APPLICATIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF ETHIOPIAN
AND ERITREAN SEMITIC LANGUAGES (EES)

Tesfay Tewolde Yohannes

Introduction

There are about 30 Semitic languages spoken in Ethiopia and in Eritrea. Eritrean and Ethiopian Semitic (EES) languages are also known as Ethio-Semitic or Abyssinian Semitic. These Semitic languages have applied arguments. Besides, they have suffixes (object or possessive suffixes) attached to the verb allowing extra nominals to appear in the vP in addition to those inherently selected by the verb. EES languages are usually classified into North and South. In this article, EES languages will be represented by Amharic (South EES) and Tigrinya (North EES). The framework and applicatives are briefly described in (1.0) and (2.0) respectively. In (3.0-3.4), verbs, affixes, arguments, vp shells and applicative functions in the context of EES are discussed. Finally, a conclusion is given in (4.0). In this article, there are several Tigrinya and Amharic examples indicated by a and b (as in 1a and 1b) respectively. The intention here is not to prepare a complete work on EES applicatives. However, this article may have a modest contribution for further research on applicatives in general and EES languages in particular.

1. The Framework

There are different proposals in the relevant literature regarding agreement. There are AgrOphiles and AgrOphobes (cf. Radford 1997, Boeckx 2006, among others). There are also different arguments on the relationship of case and agreement (cf. Boeckx 2006: 1-3). The intention here is not to provide a thorough overview on all such phenomena. But we need to be aware of the following noteworthy assumptions (cf. Radford 1997:198-249, Fuß 2005:56-60, Koopman 2006, among others).
1. Sentences have subject and object agreement phrases.
2. Separate subject phrase (AgrSP) and tense phrase (TP) exist (split INFL hypothesis).
3. Direct object phrase (AgrOP) and indirect object phrase (AgrIOP) are positioned between (lower case letters) vp and VP (split VP hypothesis).
4. Unaccusative subjects originate in spec-VP as the subject of a lexical verb while transitive subjects originate in spec-vp as the subject of an agentive light verb. Verb phrases canonically contain an outer vp shell headed by a light verb (strong v) and an inner VP core headed by a lexical verb. In this article, the points indicated in (1-4) above will be assumed (observe also the tree structures in 3.3 below).

Furthermore, it is usually assumed that a nominative DP checks its case by raising to spec-AgrS, an objective by raising to spec-AgrOP, and a dative by raising to spec-AgrIOP and hence case checking involves spec-head relation between a functional (agreement) head and its specifier (cf. Radford 1997:245).

As we can understand from Fuß (2005), several scholars assume that the DP moves to SpecAgrSP/SpecAgrOP to license the feature content of AgrS/AgrO. Moreover, they assume (see Fuß 2005:57, Koopman 2006 for more details) the spec-head relation in question results in case assignment, in that the agreement projections provide the structural configuration in which the case features carried by V (accusative) and T (nominative) are assigned to nominal arguments under spec-head agreement (which necessitates the movement of T and V to the relevant Agr-heads). Thus the verb is assumed to move to AgrS/AgrO to pick the relevant inflectional morphemes. According to Radford (1997:114-124), there is the movement of either the whole verb to INFL as in the case of Early Modern English or the percolation/attraction of the relevant grammatical features of the verb to INFL leaving the the rest of the features carried by the word behind as in the case of Modern Standard English.

On the other hand, it is to be noted that there are also scholars such as Stoyanova (2008:123-4) and Qubah (1991) who believe that lexical subjects in some languages (such as Irish) can be assigned nominative case in spec VP. According to Lasnik and Uriagereka (2005:76), the affixes are already part of whatever word moves to the functional category (for instance, any given verb is already specified in the lexicon for AgrO, T, and AgrS morphology). They assume that the verb which is already completed in the lexicon must be ‘rubber-stamped’ or ‘checked’ as a ‘good word’. Lasnik and Uriagereka (2005:76-7) question the separation of the morphemes from the verb. They (Lasnik and Uriagereka), taking examples from French and English, assume a checking relation is needed, though the details of the process may be left for further research.

In Eritrean and Ethiopian Semitic languages, aspect and mood are formed by inserting vowel patterns into the consonantal root. I also assume, following Lasnik and Uriagereka (2005), words and their affixes occur in the lexicon as complete forms. As indicated in Lasnik and Uriagereka (2005), there is a checking relation. But the details can be left for further research.
2. Applicatives

In different languages, we still find disputed, argumentative and incomplete issues regarding applicatives (Jeong 2007). We also find different types of applicatives which can be manifested in different ways. There are DP and PP applicatives as in English Luciano sent Maria a letter and Luciano sent a letter to Maria. There are languages whose intransitive verbs may not take applicative arguments. In other languages, however, both transitive and intransitive verbs may have applicative arguments. In languages like Japanese, applicative morphemes are attached to the applicative arguments. In Bantu languages applicative morphemes may occur attached to verbs. Moreover, there are languages as in Chadic with applicative morphemes attached to the applicative arguments and to the verbs. In EES languages, we have applicative morphemes which occur attached to the applicative arguments and to the verbs.

According to Jeong (2007), an applicative is usually understood as a construction in which a verb bears a particular morpheme which licenses an oblique, or non core, argument that otherwise would not be regarded as part of the verb’s argument structure.

The terms applicative or applied (see Marantz 1993:119) were used in the study of Bantu languages to indicate verbal affixes adding extra “affected” object to the argument structure of the verb. The standard applicative constructions are those in which an affix is attached to the verb and extra nominals are allowed to appear in the verb phrase in addition to those inherently selected by the verb.

The applicative marker can supertransitivize the verb, if the base verb is already transitive, and produce a double object construction. If, however, the base verb is intransitive the applicative morpheme adds the transitive flavour on it (see Jeong 2007).

According to Jeong (2007), the term applicative can, by extension, be used for oblique/indirect objects of the verb. Applicative construction can be associated with thematic roles such as benefactive, malefactive, instrumental, goal, locative and source.

According to Pylkkänen (2002) there are high and low applicatives. According to her, low applicative head denotes a possession relation between the applied/indirect object and the direct object (DO) and hence can not occur in structures that lack direct object. In languages like English (low applicative) an extra participant cannot be added to an intransitive verb. Pylkkänen (2002) also proposes that high applicative head denotes a thematic relation between an individual and an event. In Bantu languages such as Chaga (high applicative) an extra argument can be added to an intransitive verb. High applicatives have no problems in combining with static verbs such as hold since all they require is a predicate of events. According to the
description of high and low applicatives given above, EES languages such as Tigrinya and Amharic are high applicatives.

There are arguments as to where to put the applicatives in the tree structure. According to Pylkkänen (2002), Baker and Collins (2006), Jeong 2007), high applicatives occur between vp and VP. Regarding the languages in question too, I assume applicative arguments occur between vp and VP. In EES like Amharic and Tigrinya, applicative arguments are canonically different from indirect objects. In fact, applicative arguments/objects (AO) normally occur further from verbs than the indirect objects (IO) are. Thus, I assume the position of AO in the structure is between the IO and vp.

3. Objects and affixes

In Tigrinya and Amharic, intransitive (intr.) and transitive(tr.), have affixes referring to the subject. Besides, transitive verbs have suffixes indicating the object. These languages have direct objects or direct and indirect objects. If, however, the verbs have an applicative morpheme the languages get an extra applicative argument.

3.1 Applicative Objects and Applicative Affixes in Tigrinya and Amharic

Amharic and Tigrinya have applicative arguments (“affected” objects) and applicative markers (suffixes) which occur attached to the (intransitive and transitive) verbs. Subjects can be indicated a. by prefixes b. by suffixes and prefixes, or c. only by suffixes. Applicative suffixes occur either following the verb stem (if the subject is indicated by a prefix) or after the subject suffixes (if there is a subject suffix following the verb stem). Applicative morphemes indicate mainly benefactive and malefactive functions and may have different forms. In Tigrinya, transitive and intransitive verbs take different applicative morphemes. Tigrinya intransitive verbs followed by the object suffixes serve as malefactive applicative morphemes and agree with the applicative argument in person, gender and number. In order to indicate benefactive (ben.) function, however, Tigrinya intransitive verbs take l followed by possessive suffixes following the verb and agree in person, gender and number with the applicative argument. On the other hand, Tigrinya transitive verbs take l+ possessive suffixes following the verb to indicate either malefactive or benefactive functions. As far as Amharic is concerned, we have the particles -l- and -b- which indicate benefactive and malefactive (mal.) functions respectively. These Amharic applicative particles occur immediately after the verbs and are immediately followed by object suffixes which agree in person, gender and number with the applicative arguments (cf. also 2a and 2b) below.

As we can see from the examples in the following sections of this article, Amharic and Tigrinya applicative arguments take l- and n- which can be related to -
1- (an applicative morpheme) that occur attached to verbs. Moreover, the applicative marker can supertransitivize the base verb, if it is already transitive. But if the base verb is intransitive, the applicative morpheme adds a transitive flavour to it.

### 3.1.1 Applicatives and Intransitive Verbs in Amharic and Tigrinya

Verbs which don’t check objective case are said to be intransitive (for further theoretical discussion see Radford 1997 and others). As we can see from the examples in (1a) and (1b) below, Sami is the subject in both the sentences. Besides, the verbs käyd-u (in Tigrinya) and hed-ä (in Amharic) are preceded by PPs nigäza and wädä bet respectively. However, they are intransitive verbs and hence don’t have direct or indirect objects. If, on the other hand, an applicative morpheme occurs following the intransitive verbs an extra nominal appears in the vp in addition to those inherently selected by the verb. The applicatives generally have benefactive or malefactive functions.

The verbs in (1a) and (1b) are, as indicated above, intransitives and do not have objects. However, we can observe from the examples in (2a-b and 3a-b) that the same verbs have applicative objects (which can be compared to indirect objects). Observe the following:

1a. sami nigäza käyd-u
   “Sami went home”.

1b. sami wädä bet hed-ä
   “Sami went home”.

2a. sami (nj?ana) käyd-u-l-na
   “Sami went (for our benefit).

2b. sami (länña) hed-ä-ll-įn
   “Sami went (for our benefit).

3a. sami (nj?ana)) käyd-u-nna
   “Sami went (for our disadvantage).

3b. sami (länña) hed-ä-bb-įn
   “Sami went (for our disadvantage).

In (2a, 3a) and (2b, 3b), we have Tigrinya and Amharic examples respectively. In the former, we have the subject suffix -u which occurs attached to the verb stem käyd- and refers to the subject Sami. In the latter too, we have the subject suffix -ä which occurs attached to the verb stem hed- and refers to the subject Sami.

Amharic verbs, both transitive and intransitive, have the applicative morphemes -l- and -b- which occur immediately after the stems or the subject suffixes and
followed by object suffixes as in (2b-3b) above. The morphemes -l- and -b- are usually used as benefactive and malefactive markers respectively.

Tigrinya intransitive verbs have the morpheme -l- which occurs after a subject suffix or a verb stem and immediately followed by a possessive suffix. In (2a), for instance, we have -l- following the subject suffix -u and followed by the possessive suffix -na. As in Amharic, Tigrinya -l- serves as a benefactive morpheme. But the malefactive function is indicated by the object suffixes which occur immediately after the stem (if the subject suffix is indicated by a prefix) or after a subject suffix as in (3a). The object suffixes and the possessive suffixes agree in person, number and gender with their respective applicative objects. For example, the Tigrinya possessive suffix in (2a), the Tigrinya object suffix in (3a), and the Amharic object suffix in (2b, 3b) agree with the applicative objects in (2a), (3a) and (2b, 3b) respectively in person, number and gender. The applicative arguments can be ± animate objects (though they are usually + animates). The benefactive applicative affixes attached to the verbs look like the prepositions attached to the applicative objects. Observe the following:

4a. sami moyt-u
    Sami died-3ms (sub.)
    “Sami died”.

4b. sami mot-ä
    Sami died - 3ms (sub.)
    “Sami died”.

5a. sami nį-hagär-na moyt-u- ll-a
    Sami for country-our died-3ms(sub.) -ben.- 3fs(obj.)
    “Sami died for our country”.

5b. sami l-agär-aččįn mot-ä-ll-at
    Sami for country-our died-3ms(sub.)-ben-3fs (obj.)
    “Sami died for our country”.

6a. sami nį-hagär-u moyt-u-ww-a
    Sami for country his died-3ms(sub.) –3fs(obj.)
    “Sami died (bad for his country)”.

6b. sami l-agär-u mot-ä-bb-at
    Sami for country his died 3ms (sub)-mal-3fs(obj.)
    “Sami died (bad for his country)”.

In (4a) and (4b), we have intransitive verbs of Tigrinya and Amharic respectively and there are no objects. In (5a) and (5b), however, we have Tigrinya nį-hagär-na “to our country” and Amharic lagār-aččįn (lä+agāraččįn > lagāraččįn) “to our country” as applicative objects. The Amharic -l- in lä+agāraččįn > lagāraččįn and -l- in mot -ä-ll-at are the same (except that the latter is geminated). In Tigrinya too, the segment n- in nį-hagār-na and -l- in moyt-u-ll-a are etymologically very much related (though the latter is geminated). Regarding the malefactive, Tigrinya uses the object suffixes
Applicatives in the Context of Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic Languages (EES)

(that can be observed in 7iia, 7iiiia following the transitive verbs) as in (6a) while Amharic uses -b- as in (6b) above.

3.1.2 Transitive Verbs in Amharic and Tigrinya

The languages in question, as in other languages, have monotransitive and ditransitive verbs. In the former, we have a direct object while in the latter we have direct and indirect objects.

3.1.2.1 Monotransitive Verbs

As indicated above, such verbs of Tigrinya and Amharic have one direct object. The languages have a verbal subject affix attached to the verb stem. The object may also be indicated by an object suffix as in the following:

7ia. samì ni?anbäsa qätil-u
    Samì (to)lion killed -3ms(sub.)
    “Samì killed a lion”

7iib. samì anbäsa-w-įn gäddäl-ä
    Samì lion the to killed-3ms (sub.) 3ms(obj)
    “Samì killed the lion”

7iia. samì ni?anbäsa qätil-u-wwo
    Samì to lion killed -3ms(sub.) 3ms(obj)
    “Samì killed a lion”

7iiia. samì ni?ti?anbäsa qätil-u-wwo
    Samì to the lion killed -3ms(sub.)-3ms(obj)
    “Samì killed the lion”

7iiib. samì anbäsa-w-įn gäddäl-ā-w
    Samì lion the to killed-3ms(sub.) 3ms(obj)
    “Samì killed the lion”

The Tigrinya sentence in (7ia) and the Amharic sentence in (7iib) have the object (“lion” and together with the object (“?anbäsa) we see an optional preposition n- in the former and an optional postposition -n in the latter. Nonetheless, the sentences without preposition n- and postposition -n are more acceptable. In (7iia), we have object suffixes -wwo (epenthesis -w- followed by object suffix -o “him”) following the 3ms subject suffix -u (in Tigrinya). In (7iib), we have the object suffix -w following the subject suffix -ā (3ms) (in Amharic). Whenever there are subject and object affixes attached to the verb, the Tigrinya DP object obligatorily takes a preposition n- as in (7iia) or preposition n+ definite article as in (7iiia). Besides, the Amharic DP object obligatorily takes -=wįn (i.e. a definite article w and a postposition -n).
As we can see from the examples in (7ia-iiia) and (7ib-iiib), the verbs do not seem to have the direct object without a pre(post)position and the direct object suffixes together and hence they appear to be in complementary distribution (cf. Stoyanova 2008:121 for the fact that in Irish when the subject is phonologically specified the verb does not carry person numbr inflection). The verb hosting a direct object suffix cannot have an overt direct object without a pre(post)position. For the sentences to be grammatical, the direct object without any preposition or postposition must not occur together with object suffixes attached to the verb.

3.1.2.2 Applicatives and Monotransitive Verbs in Amharic and Tigrinya

In the examples in (7ia-iiia) and (7ib-iiib), we see monotransitive verbs preceded by a DP object (one for each). However, if there is an applicative affix attached to the verb we observe additional object that we call applicative. The following are examples:

8a. sami (nj?axa) ?anbäsa qätil-u-l-ka
   Sami (for you, 2ms) lion killed-3ms(sub.)-ben.-2ms(obj.)
   “Sami killed a lion for you (benefit).

8b. sami (lantä) anbäsa(n) gäddäl-ä -l- ğh
   Sami (for you, 2ms) lion (to) killed-3ms(sub)-ben-2ms (obj.)
   “Sami killed a lion for you (benefit).

9a. sami (nj?axa) ?anbäsa qätil-u-l-ka
   Sami (for you) lion killed-3ms(sub)-mal-2ms(obj.)
   “Sami killed a lion for you (disadvantage).

9b. sami (lantä) anbäsa qäddäl-ā-bb-th
   Sami (for you) lion killed-3ms(sub)-mal-2ms(obj.)
   “Sami killed a lion for you (disadvantage).

In the Tigrinya examples in (7ia-iiia) and Amharic examples in (7ib-iiib) we observe the object (?anbäsa. In Tigrinya examples in (8a and 9a) and Amharic examples in (8b and 9b), however, we see other objects in addition to (?anbäsa. In (8a and 9a), we have the applicative object nj?axa “you (2ms)”. In (8b and 9b) too, we have the applicative object lantä (“lä “to”+ antä “you (2ms)”). In Tigrinya the segment -l- can be both a benefactive and a malefactive marker. While in Amharic the former (benefactive) and the latter (malefactive) functions are indicated by -l- and -b- respectively. In Amharic, the object suffixes which occur following -l-, -b- agree in number, person and gender with the applicative object and not with the direct object. For instance, we can see from the examples in (8b and 9b) that the applicative morphemes agree in number, person and gender with antä “you (2ms)” and not with ?anbäsa “lion”. In Tigrinya, the possessive suffixes that occur following -l- agree in number, person and gender with the applicative objects and
not with the direct objects. For example in (8a and 9a), the applicative morpheme agrees in number, person and gender with the applicative object nį?axa and not with the direct object ?änbása. The pronominal applicatives such as nį?axa or lantä are optional and can be dropped. In fact, it is more acceptable to speak without their overt use. Furthermore, an applicative object needs to have a preposition attached to it. But Tigrinya object pronouns such as nį?axa begin with “n” which is similar to the preposition n- and hence there is no overtly seen preposition attached to the applicative objects. In the Amharic object pronouns, however, there is a preposition which looks like the benefactive -l-as in lä+antä> lantä. Observe also the following:

11ia. sami nį?-ade?-u t’el wāсид-u Il-a -
    Sami for-mother-his goat took-3ms(sub.)-ben. 3fs(obj.)
    “Sami took a goat for his mother (benefit).

11ib. sami lā jnnat-u fiyyāl wāssād-ā-Il-at
    Sami for-mother-his goat took-3ms(sub.)-ben-3fs (obj.)
    “Sami took a goat for his mother (benefit).

11iia. Sami nį?-ade?-u t’el wāsid-u –Il-a
    Sami for mother-his goat took-3ms(sub.-) mal-3fs(obj.)
    “Sami took a goat from his mother”.

11iib. sami lā jnnat-u fiyyāl wāssād-ā-bb-at
    Sami for mother-his goat took-3ms(sub.-)mal-3fs(obj.)
    “Sami took a goat from his mother (disad).

11iiia. sami t’el nį?-ade?-u wāsid-u –Il-a
    Sami goat for mother-his took-3ms(sub.-) mal-3fs(obj.)
    “Sami took a goat from his mother (disad).

11iiib. sami fiyyāl lā jnnat-u wāssād-ā-bb-at
    Sami goat for mother-his took-3ms(sub.-) mal-3fs(obj.)
    “Sami took a goat from his mother (disad).

Thus, we see that the benefactive applicative objects have the prepositions n- (in Tigrinya) and l- (in Amharic) which correspond to benefactive applicative morphemes -l- (in Tigrinya) and -l- (in Amharic).

We also see that the malefactive applicative objects have the prepositions n- (in Tigrinya) and l- (in Amharic) which correspond to malefactive applicative morphemes -l- (in Tigrinya) and -b- (in Amharic). We can also observe that the Tigrinya sentences in (11iia and 11iiia) and also the Amharic sentences in (11iib and 11iiib) are basically the same. The sentences in (11iia) and (11iiib) are more natural and acceptable than their counterparts in (11iiia) and (11iib) respectively. However, the latter may be used for emphasis.
3.1.2.3 Ditransitive Verbs

These are verbs with two objects, direct and indirect as in the following:

12ia. sami nį-anbäsa sığa hib-u
      Sami to lion  meat gave -3ms(sub.)
      “Sami gave meat to a lion”.

12ib. sami lä anbäsa sığa säťt-ä
      Sami to lion meat gave- 3ms (sub.)
      “Sami gave meat to a lion”.

12iia. sami nį-anbäsa sığa hib-u-(wwo).
      Sami to lion meat gave -3ms(sub.) –3ms(obj)
      “Sami gave meat to a lion”.

12iib. sami lä anbäsa sığa säťt-ä (w)
      Sami to lion meat gave- 3ms (sub.)-3ms (obj)
      Sami gave meat to a lion”.  

12iiia. sami nį-?ti ?anbäsa sığa hib-u-(wwo)
      Sami to the lion meat gave -3ms(sub.)-(3ms, obj)
      “Sami gave meat to the lion”

12iiib. sami lä anbäsa-w sığa säťt-ä-(w)
      Sami to the lion the meat gave- 3ms (sub.)-(3ms, obj)
      “Sami gave meat to the lion”.

12iva. sami nį-?ti sığa nį-?ti ?anbäsa hib-u-(wwo)
      Sami to the meat to the lion gave -3ms(sub.)-(3ms, obj)
      “Sami gave the meat to the lion”.

12ivb. sami sığa-w-in lä anbäsa-w säťt-ä-(w)
      Sami meat the to lion the gave-3ms (sub.)-(3ms, obj)
      “Sami gave the meat to the lion”.

12va. sami sığa nį-?ti ?anbäsa hib-u-(wwo)
      Sami meat to the lion gave -3ms(sub.)-(3ms, obj)
      “Sami gave meat to the lion”

12vb. sami sığa lä anbäsa-w säťt-ä (w)
      Sami meat to lion the gave- 3ms (sub.)-(3ms, obj)
      “Sami gave meat to a lion”.

Thus, we can observe that for the English readings Sami the gave meat to a/the lion, we have different sentences and five of them are indicated in (12i-v) above.

As we can see from the examples above (12i-va, 12i-vb) the Tigrinya verb hib-u and the Amharic verb säťt-ä have the indirect object nį-?anbäsa (in Tigrinya) or lä + anbäsa > ianbäsa (in Amharic) and the direct object sığa. It can be observed from the
examples above that ditransitive verbs, unlike monotransitives, can host a direct object suffix and license a direct object. In (12iva-b), for instance, we have the direct object sįga and the direct object suffixes -wwo (in Tigrinya) and -w (in Amharic).

3.1.2.4 Applicatives and Ditransitive Verbs in Amharic and Tigrinya

As indicated earlier, the ditransitive verbs have two objects. The Amharic verb sāťť-ā has the indirect object lanbāsa and the direct object sįga. As we can see later, objects may go up in the tree structure to show some kind of emphasis. However, the objects of such verbs are two. On the other hand, the ditransitive verbs with the applicative morphemes have additional arguments. Observe the following examples:

*13ia. sami nj?axa nj-?anbāsa sīga hib-u-l-ka
   Sami for you to lion meat gave- 3ms(sub.)-ben.- 2ms(obj.)
   “Sami gave meat to a lion for your benefit.

*13ib. sami lantā la anbāsa sīga sāťť-ā-ll-th
   Sami for you to lion gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms (obj.)
   “Sami gave meat to a lion for your benefit.

13iia. sami nj?axa sīga hib-u-l-ka
   Sami for you meat gave- 3ms(sub.) -ben.- 2ms (obj.)
   “Sami gave meat (to someone) for your benefit.

13iib. sami lantā sīga sāťť-ā-ll-th
   Sami for you meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms (obj.)
   “Sami gave meat (to someone) for your benefit.

13iiia. sami nj?anbāsa sīga hib-u-l-ka
   Sami to lion meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms (obj.)
   “Sami gave meat to a lion (for your benefit.)

13iiib. sami la anbāsa sīga sāťť-ā-ll-th
   Sami to lion meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms (obj.)
   “Sami gave meat to a lion (for your benefit).

The idea in (13ia) of Tigrinya and (13ib) of Amharic is “Sami gave meat to a lion for the benefit of someone indicated by a second person masculine singular pronoun”. However, these sentences are not grammatically well accepted. They have three overt objects and that make them “not easily acceptable” by native speakers. In (13ia) and (13ib), we have the direct object, the indirect object and the applicative object and hence one of them must not be overt. It is more preferable not to overtly show either the applicative object as in (13iia-iiib) or the indirect object as in (13iia-iib). However, omission (on the surface) of the direct object may in some contexts of discourse be permitted.

The sentence in (13ia), for Tigrinya, can be divided into (13iia) and (13iiia) which are acceptable by natives. The Amharic sentence (13ib) can also be divided
into (13iib) and (13iiiib) which are acceptable. Furthermore, the sentences may have similar meanings. For instance, the sentences sami nj?axa siga hibulka (13iia) and sami nj?-?anbāsa siga hibulka (13iiiia) are not only acceptable, but may have also similar meanings. Nonetheless, in (13iia) emphasis is made on the applicative object nj?-axa “to you/for you” while in (13iiiia) the emphasis is on the indirect object nj?-?anbāsa “to lion/for lion”. If, on the other hand the emphasis is to be made on both the beneficiary and the recipient the direct object siga may be omitted. But there must be some kind of discourse context to make it complete and more meaningful. The suffixes (possessive in the case of Tigrinya) attached to the verb (after the verb) always agree with applicative objects in number, person and gender.

In the case of malefactive function, similar observation can be made. Nonetheless, we can see that in Tigrinya we have the particle -l- for both malefactive and benefactive functions while the element –b- instead of –l- can be used in Amharic for the malefactive function.

3.2 Other Functions of Applicatives in Tigrinya and Amharic

So far we have observed applicatives with benefacive and malefactive functions. However, applicatives may have other functions too. Observe the following:

14ia. yonas nj?-?iti kālbi bātrī harim-u-wwo
   Yonas to the dog with stick beat 3ms(sub)-3ms(obj)
   “Yonas beat the dog with a stick”.

14ib. yonas wįśša-w-jn bā-dulla mātt-a-w
   Yonas dog the to with stick beat 3ms(sub)-3ms(obj)
   “Yonas beat the dog with a stick”.

14iia. yonas nj?-?it-a bātrī nj-kālbi harim-u-ll-a
   Yonas to the(f) stick to dog beat 3ms(sub)-aff.-3ms(obj)
   “Yonas used the stick (f) to beat the dog”.

14iib. yonas dulla-w-a-n wįśša mātt-a-bb-at
   Yonas stick the-f to dog beat 3ms(sub)-aff. 3fs(obj)
   “Yonas used the stick(f) to beat the dog”.

14iiia. yonas nj?-?iti bātrī kālbi harim-u-ll-u
   Yonas to the(m) stick dog beat 3ms(sub) aff-3ms(obj)
   “Yonas used the stick(m) to beat a dog”.

14iiib. yonas dulla-w-jn wįśša matt-a-bb-āt
   Yonas stick the(m) to dog beat 3ms(sub)-aff- 3ms(obj)
   “Yonas used the stick(m) to beat a dog”.

86
Applicatives in the Context of Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic Languages (EES)

14iva. yonas ?ab hospital moyt-u
   Yonas in hospital died -3ms(sub)
   “Yonas died in a hospital”.

14ivb. yonas hospital wįt mot-ă
   Yonas hospital in died 3ms(sub)
   “Yonas died in a hospital”.

14va. ?įta hospital sāb moyt-u-wwa
   the (3fs) hospital man died-3ms(sub)-3fs(poss.-suff.)
   “A man died in the hospital”

14vb. hospital-u sāw mot-ă-bb-ăt
   hospital the(3ms) man died-3ms(sub)-mal-3ms(obj)
   “A man died in the hospital”

The phrase bįbātri “with stick” in (14ia) and bādulla “with stick” in (14ib) are adverbial phrases of instrument. The dog is beaten with bātri “stick” in (14ia) and dulla “stick” in (14ib). In (14ia-iiai-iiia) and (14ib-iiib) bātri or dulla (together with definite articles, a preposition/postposition) has become the instrument to beat the animal. The affixes following -l- and -b- agree with the applicative argument in person, gender and number.

In (14va, 14vb), the applicative argument is in topic position (?įta hospital < nį?įta hospital). The phrase (?įta hospital) has a definite article (3fs) which corresponds to 3fs suffix in the verb. The fact that the subject suffix is -u-(3ms) indicates that the subject is sāb “man” not ?įta hospital. Nonetheless, the object suffix following the subject suffix -u-. (in the case of Tigrinya) agrees in person, number and gender with the applicative argument (this is also true for Amharic). In (14va, 14vb), the applicative argument of each of the sentences has come to the front position. Why the prepositions n- and l- are dropped is open to further research. I assume the PPs (applicative arguments) are in topic (beyond IP in the structure) position. We may assume that the prepositions are covertly in their positions (cf. also Mohr (2005:167) for an object DP becoming a PP with a silent preposition). There are, however, several theoretical discussions on this. According to Haeberli (2002:52-66), the highest category within a PP is defined like a C, i.e. as a [+D(+N), +T(+V)] and suggests that clause initial subject CP’s do not behave like nominal subjects but rather like topics (cf. also Radford 1997:152-5) for the spec-IP position filled with a dummy or expletive subject, Koopman (2006:176-7, 185) for the determination of nominative case on the object, for dative subject and for the nominative object in Icelandic, Fuβ (2005:85-6) for the direct object marked with nominative case in Giorgian, Alexiadou (2002:175) for the case of unaccusatives and passives not valued at the vP level and delay of spell out until CP, Stoyanova (2008) for topicalized arguments in spec-CP position and Bakers and Collins (2006)
for Linkers (equivalent to our applicative constructions) case-licensing DPs and PPs (locatives, instrumentals, etc.).

3.3 Agreements VP Shells and Applicatives in EES Context

Radford (1997:117-124) argues that there are two very different ways of checking the agreement properties of finite (nonauxiliary) verbs. These are movement of the whole word (i.e., phonetic, grammatical and semantic features) as in Early Modern English and attraction/percolation as in Modern Standard English. In the former, the whole word is moved while in the latter, only the relevant features are moved. He (Radford) argues once the (bold-printed in this example) head-and specifier-features such as \textbf{[pres, 3SNom]} of the verb, as in for instance 	extit{trusts} in the sentence she 	extit{trusts him}, have percolated up to INFL, its (3Nom) specifier-features (requiring it to have a third person singular nominative subject) can then be checked for compatibility with the [3FSNom] head features of she. Radford (1997:123-4) suggests that attraction or percolation is more economical than movement of the whole word. He assumes that in some languages agreement features can be checked by movement while in others agreement features can be checked by attraction (i.e., percolation) of the relevant features from V to INFL with the verb itself remaining in situ in the head V position of VP (see also Radford 1997:124).

There are scholars who assume that there are no direct relation between case Checking and agreement relation in some languages (cf. Fuss 2005: 84-87 for data taken from Giorgian and French). Öztürk (2005:14) argues that there is no vP in Turkish and TP is not the provider of structural case. According to him (Öztürk), this implies Turkish is a language in situ which lacks case-driven Agree to with higher functional projections.

Moreover, there are also scholars who argue that there are no Infl lowering (affix hopping) and question the V raising to pick up inflection elements. The verb that is already completed in the lexicon must somehow be ‘rubber-stamped’ or checked as a ‘good word’. The affixes are already part of whatever word moves to a functional category; for instance, any given verb is already specified in the lexicon for AgrO, T, and AgrS morphology and the movement to AgrO, T and AgrS positions may raise questions which are so far unsolved (cf. Lasnik and Uriagereka 2005:74-76). This article has no intention to discuss such unsettled issues.

Regarding Amharic and Tigrinya, however, I assume agreement features can be checked by attraction or percolation (cf. Radford 1997) or by some kind of mechanisms whose details are still to be researched (cf. Lasnik and Uriagereka 2005). However, we can also see in the tree structures below that the arguments can be moved to higher head positions in the hierarchy for some kind of emphasis.

In earlier sections of this article, we have said that there are different proposals in the relevant literature regarding agreement, case and applicative issues. Such issues
will be left for further research and this article has no intention to duel on such argumentative phenomena. Nonetheless, we will try to show the structures of sentences with applicative morphemes and applicative arguments following the framework indicated earlier.

If we can observe (Fig. 1) below (adopted from Jeong 2007:14), we can see that the ApplP is positioned between vp and VP.

![Fig. 1](image)

If we put the applicative phrase related to that of (Fig. 1) inside the structure in (Fig. 2), we may have a better image of the structure of sentences with applicative functions.
As we can see from (Fig.1) and (Fig.2) ApplP occurs above VP but below vp. Jeong (2007:61) argues “with an applicative head, the applied argument must always be outside VP, outside the projection the DO is introduced”. Harely (2002) and Pesetsky (1995) among others argue that an applicative head is literally like a P (see also Pylkkänen (2002) and Cuervo (2003) among others for related view). For Marantz (1993), applicative affixes are elements which take an event as their argument and introduce an individual which is thematically related to that event (cf. also Marantz (1993), for goal/benefactive argument merge in the specifier of a light applicative verb). According to Tungseth (2008:4), prepositions (like verbs) assign case. Moreover, he (Tungseth) also argues that øP is essential in licensing an added beneficiary or recipient participant in the benefactive double object construction. It is also assumed that goal/recipient argument is generated in the complement of a null preposition øP which also case-marks the goal (cf. Tungseth 2008). Arad (2002:29) argues the applicative head does not share the semantic content of either active or stative little verb v, but it does share the transitivity property with them. According to Baker and Collins (2006), LinkerP (=ApplP) must be sandwiched between VP and vp.
There are scholars who assume that indirect object and applicative objects occupy the same position in the structure (cf. for instance Jeong 2007:61). In several languages IO (indirect objects) and AO (aplicative objects) may have the same phonetic realization (same form).

But the data from EES languages, appear not to agree with this. In EES languages too (as indicated earlier, Tigrinya and Amharic are among high applicative languages), we assume the applicatives are positioned between VP and vp. In these languages (in EES languages), however, we can have different forms of such arguments. In fact, the applicative arguments (aplicative objects) and the indirect objects (IO) do not usually occur in the same sentence (cf. Jeong 2007 65-9 for the problem or constraint on two occurrences of arguments with the morpheme ni adjacent to each other in Japanese). In (13ia-13ib), we have the subject (Sami) who gives meat, we have the object to be given (meat), there is a receiver (lion) and a beneficiary/affected (2ms). The one who gets the benefit/disadvantage may not be the same person as the one who receives (in 13ia-13ib they are not one and the same). But for the sentence to be easily acceptable, either the receiver or the affected (beneficiary/maleficiary) must not be phonetically realized as in the case of (13iia-13iib). However if, though rarely, the IO and AO occur in sequence, the latter (AO) seems to be in a structural hierarchy higher than that of IO (see also the discussion below). Taking such views into account, applicatives in the languages in question are put above the direct object phrase (AgrOP) and/or above the indirect object phrase (AgrIOP). Observe the structures of the following sentences with intransitive verbs given in (15) repeated from (1a) for the sake of convenience.

15. sami njgāza kāyd-u (see (1a) for the gloss)

In (15) the subject Sami is base generated in spec-VP (cf. also Radford 1997:216). But it (Sami) may raise to a higher spec-position for case checking and agreement or for some kind of emphasis (cf. also Quhall 1991, Stoyanova 2008 for lexical subjects in Irish which can be assigned nominative case in spec-VP where no visible subject movement applies). Applicative objects occur above VP. Observe the following:
16. sami (nį?ana) nigāza käyd-u-l-na (see also (2a) for the gloss) sami (for us) to house went-3ms (sub) ben-1pl(poss.)

Fig 4

In the structure above, we see the sentence nį?ana sami nigāza käyd-u-l-na which is acceptable by native speakers. On the other hand, the sentence nį?ana sami nigāza käyd-u-l-na is said when one wants to give emphasis on the person who gets benefit. However, the sentence sami nį?ana nigāza käyd-u-l-na is more acceptable than the former (in that sense, Sami is moved to a spec-position above ApplP). In fact, the applicative object nį?ana is normally dropped (unless one wants to give emphasis on the beneficiary). It is more acceptable to raise the nominative DP (as in the case of Sami in this example) to higher spec position. According to Jeong (2007:3, Marantz 1993 among others), the applicative morpheme gives transitive flavour to intransitive verbs. The verb käyd-u is intransitive whereas the verb käyd-u-l-na (käyd-u +applicative morpheme -l+possessive suffix -na) has got a transitive flavour.

As we can observe from the structures below, there is an abstract causative light verb ø. (According to Arad 2002:18-20, the light little verb can also have an agentive or a stative function). According to Radford (1997:201), Fuji (2005), Jeong (2007), Baker (2003) among others, it is a null verb which is assumed to have a causative interpretation. This causative light verb is assumed to be affixal in nature (a strong head) that can transitivize the originally intransitive verb. The noun Sami (DP) may be assumed to originate in spec-VP, then moves to spec-VP and from there to raise to spec-TP. We may assume the merging of TP with an AgrS (subject agreement) head which projects to AgrSP (subject agreement phrase). The noun Sami may raise to spec-AgrSP which is the subject position within the subject agreement phrase. In (Fig. 4) above, we have seen the structure of the Tigrinya sentence with benefactive function in (16) repeated from (2a). The Amharic sentence with benefactive function in (2b) has also similar structure.

92
In the sentences in (17a) and (17b) (cf. also (3a) and (3b) for the gloss) we see applicatives with malefactive functions in Tigrinya and Amharic respectively as in the following:

17a sami nj?ana njigaza kayd-u-nna
17b sami lhänna (<lä+ähh) wädä bet hed-ä-bb-în

In each of the above sentences, we have two participants: the subject Sami, the applicative argument nj?ana (in Tigrinya) or lhänna (in Amharic). Observe also the following structure:

![Diagram](image_url)

Fig. 5

The subject Sami is indicated by -u- in Tigrinya and by ä in Amharic. The movement from situ to highest spec positions may mean different for different theoretical approaches. But these different views will not be discussed here. Each of the languages have malefactive morphemes attached to the verbs. We have the verb stems kayd- (in Tigrinya) or hed- (in Amharic). In Tigrinya intransitive verbs, object suffixes (such as the object suffix -na (with geminated n)) occur attached to the verb stem and serve to indicate the malefactive function. If the subject is indicated by a suffix (as -u- in kayd-u) the object suffix which serves as a malefactive marker occurs attached to the subject suffix. In our example in (17a), the morpheme –na
occurs immediately after the subject suffix -u and agrees in person, number and gender with the applicative object  nj?ana. In Amharic, we have the malefactive applicative morpheme -b- (b is geminated) following a verb stem or a subject suffix. In our example in (17b), the malefactive function morpheme -b- occurs immediately after the subject suffix -ä- to mark a malefactive function. The malefactive morpheme -b- (in Amharic) is followed by an object suffix which agrees in person, number and gender with the applicative object. The sentences sami (nj?ana) nịgiza  käydunna and sami (làñña) wàdà bet hëd-à bbìn have similar structures as indicated above (see Fig.4 and the discussion related to it for similar explanation of the structure in Fig. 5).

So far the discussion was regarding the intransitive verbs and their applicative counterparts. Let us also observe the Tigrinya and Amharic sentences (with transitive verbs) in (18a) and (18b) respectively repeated from (7ia) and (7ib) above.

18a. sami (nj)?anbāsa qātil-u-
18b. sami anbāsa(n) gāddāl-ā -
In the sentences in (18a) and (18b) above, we have the subject Sami and the direct Object (?)anbäsa “lion” and the latter optionally takes the preposition n- as in Tigrinya (ni-)?anbäsa “lit (to) lion” and the postposition -n as in Amharic anbäsä(-n) “lit lion (to)”. But the variant without the preposition/postposition is more commonly used in both the languages. The pre(post)positions are probably there for some kind of emphasis. Moreover, the direct objects can be indicated by object suffixes in both the languages as in (7iia-iiiia) in Tigrinya and (7iib-iiib) in Amharic. If the direct objects are indicated by object suffixes, the direct objects must obligatorily be inside PPs. The fact that the direct object is put inside PP helps to identify the object from the subject. Can we assume that the verb with subject and object morphemes affixed to it cannot case license the direct object (DP) inside vP? It may be a question for further research (cf. also Baker and Collins 2006 for the proposal that a simple vP-VP would not be able to license two DPs vP-internally).

As indicated above, the transitive verbs such as qätil-u have one object. But the applicative morpheme adds one extra object to such transitive verbs as in (19a) and (19b) repeated from (8a) and (8b) respectively.

19a. sami (ni?axa) ?anbäsa qätil-u-l-ka
19b. sami (lantä) anbäsä(n) gåddäl-ä -ll-įh

Fig. 7
As we can observe from (Fig. 7), there is an additional object (applicative) for each, lantä for Amharic and nj?axa for Tigrinya. The Amharic objective suffixes and the Tigrinya possessive suffixes which occur following the morpheme -l- agree in person, gender and number with the applicative objects and not with the direct objects. It can be observed that the AO is positioned in spec-Appl. Besides, we can observe that the affixes (such as the 2ms suffix pronoun –h in our example) which are in agreement in person, number and gender with the applicative argument (such as antä “you(2ms)” in our example) are attached to an applicative morpheme -l-similar to a preposition I attached to the applicative argument.

Frajzyngier (2002) argues that in chadic languages like Ga’anda, the causative marker, the third person pronoun and the benefactive marker are identical or etymologically related. There are others who argue that prepositions, pronouns and deictic particles can, in Afro-Asiatic, be related (cf. Hodge 2004, 1969, Gordon 1987, Satzinger 2004, Tesfay forthcoming). One may also argue that the benefactive morphemes are etymologically related to pronouns. However, this article will not dwell on the etymology of benefactives. It (the article) will simply focus on the current usages.

So far we have tried to raise and discuss some points regarding the benefactive function and structure of Applicatives related to monotransitive verbs of Tigrinya and Amharic. The structure of the malefactive function of the sentences with monotransitive verbs is almost the same. Observe the following:

20a. sami (nj?axa) ?anbäsa qätäl-u-1-ka
    Sami (for you) lion killed-3ms(sub.)- mal-2ms(obj.)
    “Sami killed a lion for you (disadvantage)

20b. sami (lantä) anbäsa qäddäl-ä-bb-th
    Sami (for you) lion killed-3ms(sub.)-mal-2ms(obj.)
    “Sami killed a lion for you (disadvantage)

In fact, the Tigrinya malefactive forms are the same as those of benefactives and can only be differentiated by context. In Amharic too, they can be related. It is important to note, however, that Amharic has the malefactive morpheme -b-. Hence, if we want to indicate the malefactive function we can insert -b-instead of -l-.

Furthermore, Tigrinya and Amharic sentences with ditransitive verbs as in (24iiia and 24iiib) can have applicative functions (see also examples 13ia-iiiia, 13ib-iiib and (Fig. 9). But first let us see the following (a sentence without applicative function):

21a. sami nj-?anbäsa siga hib-u
    Sami to lion meat gave -3ms(sub.)
    “Sami gave meat to a lion”
We can see from the above examples that there are three participants, Sami (giver), meat (item to be given) and lion (receiver). We can assume that the subject Sami raises through spec-TP to spec-AgrSP to check its nominative case (by movement or attraction). As Amharic and Tigrinya are prodrop languages, the arguments may be (optionally) omitted. I also assume that it is possible for the DO (direct object) and IO (indirect object) to remain in situ. But the arguments may move to higher spec positions. The DO may raise to spec-AgrOP while the IO may raise to spec-AgrIOP. For instance, sentences (21ia-ib) above may be realized as in (21iia-iib and 21iiia-iiib) whose structures can be observed in (Fig. 8) below.
As we have seen in our earlier discussion, ditransitive verbs (e.g. hibu) can take object suffixes which normally agree in person, number and gender with the IO.

If (as we can see later) a definite article and a direct object are under PPs, that constituent can be put into the topic of the sentence (and hence the phenomenon can be known as topicalization). It is moved into a more prominent position at the front of the sentence. It is assumed that topicalized constituent is moved into spec-CP (Cf. Radford 1997:172 among others) and object suffix may agree with that topicalized element in person, gender and number. If, for instance:

22ia. simone nj-marta siga hib-u-wwa
   Simone to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub)-3fs(obj)
   “Simone gave meat to Marta”

22ib. simone la martasiga sääf'-ä-at
   Simone to Marta meat gave 3ms(sub)-3fs(obj)
   “Simone gave meat to Marta”
   is changed to:

23ia. nj-?jiti siga simone nj-marta hib-uumwa
   “Simone gave the meat to Marta”
we get different meanings. The sentences (23ia) and (23ib) are the same as (23iiia) and (23iiib) respectively and the object suffixes agree with Marta. On the other hand, (23iia) and (23iib) are the same as (23iva) and (23ivb) respectively and the object suffixes agree with ?įti sığa. In (23ia-iiia) and (23ib-iiib) the meat is topicalized while in (23iiia-iva) and (23iiib-ivb) the meat is in focus position (cf. also Srikumar 2007:54).

The above sentences in (22ia-ib) have their counterparts with applicative functions as in the following:

24ia. simone nį?xa nį-marta sığa hib-u-l-ka
    simone for you to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben.-2ms (obj.)
    “Simone gave meat to Marta for your benefit”.

24ib. simone lantā lä-marta sığa sāt't'-ā-ll-th
    Simone for you to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben--2ms (obj.)
    “Simone gave meat to Marta for your benefit”.

24iia. simone nį?axa sığa hib-u-l-ka
    Simone for you meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms (obj.)
    “Simone gave meat (to someone) for your benefit”.

24iib. simone lantā sığa sāt't'-ā-ll-th
    Simone for you meat gave-3ms(sub.)-ben.-2ms(obj.)
    “Simone gave meat (to someone) for your benefit”.

99
24iiia. simone nį- marta siga hib-u-l-ka
    Simone to Marta meat gave- 3ms(sub.-ben.-2ms(obj.)
    “Simone gave meat to Marta (for your benefit)”.  

24iib. simone lāmarta siga sātŧ-ā-ll-th
    Simone to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub.-) - ben-2ms (obj.)
    “Simone gave meat to Marta (for you, benefit)”. 

24iva. nį?įti siga simone nį marta hib-u-l-ka
    to the meat simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.-) - ben-2ms(obj.)
    “Simone gave the meat to Marta for you (benefit)”. 

24ivb. sigawīn simone lāmarta sātŧ-ā-ll-th
    meat the to simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.) - ben-2ms(obj)
    “Simone gave the meat to Marta for you (benefit)”. 

24va. nį?įti siga simone nį marta hib-u-l-l-u
    to the meat simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj.)
    “Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta” 

24vb. siga-w-įn simone lā-marta sātŧ-ā-bb-āt
    meat the to simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj)
    “Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta” 

24via. simone nį?įti siga nį marta hib-u-l-l-u
    Simone to the meat to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj)
    “Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”. 

24vib. simone siga-w-įn lā-marta sātŧ-ā-bb-āt
    Simone meat the to to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj)
    “Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”. 

24viia. nį?įta siga simone nį marta hib-u-l-l-ā
    to the meat simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3fs(obj)
    “Simone gave a part of the meat to Marta” or
    “Simone gave the meat to someone for the sake of Marta”. 

24viib. siga-w-a-n simone lāmarta sātŧ-ā-bb-at
    meat the –f-to simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3fs(obj)
    “Simone gave a part of the meat to Marta”, or
    “Simone gave the meat to someone for the disa. of Marta”. 

24viia. simone nį?įta siga nį- marta hib-u-l-l-ā
    simone to the meat to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3fs(obj)
    “Simone gave a part of the meat to Marta”, or
    “Simone gave the meat to someone for the sake of Marta”. 

100
The sentences in (24ia) (24ib) are not easily acceptable. But we observe that there are four participants, the subject Simone (giver), the direct object sįga (an item to be given), the recipient Marta and the 2ms pronoun nj?axa “you/for you” (the beneficiary). The first three occur also in the sentences in (23) above. However, the last one (the applicative argument) occurs only in (24) and the suffixes following the morphemes -l- and -b- agree in person, number and gender only with that applicative argument. In (24iva), for instance the meat got fronted. But the possessive suffixes still agree only with the applicative argument. In (24va-via) and (24vb-vib), the sentences have the same meanings. In (24va) and (24vb), however, the applicative argument is fronted while in (24via-vib) it is not. As we can see from the examples in (24va-vb, 24via-vib) above, the possessive suffixes (in Tigrinya) and the object suffixes (in Amharic) agree in person, gender and number with the “meat” because that is the applicative argument. The applicative here does not indicate a kind of advantage or disadvantage; but serves to mean “some part of or a part of” something. It shows some kind of source for the item to be given.

Earlier, we have said that the recipient and the beneficiary are normally different in the languages in question. However, there may be some ambiguities as in, for instance, in the sentences in (24via-viiia) and (24viib-viiib). It is possible that Marta could be either the beneficiary or affected object or the recipient. In the case of the former, Marta is the beneficiary or affected object and the receiver is some other person. But when Marta plays the role of a recipient, the meanings of the sentences in (24vii-viii) can be similar to those of (24v-vi). Let us see the following structure.
As indicated earlier, the objects may move to higher spec-positions. In (24ia) and (24ib), all the participants are overtly seen. However, they are not easily acceptable. In order to be acceptable one of the objects must be covert. Hence, those in (24iia-viiia) and (24iib-viiib) are acceptable sentences. Observe also the following:

25a. nįʔiti siga simone nį marta hib-u-l-ka
to the meat Simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-ben.-2ms(obj.)
“Simone gave the meat to Marta for your benefit”.

25b. siga-w-jn simone lā marta săňt lä-ll-th
meat the to Simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms(obj)
“Simone gave the meat to Marta for your benefit”.

26ia. nįʔiti siga simone nį marta hib-u-ill-u
to the meat Simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj.)
“Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”.

Fig. 9
In the above sentences, there are covert and overt applicative arguments. For instance, we have the Tigrinya covert applicative argument nįʔaxa “you/for you/to you” (2ms) in (25a) and the covert Amharic applicative object lantä “you/for you/to you” (2ms) in (25b). In (26ia-iiia) and (26ib-iib), however, the direct object siga “meat” has become the applicative object. As indicated above, I assume it has taken a focus position in (26iia-iib) and a topic position in (26ia-ib) (cf. Breul (2004:71) Madhavand (2007), Srikumar (2007:54), for further discussion).

Furthermore, we can also see that the applicatives in (26ia-iiia) and (26ib-iib) do not show malefactive or benefactive functions. The applicative object is used as a kind of source for the item to be given. Observe also the sentences in (27a-b) and structure below in (Fig. 10).

27a. nįʔiti siga simone nį marta hib-u-ll-u
to the meat Simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj.)
“Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”.

27b. Siga-w-in simone lāmarta sār't-'ā-bb-āt
meat the to simone to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj.)
“Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”.
Fig. 10
We have said (cf. 26ia-ib and 27a-b) that the direct object has been topicalized and got an applicative function. According to the literature, the topicalized constituent may move to spec-CP and the data from EES languages seem to fit into this framework. The topicalized T(opic)P as in (26ia) and (26ib) may take the position of spec-CP (cf. Breul 2004, Radford 1997). According to Srikumar (2007) F(ocus)P may be located between IP and CP. As indicated in Demeke and Meyer (2006), EES may show focus in situ. Besides, the focused applied arguments as in (26iia) and (26iib) may be put in spec-ApplP position. As we can see from (Fig. 10), applicative argument in (27) is in spec-CP. But the applicative argument can be put in spec-ApplP position (cf. also Madhavan 2008:48, Breul 2004:71, Srikumar 2007:54-60). Observe (Fig. 11) and also the sentence in (28a-b) below.
28a. *simone nį-ʔįti siga nį marta hib-u-ll--u*
   Simone to the meat to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj.)
   “Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”.

28b. *simone siga-w-įn lą-marta sāt'-ā-bb-āt*
   Simone meat the to to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-aff.-3ms(obj.)
   “Simone gave some part of the meat to Marta”

   Earlier we have mentioned that there are applicative functions other than benefactive and malefactive. We have also said that (26) may indicate source. Let us observe (29ia-ib) and (29iia-iib), repeated from (14iia-iib) and (14va-vb) respectively.

29ia. *yonas nį-ʔįt-a bātri (nį)kālbi harim-u-ll-a*
   Yonas to the-f stick (to) dog beat 3ms(subj) aff.-3fs(obj)
   “Yonas used the stick (f) to beat the dog”.

29ib. *yonas dulla-w-a-n wijšša matt-a-bb-at*
   Yonas stick the -f- to dog beat-3ms(subj)-aff- -3fs(obj)
   “Yonas used the stick to beat the dog”

29iia. *ʔįt-a hospital sāb moyt-u-wwa*
   the-3fs hospital man died- 3ms(subj)-3fs(poss.-sff.)
   “A man died in the hospital”.

29iib. *hospital-u sāw mot-ā-bb- āt*
   hospital the(3ms) man died- 3ms(subj)-mal-3ms(obj)
   “A man died in the hospital”

   In (29ia-ib) and in (29iia-iib), the sentences indicate instrument and locality respectively. In the former, the applicative arguments ʔįt-a bātri and dulla-wa are positioned in a spec-AppP position. In the latter, however, the applicative arguments raise from a PP position in VP to a topic position above IP. It may be possible that in some languages the object is marked with nominative case (Fuβ 2005:83–4 for the direct object marked with a nominative case in Giorgian). According to Ahland (2009), the earlier topicalized PP has got a nominative case and become a subject (with the P deleted). According to Baye yimam (quoted in Ahland 2009), the topicalized PP is underlyingly still a PP. I assume that the earlier topicalized PP (as in 29iia-iib) has underlying P. The topicalized constituent as in (29i-ii) above can still have a covert PP (cf. also the discussion above on such issue).

3.4 Arguments of Passive and Intransitive forms

   In the passive sentences, the direct and the indirect objects of the active sentences can be promoted to subject positions. Observe the following example (30a-30b) repeated from (8a-8b)
Applicatives in the Context of Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic Languages (EES)

30a. sami (nį?axa) ?anbüsa qätil-u-l-ka  
Sami (for you, 2ms) lion killed-3ms(sub.) -ben.-2ms(obj.)  
“Sami killed a lion for you (benefit).

30b. sami (lantä) anbüsa(n) gäädäl-ä -ll-iłh  
Sami (for you,2ms) lion (to) killed-3ms(sub)-ben-2ms (obj.)  
“Sami killed a lion for you (benefit).

In sentences (30a-30b), the direct object can be promoted to the subject position. For instance, we can say

31a. ?anbüsa (nį?axa) tä-qätil-u-l-ka  
lion (for you, 2ms) was killed-3ms(sub.) -ben.-2ms(obj.)  
“A lion was killed for you (benefit).

31b. anbüsa (lantä) tä-gäädäl-ä -ll-iłh  
lion (for you,2ms) was killed-3ms(sub)-ben-2ms (obj.)  
“A lion was killed for you (benefit)

However, we cannot promote the applicative object to the subject position. We can say

32a. nį?axa ?anbüsa täqätil-u-l-ka  
for you,2ms lion was killed-3ms(sub)-ben.-2ms(obj.)  
“A lion was killed for you (benefit).

32b. lantä anbüsa tägäädäl-ä -ll-įhlh  
for you(2ms) lion was killed-3ms(sub)-ben-2ms (obj.)  
“A lion was killed for you (benefit)

Nonetheless, we can see that the applicative object is not in subject position. The affected (applicative) object may raise to spec-CP (as in 32a-b) and at times may look like a subject. But the subject affixes attached to the verb show that the subject in (31a-b) and (32a-b) is a lion. Besides, we can observe similar situations in the case of ditransitives. Observe also the examples in (33a-33b) repeated from (25ia-25ib) respectively.

33a. simone nį?axa nj marta sįga hib-u-l-ka  
Simone for you to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub.) -ben.-2ms(obj.)  
“Simone gave meat to Marta for you (benefit).

33b. simone lantä lä-marta sįga säft'-ä-ll-th  
Simone for you to Marta gave-3ms(sub.)-ben-2ms (obj.)  
“Simone gave meat to Marta for you (benefit).

In the above sentences (33a-33b), there are four participants in each of them. As indicated above, the sentences are not easily acceptable by native speakers. But they
are selected because the four participants are overtly seen. The sentences can have passive forms like the following:

34a. siga (nj?axa) nj marta tā-wa hib-u-l-ka
   meat (for you) to Marta was given-3ms(sub.) -ben.- 2ms(obj.)
   “Meat was given to Marta for you (benefit)”.

34b. siga (lanti) lä-marta tā-sāt’-ā-l-š
   meat (for you) to Marta was given-3ms(sub.)-2ms (obj.)
   “Meat was given to Marta for you (benefit).

In (34a-b), the subject of the passive sentences is siga “meat” and this is indicated by the 3ms subject suffix attached to each of the sentences. In (35a-b) below, however, the subject is Marta and this is indicated by the 3fs subject suffixes which occur attached to each of the sentences

35a. marta (nj?axa) siga tā-wa hib-ā-l-ka
   Marta (for you) meat was given-3fs(sub.) -ben.- 2ms(obj.)
   “Marta was given meat for you (benefit)

35b. marta (lanti) siga tā-sāt’-ā-cč-š
   Marta (for you) meat was given-3fs(sub.)-2ms (obj.)
   “Marta was given meat for you (benefit)

On the other hand, the applicative object can move to the topic position. But it cannot be promoted to the subject position. Observe the following:

36a. simone nj?-āde-ša nj-marta siga hib-u-š-a
   Simone for mother your to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub.) -ben.- 3fs(obj.)
   “Simone gave meat to Marta for the sake of your mother (benefit)”.

36b. simone lā-nmat-jh lā-marta siga sāt’-ā-l-š
   Simone for mother your to Marta meat gave-3ms(sub.)-2ms (obj.)
   “Simone gave meat to Marta for the sake of your mother (benefit)

We have indicated that one of the objects must be covert in order for the sentence to be easily acceptable. In the example in (36a-b), Marta (indirect object) and siga “meat” (direct object) could be the subjects of their respective passive sentences. The applicative object nj?adexa cannot be promoted to subject position. Instead, it may move to topic position as in the following passive sentence

37a. nj?-āde-ša nj marta siga tā-wahib-u-š-a
   for mother your to Marta meat was given-3ms(sub.) -ben.- 3fs(obj.)
   “meat was given to Marta for the sake of your mother (benefit)”.

37b. lā-nmat-jh lā-marta siga tā-sāt’-ā-l-š
   for mother your to Marta meat was given-3ms(sub.)-2ms (obj.)
   “Meat was given to Marta for the sake of your mother (benefit)”.
In (37a-b) the subject is sîga indicated by the subject suffixes which occur attached to the verbs. Each of the applicative object, nj?adexa and lännatįh, are dominated by a P. But this preposition may at times be covert (see 38a-b) and the object in question may appear to be a subject.

38a. ?ade-xa nj-marta sîga tä-wahib-u-ll-a
    mother your to Marta meat was given-3ms(sub.)-ben.-3fs(obj.)
    “Meat was given to Marta for the sake of your mother (benefit)

38b. jnnat-jh lâmarta sîga tâ-sâf’t-ä-ll-at
    mother your to Marta meat was given-3ms(sub.)-ben-3fs (obj.)
    “meat was given to Marta for the sake of your mother(benefit)”.

I assume, as indicated earlier, words like ?adexa may be regarded as covert PP’s.

The construction in (38a-b) may be assumed to be ungrammatical. It may, however, be heard during oral communication among native speakers. As indicated earlier, however, the subject is sîga and not adexa “your mother” or jnnatįh “your mother”.

At times the earlier PP is assigned a nominative case. In the examples below, (39va and 39vb) have the same meanings as (39via and 39vib) respectively. However, nj?ay “to me” (39va) and lâ jîne “to me” (39vb) are changed to ?anâ “I” (39via) and jîne “I” (39vib) respectively. I think this may be compared to ECM (according to Radford 1997, among others, objective subjects of infinitive clauses such as him in I believe him to be innocent are said to carry exceptional objective case because (1) the case of the objective subject is checked by the preceding verb (2) the subject of one clause is checked by the verb in a higher clause).

In constructions like (38a-b), either the recipient (such as njMarta) or the argument like sîga may remain covert in order for the sentences to be less ungrammatical or even acceptable.

In the above examples, we have seen applicative arguments with the passive of transitive verbs. Let us also observe applicative arguments related to intransitive verbs.

39ia. zämäd nj-sami moyt-u-wwo
    relative to sami died-3ms(sub) mal/him
    “Sami’s relative died”.

39ib. zämäd lâ-sami mot-ä-bb-ät
    relative to sami died 3ms(sub)mal-him
    “Sami’s relative died”

As we can see from (39ia-ib), zämäd (indicated by the 3ms subject suffix) is the subject. The PP’s can be fronted as in the following:
We can observe from (39iia-iib) that the prepositional phrases (and also the applicative objects) nįsami/läsami are moved to the front position. However, the prepositions which are the heads of the fronted PP’s may not be overtly seen as in:

39iia. nį-sami zämäd moyt-u-wwo
to sami relative died-3ms(sub) mal/him
“Sami’s relative died”.

39iib. läsami zämäd motääbb-ät
to sami relative died 3ms(sub)mal-him
“Sami’s relative died”

In (39iiia-iib), we also observe that the prepositions which preceded Sami have become covert and on the surface, sami looks like the subject. However, it is clear from the examples above that the subject is not sami. We have also seen earlier that Amharic has the morpheme -b- to indicate the malefactive function. None the less,
we can observe from (39ivb, 39vb, 39vib) that Amharic malefactive function, as in Tigrinya, may also be indicated by the object suffixes following the intransitive verbs (cf. also Amberber 2002 for the Amharic examples).

3.5 Verbs to Have and to Exist

Another very interesting phenomena related to the applicative issue is regarding the verbs to have and to exist in Tigrinya and Amharic. In Afro-Asiatic languages, the verbs with the reading to have and to exist may be etymologically related. The intention here is not to look into the history of these two lexical items. But it is interesting to observe that the verb to have is built on (usually the third person singulars and plurals) the verb of existence. As we have seen earlier, intransitive verbs followed by applicative objects (indicated by object suffixes in Tigrinya and object suffixes with or without b preceding it, i.e., (b)+ object suffixes, in Amharic) may indicate source, instrument or malefactive applicative functions. The verb to have may be formed in a similar fashion (cf. for instance, 29iia, 29iib, 39iva and 39ivb). Observe the Tigrinya verb of existence in (40).

40. ?allo-xu “I exist”  ?allo-xa “you (2ms) exist”
    ?allo-xi “you(2fs) exist”  ?allo-ā > ?allo “he exists”
    ?allo-āt > ?alla “she exists”  ?allo-na “we exist”
    ?allo-xum “you(2mp) exist”  ?allo-xin “you (2fp) exist”
    ?allo-wu “they(3mp) exist”  ?allo-wa “they(3fp) exist”

As we can see from (40) above, different subject suffixes are added to ?allo- (<halläw-) “exist”. Let us also observe the verb of existence in Amharic (41).

41. allä-hu “I exist”  allä-h “you(2ms) exist”
    allä-š “you(2fs) exist”  allä-ā > allä “he exists”
    allä-čč “she exists”  allä-n “we exist”
    allä-aččįhu > allaččįhu “you(2p) exist”  allä-u > allu “they(3p) exist”

As we can see from (41) above different subject suffixes are added to allä- (<shalläw-) “exist”.

In (40) and (41) we have the verbs of existence of Tigrinya and Amharic respectively. In order to form the verb to have, we add the object suffixes of Tigrinya and Amharic to the verb of existence (usually third person singulars or plurals) of the languages in question. Hence, we have

42. ?allo-nni “I have”  ?allo-kka “you(2ms) have”
    ?allo-ki “you(2fs) have”  ?allo-wwo “he has”
    ?allo-wwa “she has”  ?allo-na “we have”
    ?allo-kkum “you(2mp) “have”  ?allo-kkín “you (2fp) “have”
    ?allo-wwom “they(3mp) have”  ?allo-wän “they(3fp) have”
in Tigrinya

43 allä-ňň “I have” allä-h “you(2ms) have”
   allä-s’ “you(2fs) have” allä-w “he has”
   allä-at > allat “she has” allä-n “we have”
   allä –aččļhu> allaččļhu “you(2mp) have”
   allä –aččāw> allaččāw “they(3p) have”

in Amharic.

We also see the same situation in the verbs, näbär-ä “there was” and näbär-o “he had”, konä “it(he) became”, konänni “it occurred to me(mal)” in Tigrinya and näbbär-äw “he had”, hon-ä “it(he) became” and honábbat (it occurred to him(mal)) in Amharic (as in mättu “they beat” and mättu-t “they beat him” the element -t- can be used as a substitute for the morpheme w “him”).

Let us also see the structure of the sentences

44a. yohannes bet ?all-o-wwo
    Yohannes house there is-3ms(sub.) -3ms(obj.)
    “Yohannes has a house”.

44b. yohannes bet all-ä-w
    Yohannes house there is-3ms (sub.) 3ms-(obj.)
    “Yohannes has a house”.

Which are derived from

45a. ni-yohannes bet ?all-o-wwo
    to Yohannes house there is-3ms (sub.)-3ms (obj.)
    “There is a house for Yohannes”.

45b. lä-yohannes bet all-ä-w
    to Yohannes house there is-3ms (sub.)-3ms -(obj.)
    “There is a house for Yohannes”

The reading of the sentences in (44) above is actually Yohannes has a houses derived from there exists a house for yohannes or “there is a house for Yohanne (45)”.

The subject of sentence is not Yohannes. The subject is, I assume, bet “house” indicated by the subject suffix ä (<?allo < halläw-ä ) in Tigrinya and -ä in Amharic (cf. Boneh 2003;63-77 for related construction of the verb to exist and to possess in Modern Hebrew). As we can see from the examples below (taken from Boneh (2003),

46. le-dani yeS sefer yeS le-dani sefer
    to dani exist book exist to dani book
    “Dani has a book” “Dani has a book”
the Modern Hebrew construction of the verb with the reading like “there is for someone> someone has” is related to that of Amharic and Tigrinya. According to Boneh (2003) the possessor (such as le dani) does not have the canonical subject properties and does not behave like a subject. He (Boneh) places yeS in C and the possessor in spec-CP or in spec-TopicP. We also see some kind of parallelism between Modern Hebrew yeS and Tigrinya to have, in that both of them cannot be negated as verbs. In Modern Hebrew, yeS is replaced by çen while in Tigrinya the verb to have is replaced by bl (<bςl “owner, possessor”) as in ?allowwo “he has” and ‘ayb[ill-u-n “he does not have” derived from ‘ay-n ”not” + bςl>bl “have”+-u “3ms”.

From our earlier discussion, applicative objects cannot be the subjects of passive sentences. We can understand that applicative objects cannot be promoted to subjects. Taking such evidences into consideration, I assume the verb “to have” in Amharic and in Tigrinya can be put in Topic position. But they are not subjects. Observe the following:

![Diagram](image-url)
In (Fig. 12) above, (nį)yohannîs is not the subject. It is a PP in the spec of CP. The subject in bet and not (nį)yohannîs or yohannîs.

Conclusion

Tigrinya and Amharic have applicative morphemes which occur attached to transitive and intransitive verbs and applicative arguments.

Amharic has -b+object suffixes and -l+object suffixes which function as malefactives and benefactives respectively. In Tigrinya, we use the element -l followed by possessive suffixes to indicate both benefactive and malefactive functions when attached to transitive verbs. In intransitive verbs, however, -l+possessive suffixes are used to show benefactive functions while the object suffixes are employed to indicate malefactive functions.

The applicatives usually indicate benefactive or malefactive functions. However, they may also have other functions. The applicatives may have instrumental, source or locative adverbial functions too. Besides, the manner we form applicatives can be used to form the verbs to have (past and present) and to occur.

In both Tigrinya and Amharic, the object and possessive suffixes attached to the verbs agree with the applicative arguments in person, gender and number.

The applicative morphemes add extra arguments to the verbs. Thus, Intransitive, monotransitive and ditransitive verbs have two, three and four participants. In (23) above, for instance, we have three participants, i.e. the giver (Simone), the direct object or the item to be given (sįga) and the recipient (Marta). But in (24ia) and (24ib), we have a fourth participant- the beneficiary nį?axa “you/to you”. Unlike many other languages, the beneficiary and the receiver are not the same person or thing. On the other hand, not all the four participants can be overtly seen and this can be observed from the examples in (24iia-ib) and (24iiia-iiib) above.

In some languages, applicative morphemes may occur attached to verbs. In other languages, applicative morphemes occur attached to nouns. In languages like Tigrinya and Amharic, applicative morphemes occur attached to nouns and verbs.

As indicated in (3.4), Tigrinya and Amharic applicative arguments can move to topic positions. But they cannot be promoted to subject positions of (active or passive) sentences. Besides, I assume words like zämäd in (39ia-iiia) and (39ib-iiib) or Yohannîs in (44) and (45) cannot be used as subjects of the sentences in (39), (44) and (45).

According to the literature (cf. Jeong 2007, Bakers and Collins (2006), among others), applicatives occur between vp and VP. In the languages in question, applicative arguments can be put between vp and IO in the structure. However, applicative arguments may be focused or topicalized and thus may move to spec positions between IP and CP or to spec-CP position (cf. Radford 1997, Srikumar 2008).
Applicatives in the Context of Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic Languages (EES)

Reference


Cuervo, M.C. (2003). Datives at Large, PhD Dissertation, MIT.


Applicatives in the Context of Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic Languages (EES)


Abstract

Tigrinya and Amharic have overt applicative arguments and applicative morphemes and the latter occur attached to transitive and intransitive verbs. This article tries to discuss the applicatives in question (assumed to be within the minimalist approach).

It can be observed that applicative morphemes usually mark benefactive or malefactive functions. However, they may also show functions like instrumental, source or locative adverbials. We can observe that an applicative morpheme adds extra argument (the beneficiary) to the verbs. Nonetheless, the beneficiary and the recipient are not the same.

Moreover, the article can also show that applicative objects cannot be subjects of the passive sentences.

According to Jeong (2007, Bakers and Collins (2006) among others, applicatives occur between vp and VP. In Amharic and Tigrinya too, applicative arguments can be put between vp and VP and more precisely between vP and IO in the structure. However, applicative arguments may be focused or topicalized and thus may move to spec positions between IP and CP or to spec-CP position (cf. also Radford 1997, Srikumar 2008).

Abbreviazioni usate in questo articolo

affix = aff
AO= applicative object
ben =benefactive
Simboli usati in questo articolo

ä = mid central vowel
j = high central vowel
? = glottal stop
ζ = vd pharyngeal fricative
h = vl pharyngeal fricative
q = ej. velar Stop
x = vl velar fricative
Applicatives in the Context of Ethiopian and Eritrean Semitic Languages (EES)

x' = ej. velar fricative
š = vl palatal fricative
č = vl palatal affricate
c = ej. palatal affricate
š = ej. alveolar affricate
t' = ej. dental stop
ň = palatal nasal stop