliary *bär*- 'leave, abandon'

The periphrastic construction with *bär*- 'leave, abandon' is morphosyntactically similar to the one with *yiw*- 'give': the lexical verb in the converb form precedes the auxiliary. Both transitive and intransitive verbs are licensed with this auxiliary.

Semantically, the applied phrase may have a malefactive or a benefactive interpretation, depending on the semantics of the verb, the subject NP, or the extra-linguistic context, judging by the examples provided in Darmon (2015). Based on the semantics of the auxiliary when used as a lexical verb, Darmon (2015: 204) hypothesizes that the malefactive reading is primary. When the participant is positively affected, it is always understood as a plain beneficiary.

Unlike with *yiw*-, the introduction of *bär*- after transitive verbs does not necessarily require the presence of a third non-core argument. When the direct object of the base construction becomes the applied phrase of the verbal periphrasis, it keeps its accusative case (6). This construction could thus also be interpreted as an applicative lookalike. On the other hand, the locative case of a non-core argument with intransitive verbs in the base construction is turned into the accusative case with the applicative periphrasis (7). It thus promotes the adjunct participant to the status of a core syntactic term. With transitive verbs, the non-core argument of the base construction can be either promoted to a core argument with accusative case (8–9)—in line with the narrow

<sup>2</sup> See Creissels (2010: 50) for crosslinguistic attestations of 'give' verbs with a deictic component.

definitions of applicatives (e.g. Dixon and Aikhenvald 2000), but not of Zúñiga and Creissels (this volume)—or remain in the non-core dative case in the applied construction, while only the non-core dative case is possible in the base construction (9).

(6) Xamtanga

- a. *dāṇā-d ḡṛ-idyān-t dāṇt-u*  
 judge-DEF man-DEF-ACC judge-PFV[3SG.M]  
 ‘The judge judged the man.’ (Darmon 2015: 198)
- b. *dāṇā-d ḡṛ-idyān-t dāṇt bār-u*  
 judge-DEF man-DEF-ACC judge[3SG.M.CVB] leave-PFV[3SG.M]  
 ‘The judge judged the man to his detriment.’ (he was probably innocent)  
 (Darmon 2015: 197)

(7) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 197)

- a. *Birtukʷan-til qasʹ-u*  
 Birtukʷan-LOC shout-PFV[3SG.M]  
 ‘He yelled at Birtukʷan.’
- b. *ṇita=nyä-yān ifār-dyān-t qasʹ-ir bār-i-č*  
 3PL.POSS=mother-DEF child.PL-DEF-ACC shout-3SG.F[CVB] leave-PFV-3SG.F  
 ‘The mother scolded her children.’ (she shouted at their detriment)

(8) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 199)

- a. *ifārä-y-z-u sʹibkʹä-d kʹäb-u-n*  
 child-DEF-GEN-HEAD.SG hair-DEF[ACC] cut-PFV-1SG  
 ‘I cut the child’s hair.’
- b. *ifārä-y-z-u sʹibkʹä-d kʹäb bātʹ-u-n*  
 child-DEF-GEN-HEAD.SG hair-DEF[ACC] cut[1SG.CVB] leave-PFV-1SG  
 ‘I cut the child’s hair.’ (to make him happy / against his will)

As with *yiw-*, when a third argument is added to a transitive verb, the applied phrase can be placed between the core verb and the auxiliary or precede the whole periphrasis.

(9) Xamtanga

- a. *Abbäbä Birtukʷan-si dībdabe sʹaf-u*  
 Abbäbä Birtukʷan-DAT letter[ACC] write-PFV[3SG.M]  
 ‘Abbäbä wrote a letter to Birtukʷan.’ (Darmon 2015: 194)
- b. *Guläšu Fre-t / Fre-s dībdabe-d sʹaf*  
 Guläšu Fre-ACC Fre-DAT letter-DEF[ACC] write[3SG.M.CVB]  
*bār-u*  
 leave-PFV[3SG.M]  
 ‘Guläšu wrote the letter to the detriment of Fre.’  
 (Lit. ‘Guläšu wrote the letter and left Fre / (it) to Fre’)

- c. *Guläšu dibdabe-d s'af Fre-s bär-u*  
 Guläšu letter-DEF write[3SG.M.CVB] Fre-DAT leave-PFV[3SG.M]  
 'Guläšu wrote the letter to the detriment of Fre.' (Darmon 2015: 198)

The positively or negatively affected element can also be the speaker, which is left unexpressed. In such a case, the construction is again an applicative lookalike. In (10) the auxiliary *bär* 'leave' induces the applicative reading of the sentences, but it is the adjective or the verb modifying the subject that entails the benefactive (10a) or malefactive (10b) reading.

- (10) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 199)
- a. *id č'iqə gizin-id kir bär-u*  
 DEM2.SG.M bad dog-DEF die[3SG.M.CVB] leave-PFV[3SG.M]  
 'That bad dog died.' (speaker positively affected)
- b. *id k'äs-äw gizin-id (k'al) kir bär-u*  
 DEM2.SG.M be.good-3SG.M dog-DEF INTRJ die[3SG.M.CVB] leave-PFV[3SG.M]  
 'That good dog died!' (speaker negatively affected)

### 2.1.4 The 'say' construction

The case of the 'say' construction is problematic from an applicative verbal periphrasis perspective. Morphosyntactically, conversely to the previous constructions, 'say' is a converb in V1 position, following a dative-marked noun or pronoun, and the lexical verb is finite, in V2 position. This suggests a different grammaticalization path, from a quotative construction with an overt addressee in the dative case,<sup>3</sup> and a different synchronic morphosyntactic analysis. The grammaticalized quotative converb functions more like a postposition following the dative argument than as an applicative verbal periphrasis.

- (11) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 195)
- Almaz Dawit-is y-ir qas'ijä-dyän-t k'iw-i-č*  
 Almaz Dawit-DAT say-3SG.M[CVB] thief-DEF-ACC kill-PFV-3SG.F  
 'Almaz killed the thief for Dawit.' (Lit. 'Almaz killed the thief saying to Dawit.')

The postpositional analysis is also favoured by the fact that the 'say' construction can combine with the 'leave' construction (12). In this case, the 1<sup>st</sup> person applied phrase is not left unexpressed as in (10), but is marked with a pronoun in the dative case.

<sup>3</sup> The addressee of 'say' used as a quotative verb is also marked with the dative case (Darmon 2015: 324).



(12) Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 199)

*id k'äsāw iğir yiggis y-äw kir*  
 DEM.SG.M good.3SG.M man 1SG.DAT say-3SG.M[CVB] die[3SG.M.CVB]  
*bär-u*  
 leave-PFV[3SG.M]  
 'That good man sacrificed himself for me.'

This is in line with Creissels's (2010: 61–62) analysis of similar constructions in Ethio-Semitic languages as being not inherently benefactive applicative periphrases.

## 2.2 North Cushitic

In Beja, nouns with the semantic role of beneficiary are only constructed with the directional postposition *dha:j* 'towards', which governs the genitive case, without any applicative marking on the verb. But when the benefactive argument is a pronoun, a periphrastic applicative construction with the (highly irregular) auxiliary verb *hi* 'give', the sole applicative auxiliary of the language, is used instead of the adjunct construction. Compared with the base construction, *hi* obligatorily licenses an additional argument (Vanhove 2017: 143), and can be used with both transitive (13–14) and intransitive verbs (15).

As a lexical verb, *hi* is a ditransitive verb, and if the recipient is a pronoun, the latter belongs to the bound set of object or possessive pronouns (depending on the verb paradigm) and is enclitic to 'give'.<sup>4</sup> This morphosyntactic feature is kept for the applied phrase when 'give' is used as an applicative auxiliary. The Beja construction would thus be best described as an applicative lookalike.

The lexical verb, which precedes the auxiliary, is either the general (same subject) converb (13b), or a finite verb form (14b) (optionally followed by the—non-coordinating or subordinating—linker *-i* for the Perfective [15b]), which shares its subject with the lexical verb (Vanhove 2017: 143–144).

The beneficiary of the 'give' construction is mostly of the deputative type, expressing that an action is done on someone else's behalf.

<sup>4</sup> Among hundreds of examples, there are only two where the pronominal recipient is followed by the directional postposition, or is an independent object pronoun.

## (13) Beja

- a. *ʔabana:=t=o: i-dʔi*  
 coffee=INDEF.F=POSS.3SG.ACC 3SG.M-do\PFV  
 ‘He made his coffee.’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_15\_leopard\_066)<sup>5</sup>
- b. *mhaj=t farti-ja dʔi-ti a-ni:w=ho:k*  
 three=INDEF.F line-PL do-CVB.GNRL 1SG-give\IPFV=2SG.OBJ  
 ‘I’ll draw three lines for you.’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_06\_foreigner\_29)

## (14) Beja

- a. *e:=mak a-gʷʔad*  
 DEF.PL.M.ACC=donkey\PL 1SG-watch\PFV  
 ‘I watched after the donkeys.’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_190\_poorDonkeys\_14)
- b. *e:=mak gʷʔad-a he:=ho:n*  
 DEF.PL.M.ACC=donkey\PL watch-IMP.2SG.M give\IMP.2SG.M=1PL.OBJ  
 ‘Watch after the donkeys for us!’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_190\_poorDonkeys\_11)

## (15) Beja

- a. *ge:b=o:n tikʷ-i:ni*  
 next=POSS.1PL.ACC go.down-IPFV.3SG  
 ‘They go down next to us.’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_57\_Ababda\_246)
- b. *i=?ara:w=u:n dha:j tikʷ-ja-i*  
 DEF.M=friend=POSS.1PL.NOM DIR go.down-PFV.3SG.M-LNK  
*i-he:=he:b*  
 3SG.M-give\PFV=1SG.OBJ  
 ‘Our friend went down to him for me.’  
 (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_43\_hyena\_man\_042-044)

In a few instances, the ‘give’ construction has a plain beneficiary semantic role:

## (16) Beja

- a. *ti=ʔʒhalaj fif-ti:t*  
 DEF.F=coal\PL pour-CVB.SEQ  
 ‘They poured the coal and. . .’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_42\_hunter\_bread\_115)

<sup>5</sup> The Beja examples are mostly extracted from Vanhove’s online corpus (2020b); the indications at the end of the free translation refer to the texts and prosodic units where they are found. In the glosses, \ signals stem alternation.

- b. *ɕa:hil-a*      *i-ʔafif-n=e:k*      *hala:wa:=t*  
 small.child-PL 3SG.M-face.each.other\PFV-PL=if sweet\PL=INDEF  
*i-fif*      *i-hi*  
 3SG.M-pour\PFV 3SG.M-give\PFV  
 ‘When the small children met him, he poured sweets for them.’  
 (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_12\_witch\_122-124)

A malefactive interpretation is possible only in negative utterances:

(17) Beja

- a. *ki=t-kan=he:b*      *han*  
 NEG.IPFV=2SG.M-know\MID.PFV=1SG.OBJ Q.PL  
 ‘Don’t you know me?’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_31\_king\_40)
- b. *tak kan-ti*      *hi-it=he:b*      *i-rib*  
 man know\MID-CVB.GNRL give-VN=1SG.OBJ 3SG.M-refuse\PFV  
 ‘No one got information for me.’ (Lit. ‘a man refused giving me knowing’)  
 (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_04\_djinn\_075)

The periphrastic construction can also be used, albeit rarely, to express a causal relationship between two events, another type of grammaticalization of benefactives (see Creissels 2010: 35–36 for examples in São-Tomense Creole and Yoruba). In (18), there is no bound object pronoun on the auxiliary because the 3<sup>rd</sup> persons of this set are zero morphemes:

(18) Beja

- ti=bʔafi*      *ti-fbib*      *o:=ja:s*      *ti-fdin*  
 DEF.F=fox 3SG.F-look\PFV DEF.SG.M.ACC=dog 3SG.F-move.away\PFV  
*tal-ta-i*      *t-hi*  
 trot-PFV.3SG.F-LNK 3SG.F-give\PFV  
 ‘The vixen looked at the dog and trotted away because of it (the dog).’ (BEJ\_MV\_NARR\_50\_fox\_hunt\_050-051)

### 3 Applicatives with preverbs

The verb forms of a number of Cushitic languages are made of two independent or, more often, clitic elements,<sup>6</sup> consisting of a (partly) inflected lexical core, preceded by what some Cushiticists call a “selector” (e.g. Mous 2006: 306), defined as “an inflectional complex” in Mous (2016: 173). In this chapter, I will use “preverb” (also used by some authors) as a neutral cover term, since the smallest common denominator between all

<sup>6</sup> Most often, cliticization is not represented in the transcriptions of the authors.

the languages concerned is that this inflectional element is obligatorily placed before the verb (although in some languages it may be separated from the verb by other elements, or cliticize to any preceding element).<sup>7</sup> Preverbs may consist of only one morpheme, e.g. a special set of object pronoun, or be, more often, multimorphemic. However, the type and number of grammatical categories that can be marked and often stacked on preverbs vary across languages: subject, impersonal subject, object, sentence type (e.g. dependent or independent), focus, direction, TAM, and obliques (sometimes termed “case clitics”). In none of these languages do the preverbs bear all these grammatical categories. Among the thirteen languages with a preverb reported in Mous (2006: 306), I could identify nine with morphemes that are good candidates to be applicative (lookalike) markers: Alagwa, Arbore, Boni, Burunge, Dhaasanac, Elmolo, Iraqw, Rendille, and Somali.<sup>8</sup>

Diachronically, some of the morphemes composing the preverbs have stemmed from phonetically reduced subject pronouns (Banti 1997: 103–104), or, as in the case of applicative morphemes, they are cognate with instrumental, directional or dative postpositions (see e.g. Kießling 2001). It seems no preverbal morpheme has a verbal origin, unlike the auxiliary constructions in § 2.

### 3.1 East Cushitic: The Iraqw-Alagwa-Burunge cluster

Four preverbs contain morphemes used in constructions that meet the criteria of the definition proposed in the introductory chapter for applicative constructions, or are more of the lookalike type.

#### 3.1.1 The instrumental applicative *-rar*

The applicative *-rar* (and its cognate forms), is the sole marker that has one and the same instrumental semantic role across the three languages.<sup>9</sup>

In the Iraqw example below, the peripheral argument of the base construction bears the instrumental postposition (19a), cognate with the applicative marker, while in

7 In addition to the idiosyncratic “selector”, preverbs have been termed in many various ways in Cushitic studies, such as “preverb”, “derivative prefix”, “indicator particle”, “focus particle”, “inflectional particle”, “prepositional particle”, “preverbal particle”, “Incorporated Object Prefix”, “adposition”, “auxiliary”, “be verb”, “case marker”, “case clitic”. Obviously, such a wealth of terminology does not ease cross-linguistic comparison, even within the Cushitic family.

8 This list is shorter than the ones provided in Mous (2006: 322) since what he labels as “dative” does not have an applicative function in all the languages he mentions.

9 A cognate preverb *ar-* is also found in Elmolo (Omo-Tana), but as a ventive and focus marker (Heine 1980a: 197). A possible applicative function is unclear.

(19b) the preverb stacks an object pronoun, a TAM marker, and the instrumental marker, while the noun does not bear the instrumental postposition. This construction is again an applicative lookalike.

(19) Iraqw

- a. *qaymo ga kurmo-’éen-ar doohl*  
 field 3.OBJ:F.OBJ hoe-1.SG.POSS-INS dig:3.SG.M:PRS  
 ‘He cultivates the field with my hoe.’ (Mous 1993: 245)
- b. *anín kurmo u-na-rar dóohl*  
 1SG hoe M.OBJ-PST-APPL.INS dig:1SG  
 ‘I was digging with a hoe.’ (Mous 1993: 153)

Burunge also makes use of an instrumental-comitative preverbal marker *-ri*, and its grammatical allomorph (20b) *-r-*, cognate with the preposition *har*<sup>i</sup> ‘with, to, at’ (20a) (Kießling 1994: 171, 192–193). The base construction (20a) uses a different preverb.

(20) Burunge

- a. *’ana haati ’alung ki<sup>a</sup>*  
 1.SG 1/2.SBJ:FUT:SEP back return:1SG.IPFV  
 ‘I will go all the way back to the starting point.’ (Kießling 1994: 237)
- b. *’ana ha-gu-r-aa ki<sup>a</sup> ’ayaa-ge*  
 1SG 1/2.SBJ-2SG.M.OBJ-APPL:COM-FUT return:1SG.IPFV house-ALL  
 ‘I’ll go back home with you.’ (Kießling 1994: 172)

Alagwa illustrates a similar situation where the instrumental-comitative marker *-ra* on preverbs is cognate with the preposition *hara* ‘in, at, to, with’ (Mous 2016: 186, 211–215). (21) is the sole example in Mous’s grammar with this applicative marker stacked on the preverb, but there is no corresponding base construction. However, clauses with the cognate preposition before a noun do not use the preverb with the applicative marker (22). Since the preposition used in (21) is different from the cognate preposition, it might be the case that Alagwa has here a well-behaved applicative, according to Zúñiga and Creissels’s definition.

(21) Alagwa (Mous 2016: 186)

- nongo-ra ibüiti na hati hare téé-lo’*  
 IPS.CONS.M.OBJ-APPL stay.3.M with relative wife F-heavy  
 ‘And he was left with a pregnant woman.’

(22) Alagwa (Mous 2016: 252, 257)

- nanka máax hara du/i*  
 CONS:IPS:F.OBJ smear with oil  
 ‘And she was anointed with oil.’

### 3.1.2 The benefactive applicative *s(V)-*

Alagwa has an applicative marker *s-* which is prefixed to the preverb.<sup>10</sup> The marker can be used for the addressee of a ‘say’ verb, the recipient argument of ‘give’ verbs, and as a benefactive device. As a benefactive, it is restricted to two contexts: when a nominal beneficiary precedes the verb and when it is a pronoun. When the lexical NP follows the verb, Alagwa uses instead the cognate preposition as in (25), i.e. an adjunct strategy (Kießling 1994: 171). Compare the preverbal applicative constructions where the pronominal applied phrase is the last suffix of the preverb in (23b), and a noun in (24b), here as the head of a relative clause, with the base constructions with less complex preverbs in (23a) and (24a). Only examples with transitive verbs were found. Could it be that the word order change operates as a different non-core coding of the applied phrase, or could the possible absence of the applied phrase in the base construction indicate that the corresponding applicative construction meets the criteria of Zúñiga and Creissels’s definition? Since no strict corresponding constructions were found in the grammar, the final answer is left open.

(23) Alagwa

- a. *qoo yawa k-i /agagin?*  
 EMPH cattle IPS-N.OBJ eat:HAB:DUR:Q  
 ‘Are cattle not eaten?’ (Mous 2001: 240, 245)
- b. *daankii si-k-i koonka /ag*  
 then APPL:BEN-IPS-3PL chicken eat  
 ‘And then a chicken was slaughtered for them.’ (Lit. ‘One ate for them a chicken.’)  
 (Mous 2001: 131)

(24) Alagwa

- a. *ra’amu k-a ra’am-an na hek<sup>u</sup>*  
 song SUB-1/2 sing-1PL COP DEM1.PRO  
 ‘The song that we sing is this one.’ (Mous 2001: 189)
- b. *hiru sa-k-a-n raa’ na heek<sup>u</sup>*  
 man.M APPL:BEN-SUB-1/2.SBJ-PFV sing.1SG COP DEM1.M  
 ‘The man that I sang to is this one.’ (Mous 2016: 191)

(25) Alagwa (Kießling 1996: 37)

- kuu marée hhaab-it sa taatáà*  
 2SG PROH inform-2SG APPL:BEN father  
 ‘You don’t tell father!’

<sup>10</sup> It is called “dative case marker” in Mous (2006: 322), and “beneficient selector prefix” in Mous (2016: 176).

A cognate applicative *sV-* (the vowel is subject to regressive assimilation) is used in Burunge (Kießling 1994: 169–171) (26b–27b). Unlike in Alagwa, the applied phrase is expressed twice, as an independent NP (pronouns in 26b and 27b) and prefixed on the preverb. Since the applied phrase cannot be expressed in the base construction, *sV-* can be viewed as a true applicative marker.

(26) Burunge (Kießling 1994: 170)

- a. *'ana ha-ga laahhama hhada*  
 1SG 1/2.SBJ-3SG.F.OBJ put.up:1SG:IPFV stick  
 'I put up a stick.'
- b. *'ana ugu su-gu laahhama hhada*  
 1SG 2SG.M APPL:BEN-2SG.M.OBJ put.up:1SG:IPFV stick  
 'I put up a stick (as a target) for you.'

(27) Burunge (Kießling 1994: 170)

- a. *'ina ha-gw-áa fūsi kooloo*  
 3SG 1/2.SBJ-3SG.M.OBJ-PRET steal:3SG.M:PFV hoe  
 'He stole a hoe.'
- b. *'ina 'ana si-n-áa-ni fūsi kooloo*  
 3SG 1SG APPL:BEN-1SG.OBJ-PRET-VENT steal:3SG.M:PFV hoe  
 'He stole a hoe for me.'

In Burunge, *sV-* can also be used with a causal value:

(28) Burunge (Kießling 1994: 171)

- taataa-gway 'idoo si-ni<sup>11</sup> qaase hing*  
 father.M-POSS.1SG.M thing APPL:REAS-1SG.OBJ bury:1SG.SBJV 3SG:COMP  
*gwaai*  
 die:3SG.M:PFV  
 'The reason why I bury my father is that he is dead.'

A cognate preverb *-s* (in final position on a preverb) / *sa-* when cliticizing to the verb, exists also in Iraqw as a suffix to the other preverbal elements. It has a causal value (29). Combined with the locative applicative *ni-* (§ 3.1.4.) on complex preverbs, *s(a)* marks the pronominal beneficiary of an intransitive verb (30a). Alternatively, it can be prefixed to the verb, without *ni-* (30b). *s(a)* is cognate with the reason case marker and the preposition *as* 'because' (Mous 1993: 102, 261–262). The exact applicative status is unclear.

<sup>11</sup> Kießling's example has *sugu*, obviously a typo, since this preverb corresponds to the applicative with a 2SG.OBJ.

- (29) Iraqw (Mous 1993: 153)  
*bar-ti-na-sa* *caacaam-in*  
 COND-IPS.1SG.OBJ-PST-REAS cry-DUR.3SG.M  
 ‘If they were crying because of me.’
- (30) Iraqw (Mous 1993: 154)  
 a. *ngu-s* *gadyúus*  
 3.OBJ:APPL:LOC:M.OBJ-APPL:BEN work.1SG  
 ‘I work for him.’ (Lit. ‘The reason I work is for him.’)  
 b. *u* *sa-gadiyúus*  
 3M.OBJ APPL:BEN-work.1SG  
 ‘I work for him.’ (Lit. ‘The reason I work is him.’)

### 3.1.3 The locative applicative *ee*

For Alagwa, Mous (2016: 185–186) reports on a morpheme *ee*, that he labels “applicative” with a locative meaning. It can encliticize to the other preverbal elements, but can also be prefixed on verbs. The latter strategy is treated under the section about compound verbs (not derived verbs) in which Mous states that “[t]he applicative clitic can also fuse with the verb or adjective and lexicalise to a new verb often with a different and partly unpredictable meaning” (Mous 2016: 150–151), suggesting that the device as a verbal prefix is not very productive.

Only applicative constructions with intransitive verbs are exemplified: (31b) shows the use of *ee* prefixed to a motion verb, and (31c) as a clitic to the preverb, with a locative phrase which cannot be expressed in the base construction (31a), i.e. a true applicative; (32a) illustrates the applicative prefixed to a middle verb, and (32b) cliticized on the preverb. In (32a–b) no overt location is expressed, but the applicative implies that space is somehow involved; in this case the constructions may better qualify as applicative lookalikes.

- (31) Alagwa  
 a. *ningi* *daaf*  
 CONS:3 enter.3M  
 ‘And he entered.’ (Mous 2016: 186)  
 b. *ningi* *qoroo* *ee-daaf* *do’o-li*  
 CONS:3 EMPH APPL:LOC-enter.3M house-in  
 ‘And he entered the house / went inside.’  
 c. *ning=ee* *qoroo* *daaf* *do’o-li*  
 CONS:3=APPL:LOC EMPH enter.3M house-in  
 ‘And he entered the house / went inside.’ (Mous 2016: 185)



(32) Alagwa (Mous 2016: 185)

- a. *hadithi-r-i i-ni asa ee-fak-it*  
 story-F-POSS.1SG 3-PRF already APPL:LOC-finish-MID  
 ‘My story finishes here.’
- b. *hadithi-r-i i-n=ee fak-it<sup>i</sup>*  
 story-F-POSS.1SG 3-PRF=APPL:LOC finish-MID.PRS.3SG.M<sup>12</sup>  
 ‘My story is finished.’

Mous mentions that *ee* is compatible with the *s*- applicative preverb (§ 3.13) only if space is involved. In the sole example provided, *ee* is prefixed to the verb:

(33) Alagwa (Mous 2016: 186)

- s-oo fa/a ee-qaas*  
 APPL:BEN-M.OBJ mash APPL:LOC-put  
 ‘I will provide mash for you.’

Although not mentioned in the list of prepositions (Mous 2016: 211), it seems, judging by the sole example I found in the texts, that *ee* may also function as a preposition, doubling the allative case of the noun:

(34) Alagwa (Mous 2016: 253, 257)

- kimaa in nanga xab ee mfalmee-li, xwaylá-s*  
 then 3SG CONS:F.OBJ marry APPL king-ALL child-DEM2  
 ‘Then she was married to the king, that child.’

No cognate form of this applicative is reported for the other two languages.

### 3.1.4 The locative and benefactive applicative *ni*

The three languages of this group have a marker *ni* (and its cognate forms)—labelled “hither” in Iraqw, “ventive” in Alagwa and Burunge—for which an applicative analysis can be considered.

In Burunge, this morpheme, which is the last element of the preverb, is described in terms of pragmatics:

Das Ventivmorphem {ni} im Flexionskomplex zeigt an, daß die Handlung auf ein zuvor etabliertes Aufmerksamkeitszentrum gerichtet ist. Dieses Zentrum fällt im alltäglichen Diskurs in der Regel mit dem Standpunkt des Sprechers zusammen. In einer fortlaufenden Erzählung wird der Ventiv

12 The two examples with *fakit* and *fakit<sup>i</sup>* are simply glossed ‘finish’ by Mous; I have restored the full glossing.

meist auf die Person des Hauptakteurs bezogen. [The ventive morpheme {ni} in the inflectional complex indicates that the action is directed toward a previously established center of attention. In everyday discourse, this center usually coincides with the speaker's point of view. In a continuous narrative, the ventive usually refers to the person of the main actor.] (Kießling 1994: 166)

The construction is used with intransitive (35b) and transitive (36b) verbs to mark a proximal locative meaning. (37b) is a case where the construction refers “to the person of the main actor”. Since there is no applied phrase, *ni-* is better analyzed as an applicative lookalike.

(35) Burunge (Kießling 1994: 166)

- a. 'ugu haa ki/id<sup>a</sup>  
2SG.M 1/2.SBJ:FUT1 return.2SG.IPFV  
'You will return.'
- b. 'ugu haa-ni ki/id<sup>a</sup>  
2SG.M 1/2.SBJ:FUT1-APPL:LOC return.2SG.IPFV  
'You will return here.'

(36) Burunge (Kießling 1994: 166)

- a. 'ana haa satis<sup>i</sup> fa/a  
1SG 1/2.SBJ:PRET move:CAUS:1SG.PFV porridge  
'I moved the porridge (there).'
- b. 'ana haa-ni satis<sup>i</sup> fa/a  
1SG 1/2.SBJ:PRET-APPL:LOC move:CAUS:1SG.PFV porridge  
'I moved the porridge here.'

(37) Burunge (Kießling 1994: 224)

- a. /anta dagáa tip<sup>i</sup> har<sup>i</sup> qoro'u  
termite.mound IPS:3SG.F.OBJ:PRET cover.3SG.M.PFV with dry.leaves  
sa hiica/a da Laa'ay  
for escape SUB.F Laa'ay  
'The termite mound was prepared with dry leaves for Laa'ay's escape.'
- b. /anta higáa-ni tip<sup>i</sup> har<sup>i</sup>  
termite.mound 3.SBJ:3SG.F.OBJ:PRET-APPL:BEN cover.3SG.M.PFV with  
qoro'u sa hiica/adosi  
dry.leaves for escape:F:POSS.3SG  
'He covered the termite mound with dry leaves for his escape.'

Alagwa has a marker *n-*, which, similarly to its Burunge cognate, is used for ventive actions relative to the *hinc et nunc* (Mous 2016: 179), as well as with 'give' verbs. I found one example in Mous's texts which could be interpreted as a benefactive:

- (38) Alagwa (Mous 2016: 253, 257)  
*haa'uw n-í hhútlit*  
 come.IMP OPT:APPL:BEN-SG.F.OBJ.2 plait:1SG  
 'Come let me braid your hair!' (Lit. 'Let me braid to you.')

In Iraqw, *n(i-)*, which is the first morpheme of the preverb, is used, among others, for recipients of 'give' verbs and addressees of 'say' verbs, and as a directional with motion verbs (Mous 1993: 134–136). It also has the same pragmatic functions as in Burunge and Alagwa, and can mark the pronominal beneficiary of transitive verbs (39b–40b), thus behaving as a benefactive applicative. First person beneficiaries are unexpressed (41b).

- (39) Iraqw (Mous 1993: 136)  
 a. *aníng kurmo u tlaaxw*  
     1SG hoe(M) M.OBJ buy:1SG  
     'T'll buy a hoe.'  
 b. *aníng kurmo ngu tlaaxw*  
     1SG hoe(M) 3.OBJ:APPL:M.OBJ<sup>13</sup> buy:1SG  
     'T'll buy him a hoe.'
- (40) Iraqw (Mous 1993: 136)  
 a. *da'angw gu-na óo'*  
     song(M) 3.OBJ:M.OBJ-PST sing:3SG.M.PST  
     'He sang a song.'  
 b. *da'angw ngu-na di-r-ós-i ó'*  
     song(M) 3.OBJ:APPL:M.OBJ-PST place-F-3SG.POSS-DIR<sup>14</sup> sing:2SG.M  
     'You sang a song for him.'
- (41) Iraqw  
 a. *garma gu-na barwadu leehha-r-wa yacaaw*  
     boy(M) 3.OBJ:M.OBJ-PST letters catching-F-ABL send:3.SG.M  
     'He sent a boy to get the letters.' (Mous 1993: 271)  
 b. *garma u-na ya'aaw imboru barwadu ngi-wa*  
     boy(M) M.OBJ-PST send:1SG Mbulu letters 3.OBJ:APPL:N.OBJ-BCKG  
     *oh-i*  
     catch-3SG.M:SBJV  
     'I sent a boy to Mbulu to collect letters for me.' (Mous 1993: 132)

<sup>13</sup> There is a typo in Mous's glossing which reads "DEPS.1.SG:O.M".

<sup>14</sup> Motion verbs and 'say' verbs often require the use of the feminine place noun *dí-r* with the directional suffix *-i* (Mous 1993: 99).

## 3.2 Omo-Tana

### 3.2.1 The applicative *ka/ká*

In Elmolo, there is an applicative preverb *ka* (also a dative with ‘give’ verbs [43]), which either cliticizes to the verb (42b, 43a), or is separated from it by a direct object (43b). The *ka*-preverb, which follows the subject index and TAM affixes, marks a benefactive with animates (42b), an instrumental with inanimates (42c), and a locative with ablative phrases (42d) (Heine 1980a: 197). Only with the latter meaning does the applied phrase occur with a non-core marking, but no corresponding base construction was found.

(42) Elmolo (Heine 1980a: 197)

- a. *yesé mín ’án-dís-a*  
1SG house 1SG-build-IPFV  
‘I build a house.’
- b. *yesé mín h’эле аη-ка-dis-a*  
1SG house children 1SG-APPL:BEN-build-IPFV  
‘I build a house for the children.’
- c. *yesé mín elle áη-k’a-dís-a*  
1SG house stones 1SG-APPL:INS-build-IPFV  
‘I build a house with stones.’
- d. *yesé mín-lu áη-ка-pé-e*  
1SG house-ABL 1SG-APPL:LOC-get.out-IPFV  
‘I (shall) get out of the house.’

(43) Elmolo (Heine 1980a: 196–197)

- a. *yesé núúm h’эле an-’áη-ka-koon-e*  
1SG food children 1SG-PFV-APPL:BEN-bring-PFV
- b. *yesé núúm an-’áη-ka h’эле koon-e*  
1SG food 1SG-PFV-APPL:BEN children bring-PFV  
‘I brought the children food.’

When the applied phrase is a pronoun, it belongs to a special set of bound object pronouns (Heine 1980a: 197), different from independent object pronouns (*kesé* or *kéló* for 2SG.OBJ vs. *éké-* with the applicative in [44]):

(44) Elmolo (Heine 1980a: 197)

- isé dáfárné éké-ka-waak-as*  
she dress 2SG.OBJ-APPL:BEN-sew-IPFV  
‘She sews a dress for you.’

For Arbore, Mous (2006: 322) mentions an applicative preverb *ka* but does not provide examples. It covers ablative (source), dative (beneficiary), locative and directional

meanings. There is unfortunately only one example in Hayward's (1984) grammar, with a beneficiary semantic role, in the following relative clause:

(45) Arbore (Hayward 1984: 312)

*náag gidiká mod áha-ttóy naag ka dá-w?w-elo*  
 boy then those people-3SG.M girl APPL beg-PFV-DEF  
*?ay ka hóǵǵeta*  
 3SG.M.IND.INDF<sup>15</sup> APPL:BEN work:IPFV:3SG.M  
 'Then the boy will work for those people who asked for the girl for (him).'

The second occurrence of *ka* is analyzable as a suffix of the complex preverb *?ay* which merges a person index and a TAM marker, while the first occurrence could be interpreted as a postposition, since cognates of *ka* are numerous in Cushitic as case markers or postpositions, with either ablative, locative, comparative, instrumental or dative functions (Appleyard 1990: 28). It could be that both constructions as a dative postposition and an applicative preverbal element coexist in Arbore.

In any case, the related *ka* morpheme of Rendille is analyzed by Pillinger and Galboran (1999) as both a postposition with ablative, instrumental, and directional meanings, when following directly a noun (46a), and as an applicative instrumental preverb when preceding a verb (46b). Judging by the translations, pragmatics may be involved in the choice of one or the other construction.

(46) Rendille (Pillinger and Galboran 1999: 28)

- a. *wúl ká ínam jahe*  
 stick with DEF.boy 3SG.M.hit  
 'It was with a stick that he hit the boy.'
- b. *wúl ínam á-ká-jahe.*  
 stick DEF.boy FOC-APPL:INS-3SG.M.hit  
 'He hit the boy with a stick.'

Heine (1980b) provides an example with an ablative reading:

(47) Rendille (Heine 1980b: 238)

- a. *usu ayimi*  
 he came  
 'He has come.'

<sup>15</sup> Glossing is mine. *?ay* is simply glossed as 3SG.M by Hayward. *?ay* is not in his list of pronouns, but it is duly reported as a "selector" of "3SG indicative indefinite" (p. 109).

- b. *usu min-é ka-yimi*  
 he house-FOC APPL:ABL-came  
 'He has come from the house.'

The syntactic status of the Dhaasanac cognate morpheme *ká* is debated, and it is unclear whether it marks an adjunct strategy or a preverbal strategy: Sasse (1976: 209) and Mous (2006) analyze *ká* as a preverbal element, while Tosco (2001: 232–233, 259–261) is more in favour of considering it an allative postposition.<sup>16</sup> According to Tosco, *ká* occurs in a fixed position, immediately before the verb, and follows directly a noun, to which it is suffixed (even though he always transcribes *ká* as an independent word), except when the noun is topicalized. Two arguments, duly mentioned by Tosco, could support the preverbal analysis: (i) when the noun is topicalized, *ká* stays in its preverbal position; (ii) object pronouns following the focus marker license a special set of “verbal pronouns” directly preceding *ká*.

However, it might be the case that both analyses hold. There is one indisputable case of a postpositional behaviour in one example (48) in Tosco’s texts in which *ká* is separated from the verb by a direct object noun, thus breaking the rule of verbal adjacency.

- (48) Dhaasanac (Tosco 2001: 317–318)  
*mé ká fás gaa ruut*  
 head to blood have.PRF goat  
 ‘The he-goat had blood on its head.’

Apart from its use as an allative and dative marker with motion and ‘give’ verbs, there is one example of *ká* with an intransitive middle verb which might be interpreted as an applicative construction, but there are no other examples of this verb or similar constructions to confirm this interpretation.

- (49) Dhaasanac (Tosco 2001: 260)  
*diidic <sup>h</sup>a <sup>h</sup>í ká raaða*  
 dung.beetle FOC VPRO.3.OBJ APPL? take.by.surprise.MID.IPV  
 ‘The dung-beetle takes him by surprise.’

<sup>16</sup> This disagreement is also the case for the other preverbal elements of Dhaasanac in the following sections.

### 3.2.2 The applicative *í-/ú/u*

Tunni (a dialect of Somali), has an applicative preverb *í*, with several grammatical allomorphs depending on the pronoun it combines with. It has directional and dative meanings with motion, ‘give’, and ‘say’ verbs, and has a benefactive interpretation with transitive (50b–51) and intransitive verbs (52). It always precedes the verb, whatever the position of the applied phrase. It can combine with the other applicative preverbs (51). No corresponding base constructions were found.

(50) Tunni

- a. *áy sagáar[a] árrabkíi kú qáata a soo nágt*  
 Mrs. dikdik:ART tongue:M.ANP from take:3F JUSS here give.back:3F  
 ‘Let Mrs. Dikdik, who took his tongue from him, give it back.’ (Tosco 1997: 158)
- b. *isín beesódán n-oo-kú taabtèen*  
 2PL money:F:PROX 1PL-APPL:BEN-ABL take.2PL  
 ‘You took this money from him for us.’ (Tosco 1997: 110)

(51) Tunni (Tosco 1997: 108)

*rúbbunkán sóorta i-i-kí laabàayt*  
 spoon.M:ART food.F:ART 1SG.OBJ-APPL:BEN-APPL:INS stir:PROG:2SG  
 ‘You are stirring the food for me with this spoon.’

(52) Tunni (Tosco 1997: 160–162)

*áw Mayow hidáa má kíi róon[o]*  
 Aw Mayow so NEG 2SG:APPL:BEN be.good  
 ‘Aw Mayow, this is not good for you.’

In Standard Somali, the cognate applicative preverb is *-u*, and it is structurally similar (with minor differences) to Tunni. No corresponding base constructions were found.

(53) Standard Somali (Biber 1984: 49)

*Cabdi nin-ka b-uu suuq-a u-tagay*  
 Abdi man-ART FOC-3SG market-ART APPL:BEN.3SG-go.to.PFV  
 ‘Abdi went for the man to the market.’

Boni as described by Sasse (1981: 257) has a cognate applicative preverb *ú-*, which is a well-behaved applicative since no counterpart of the applied phrase can occur in the base construction.

## (54) Boni (Sasse 1981: 277)

- a. *fíli kadi*  
 comb bought  
 'He bought a comb.'
- b. *hác-hablo fíli ú-kadi*  
 girl-DEF comb APPL:BEN.3SG-buy.PFV  
 'He bought a comb for the girl.'

In Dhaasanac, notwithstanding the issue of the exact morphosyntactic status of preverbal elements in this language (see § 3.2.1), *(k)í*, one of Tosco's "core adpositions", has three readings: dative, benefactive (55b), and instrumental (56). The preverb can encliticize to any preceding word; in such a case, the initial *k* is dropped.

## (55) Dhaasanac

- a. *yáa bie ?oŋolic fii*  
 1SG.SBJ water calabash pour.PFV  
 'I poured water in the calabash.' (Tosco 2001: 259)
- b. *bie dáat <sup>h</sup>a yú ko (k)í fafaa*  
 water calabash FOC 1SG 2SG.OBJ APPL:BEN pour.RDP.IPFV  
 'I'll pour for you water in the calabash.' (Tosco 2001: 237)

## (56) Dhaasanac (Tosco 2001: 233)

- gáal ?éðe húol=í tuni*  
 people guns REFL=APPL:INS hit.PFV  
 'People fought (each other) with guns.'

Rendille uses an applicative preverb *í-* (for 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> oblique pronouns) and *kí-* (for 2<sup>nd</sup> oblique pronouns).<sup>17</sup> Those preverbs differ from the bound direct object pronouns, which have low tones (57a). Heine (1980b: 238) only mentions the *í-* form.<sup>18</sup> This applicative construction is used with both transitive (57b) and intransitive verbs (58b), with a benefactive interpretation.

## (57) Rendille (Pillinger and Galboran 1999: 29)

- a. *usú i'-helé / kí'-helé*  
 3SG.M.FOC 1SG.OBJ-find.PFV 2SG.OBJ-find.PFV  
 'He's the one who found me/you.'

<sup>17</sup> They are labelled "incorporated object prefixes" by Pillinger and Galboran (1999: 29).

<sup>18</sup> Heine labels it a "verbal extension".



- (58) Rendille (Heine 1980b: 238)

- dád*      *má*      *s[i]*      *íl*      *dágnə*  
people    NEG    NPST    APPL:COM    dwell.1PL  
'We don't live with other people.'

- (62) Standard Somali (Biber 1984: 50)

*Cabdi b-uu Cali geela ka-la-dhacay*  
 Abdi FOC-3SG.M Ali camels ABL-APPL:COM-rob.PFV.3SG.M  
 ‘He robbed some camels from Ali together with Abdi.’

Rendille *lee-* may also be a cognate preverb, but the sole example—*leejira* ‘be with (someone)’, cf. *jira* ‘be, live’—and the comments in Pillinger and Galboran (1999: 29) are too sketchy to be sure.

## 4 Applicative derivation

Kießling (1984: 94) mentions a derived applicative verb form in Burunge marked by the prefix *hii-/hay-*, which “zeigt an, daß die Handlung in Bezug auf ein Objekt, im Hinblick auf ein bestimmtes Ergebnis oder in Richtung auf ein bestimmtes Ziel hin unternommen wird” [indicates that the action is taken with respect to an object, with respect to a particular result, or toward a particular goal]. He provides a short first list of base forms with their corresponding applicative forms, and longer lists of applicatives with “specialized semantics” and fossilized forms. Utterances with only two intransitive verbs of the first list could be found in his grammar. In (63b) the applied phrase keeps its non-core marking, and there is no applied phrase in (64); the construction is thus better viewed as an applicative lookalike with ventive semantics.

- (63) Burunge

- a. *kalaamay ma gesaa day 'ayaage*  
 better CONS-1/2.SBJ first come.1SG.PFV house:ALL  
 ‘It is better I go home first.’ (Kießling 1984: 227)
- b. *higi hii-day maraage*  
 3.SBJ:SEQ APPL-come:3SG.M:PFV:DECL house:ALL  
 ‘And he entered into the house.’ (Kießling 1984: 266)

- (64) Burunge (Kießling 1984: 218)

*yee dahagway hoo malaalee hii-tlayda*  
 VOC:M guest:M:POSS.1SG 1/2.SBJ:PROS when APPL-stand:2SG:IPFV  
 ‘Oh my dearest, when will you rise?’

Kießling (1994: 94) relates the applicative prefix to a few fossilized verb forms with a prefix *ii-/in-* in Iraqw, which Mous (1994: 199) tentatively relates to the Iraqw directive case marker *-i*. Kießling (1994: 109) also reports on a malefactive derived verb with a prefix *'afa-*, which only occurs with some lexicalized items, not as a productive device.

## 5 Dative doubling in Oromo: A possible lookalike?

Oromo uses an adjunct strategy with a dative case that marks the beneficiary. In addition, in both the Wollegga and Harar dialects, the dative case may occur twice, obligatorily on the beneficiary and optionally on the verb, after the inflectional morpheme:

- (65) Oromo (Wollegga dialect; Girma Mengistu Desta, p.c.)

*ani ilma-koo-f konkolaataa=n bit-e(-ef)*  
 1SG son-POSS.1SG-DAT car=1SG.SBJ buy-PFV-DAT  
 'I bought a car for my son.'

- (66) Oromo (Harar dialect; Owens 1985: 119)

*sheex-nii isaaf-f hiddá heezabée-f*  
 sheikh-NOM 3SG.OBJ-DAT medicine prescribe-DAT  
 'The Sheikh prescribed some (native) medicine for him.'

The construction with repetition of dative marking on the verb can be viewed as an applicative lookalike that might constitute the initial stage of a grammaticalization process towards a suffixal applicative strategy.

## 6 Conclusion

In what follows, I recapitulate the above analyses, trying to answer as best as I possibly can the questions asked in the questionnaire about the morphology, syntax, and semantics of applicative constructions, as well as the issue of lookalikes.

### Morphology

- The survey of applicative constructions in eleven Cushitic languages showed that the preverb strategy is more widespread than the auxiliary strategy (9/11 vs. 2/11 languages), and that verbal derivation is highly marginal in the sole language that uses it. Although there is a good number of commonalities, each language has developed its own system.
- Two main types of preverbs are attested: (i) preverbs, often clitics, which can bear TAM markers (the Iraqw-Alagwa-Burunge cluster, and two Omo-Tana languages, Elmolo, and probably also Arbore); and (ii) preverbs, also often clitics, that cannot: all Omo-Tana languages, except Tunni. Therefore, this bi-partition corresponds only partly to the genealogical subgroupings. Most applicative preverbs have stemmed from adpositions. However, degrees of grammaticalization seem to vary across languages, although it is not always easy or feasible to assess them from the available grammars. For instance, no examples of applied lexical phrases were found for some markers in Iraqw, Burunge, Alagwa, Arbore, Tunni and Dhaasanac, but the

descriptions rarely specify whether they are licensed or not, except for Alagwa, where the applicative *s-* is said to be restricted to pronominal applied phrases and to nouns in preverbal position. Descriptions do not mention either possible polarity restrictions, but one negative example (52) was found in Tunni.

- As for the two languages with auxiliaries, Xamtanga and Beja, both share the ‘give’ strategy, but only the former has in addition a ‘leave’ strategy. In Xamtanga they always combine with a preceding lexical verb in the converb form, while in Beja, finite lexical verbs are also licensed. There are limitations to their grammaticalized status. In both Xamtanga and Beja, the auxiliaries cannot co-occur with themselves as lexical verbs. On the other hand, examples show that applicativization is compatible with the negative polarity in Beja, while it not the case in Xamtanga (Darmon 2015: 196). In Beja, the periphrastic applicative construction is limited to pronominal applicative phrases. Conversely, Xamtanga provides no examples with pronouns, but this issue is not discussed.
- Verbal derivation, with a prefix, is limited to one of the applicative constructions of Burunge and does not seem very productive.
- Allomorphy is attested in six languages with the preverb strategy for some applicative morphemes. In most cases allomorphy is grammatically conditioned (by the presence of bound pronouns and/or other preverbal elements), in a few others it is due to phonological processes of vowel harmony or cliticization.
- In all languages, applicativized verbs show comparable inflectional paradigms to those of their base counterparts.

### Syntax

- In most cases, the applied phrase is a P. With the preverbal strategy, P may belong to a special set of bound object pronouns. In some languages, it is an X, usually a dative, as in Xamtanga, rarely an adpositional phrase.
- Depending on the language, and the marker, the syntactic status of the applied phrase’s companion arguments or adjuncts may change or not between the base constructions and the applicative construction. In the languages with the preverb strategy, the applied phrase is mostly not marked with an adposition, contrary to the base construction, or it combines with different preverbal elements than in the base construction. However, with some preverbs, the adposition or case is kept in the applicative construction. In Xamtanga, the dative case applies to both constructions, but there is an optional alternation with the accusative case with the auxiliary *bār-* ‘leave, abandon’. Beja retains the object marking of the beneficiary in the applicative construction.
- In the descriptions, little is mentioned about voice operations which can combine with applicativization, but sporadic examples are found. Such is the case with the causative and the middle forms in Beja. Conversely, the Xamtanga applicative ‘give’ construction is incompatible with the causative and the mediopassive (Darmon

2015: 196). In Alagwa and Tunni, the applicative preverbs are used with an impersonal subject (a passive lookalike). In some languages, there are very few examples of applied phrases with reflexive and reciprocals.

- In Beja, the applied construction is a special subset of a ditransitive.
- From the available descriptions, it is difficult to know how rigid or flexible the assignment of case or agreement frames to applied constructions is when compared to base constructions, but my general impression is that it is rigid.
- It seems that applicativization does not condition the access of non-core syntactic arguments to operations such as relativization or focalization (several examples in relative clauses, clefts, and with focus markers are mentioned for Alagwa, Arbore, Dhaasanac, Rendille, and Somali, and this is also the case for relativization in Beja).

### Semantics

- Although Cushitic languages do not have all-purpose applicative constructions comparable to the Bantu applicative using \*-*id* (Pacchiarotti, this volume), it is possible to distinguish two types of applicative (or applicative lookalike) markers, some being more semantically specialized than others. The highly specialized ones are the following: *-rar* is instrumental in Iraqw (and comitative with animate applied phrases in Burunge and Alagwa); *s(V)-* is benefactive in Alagwa; *ni* is ventive in Burunge; *i/ú/u* is benefactive in Tunni, Boni, and Rendille; *íl/la* is comitative in Tunni and Standard Somali; and the ‘give’ auxiliary is benefactive in Xamtanga. On the other hand, descriptions rarely specify whether the applicative construction is limited or not to transitive or intransitive verbs. A restriction to transitive verbs is specifically mentioned for the *yíw* ‘give’ auxiliary construction in Xamtanga, and the absence of valency restrictions is the case in Beja, as well as for part of the markers of the other languages. However, the absence of one verb type or the other for some markers in Iraqw, Alagwa, and Burunge may be just due to a gap in the documentation.
- The most frequent semantic interpretation of applied phrases is benefactive, then instrumental(-comitative), and finally locative (ventive, ablative). Malefactive (Xamtanga, Beja) and causal (Burunge, Beja) are marginal.
- From the available data, it is difficult to assess whether there are semantic roles that can only be expressed by means of an applicative construction for each language. At most, some applied phrase cannot occur in the corresponding base constructions. This is the case for the locative in Alagwa with the preverb *ee-*, for the benefactive with *ú-* in Boni, and for the benefactive, instrumental and locative with *ka-* in Elmolo.
- With the exception of Xamtanga, where affectedness is specific to the benefactive construction, as opposed to the base construction, nothing in the descriptions shows that there is a semantic difference between the applied phrase and its counterpart in the base construction. Once again, this may be due to gaps in the documentation.

- In four languages—Burunge, Alagwa, Iraqw for the *ni*-applicative, and Rendille for the *ka*-applicative—the comments of the authors show that there is a pragmatic difference between the applied phrase and its counterpart in the base construction, but the exact link with focus or topic is often unclear. Dhaasanac may also be a case where pragmatics plays a role, for all applicative preverbs, if Tosco's analysis in terms of topicalization of the applied phrase is correct.
- Xamtanga is the sole language where discourse-sensitive specificity of the applicative construction is mentioned. The *yiw* 'give' auxiliary construction adds a specific engager / discourse prominent recipient-like semantic role to the dative argument.

### Lookalikes

- In the Cushitic languages studied, there is always an applicative marking on the verb. However, if one sticks to the third criteria of the definition of applicative constructions proposed in Zúñiga and Creissels (this volume), which requires a non-core marking on the applied phrase different from its non-core marking in the base construction, then most of the constructions are lookalikes. Additionally, the morphemes for which an applicative analysis can be considered, at least in some constructions, are often also found in constructions in which no applied phrase can be identified. They are best analyzed as directionals.
- The case of Oromo is different, and, in some respects, reminiscent of the situation found in Amharic (Ethio-Semitic), although not entirely identical (Amberber, this volume). In Oromo, an adjunct strategy with a dative case, marking the applied phrase, is the rule. Optionally the dative case can also occur suffixed on the verb, which may be an incipient grammaticalization towards a suffixal applicative construction.
- Historical or comparative data are lacking, which makes it difficult to assess whether some markers may have turned from erstwhile applicatives into strictly valency-neutral markers, but synchronic data does not seem to point in this direction.

## Abbreviations

ABL	ablative	COND	conditional
ACC	accusative	CONS	consecutive
ALL	allative	COP	copula
ANP	anaphoric	CVB	converb
APPL	applicative	DAT	dative
ART	article	DECL	declarative
BEN	benefactive	DEF	definite
BCKG	background	DEM	demonstrative
CAUS	causative	DIR	directional
COM	comitative	DUR	durative
COMP	completive	EMPH	emphatic

EP	epenthetic vowel	PFV	perfective
F	feminine	PL	plural
FOC	focus marker	PLR	polar
FUT	future	POSS	possessive
GEN	genitive	PRET	preterit
GNRL	general	PRF	perfect
HAB	habitual	PRO	pronoun
HEAD	head agreement	PROG	progressive
IMP	imperative	PROH	prohibitive
IND	indicative	PROS	prospective
INDF	indefinite	PROX	proximal
INS	instrumental	PRS	present
INTRJ	interjection	PST	past
IPS	impersonal subject	Q	question
IPFV	imperfective	RDP	reduplication
JUSS	jussive	REAS	reason
LNK	linker	REFL	reflexive
LOC	locative	SBJ	subject
MEDP	medio-passive	SBJV	subjunctive
MID	middle	SEP	separative-intrusive
MULCL	multifunctional clitic	SEQ	sequential
N	neuter	SG	singular
NEG	negative	SUB	subordinator
NMLZ	nominalizer	SBJ	subject
NOM	nominative	VENT	ventive
NPST	non-past	VN	verbo-nominal
OBJ	object	VOC	vocative
OPT	optative	VPRO	verbal pronoun

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