



Word order, Auxiliaries & Evolution of the verbal system in Dahālik (Ethiosemitic)

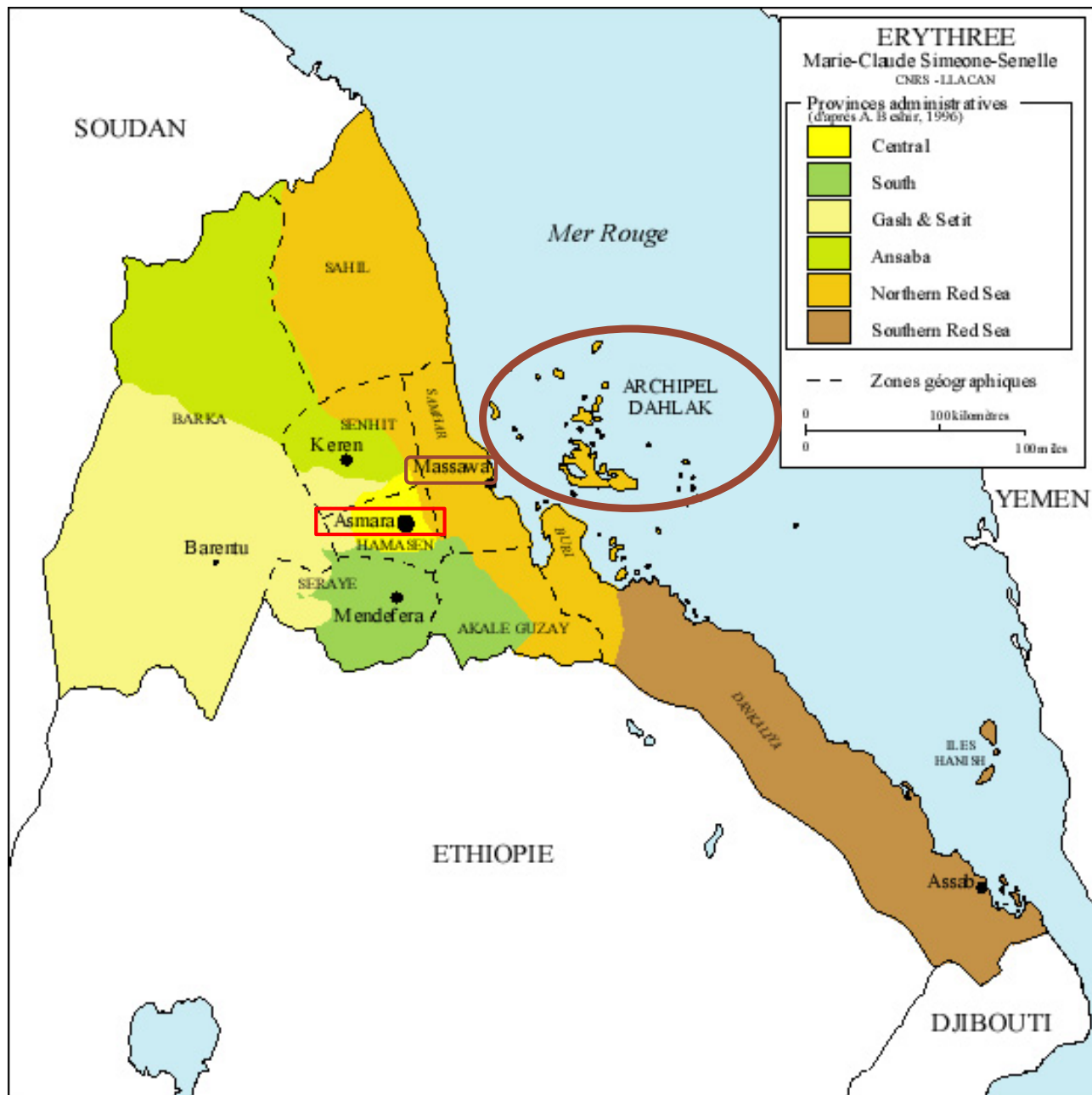
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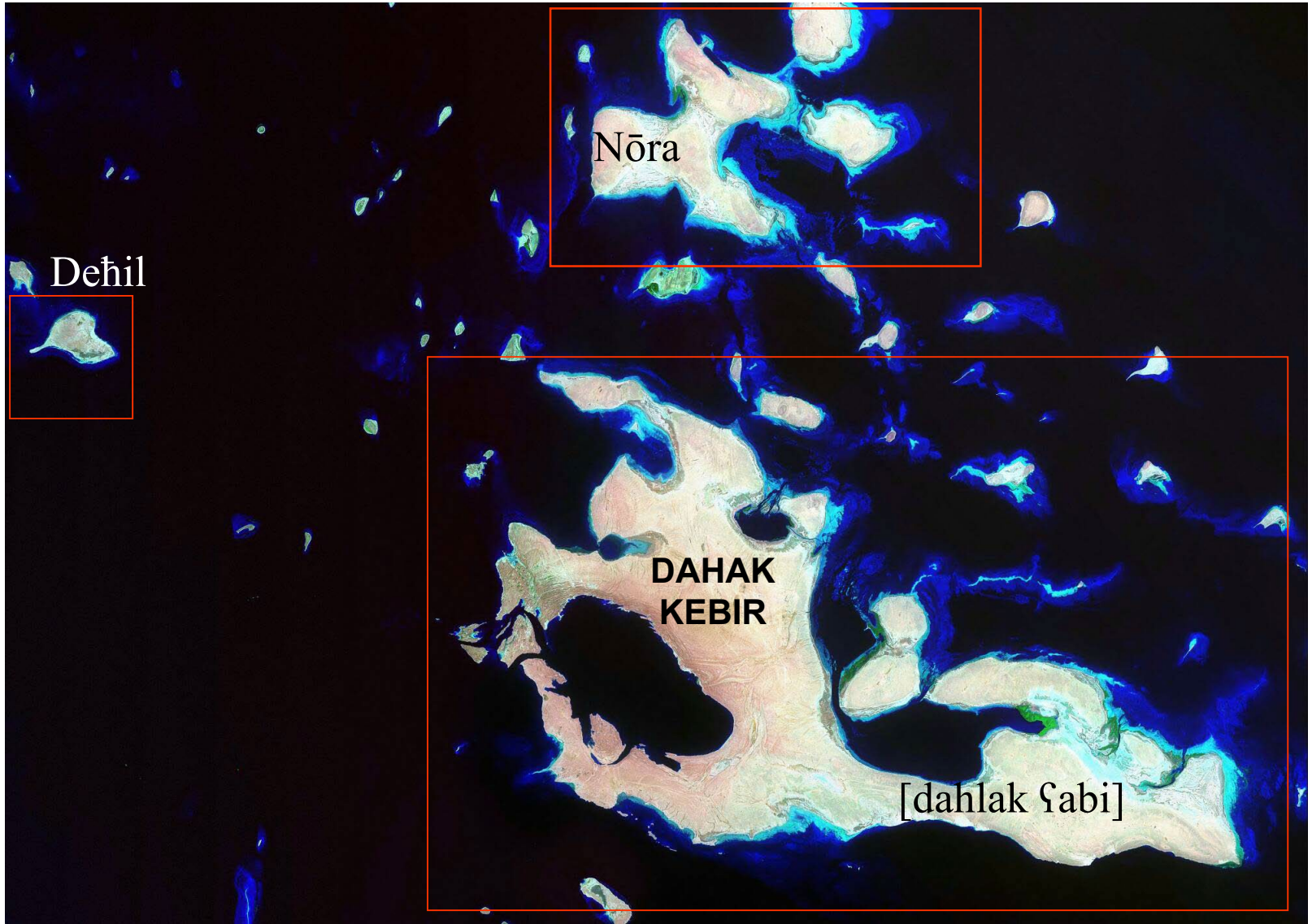
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Dahālík

(Plural of dahlāki)

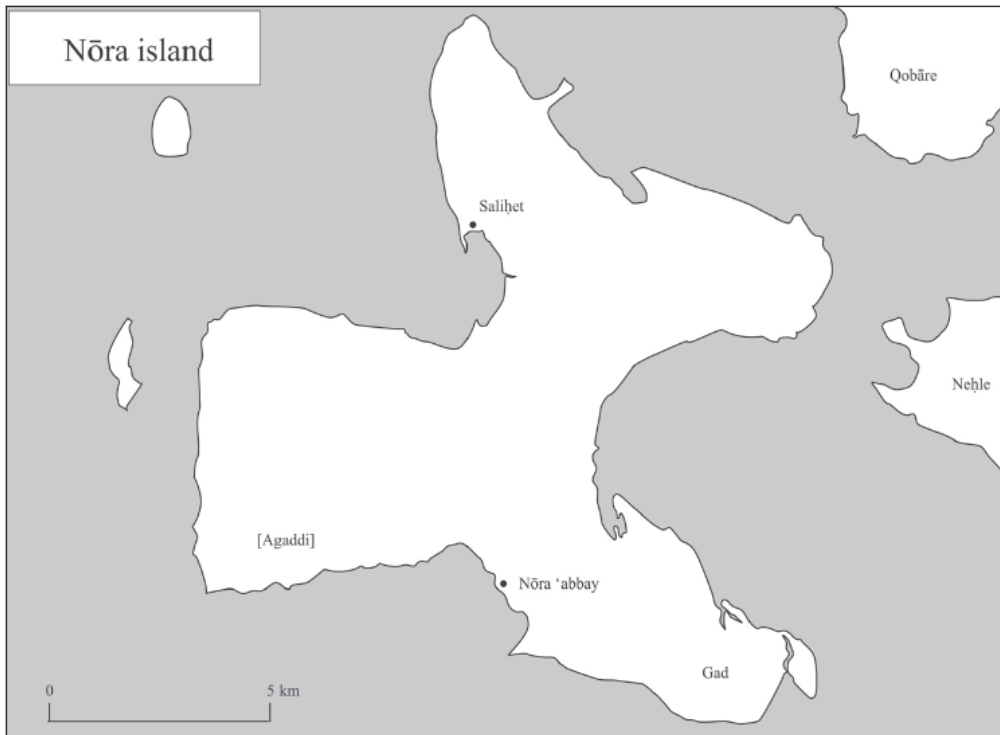
- Inhabitants of the Dahlak archipelago in the Red Sea, off Mīwaʕ (Massawa), in the State of Eritrea
- Mother tongue of over 83% of approximately 3000 islanders on three islands : Dahlak ʕabi/ʕabbay (Dahlak Kebīr),
Nōra,
Dehil.

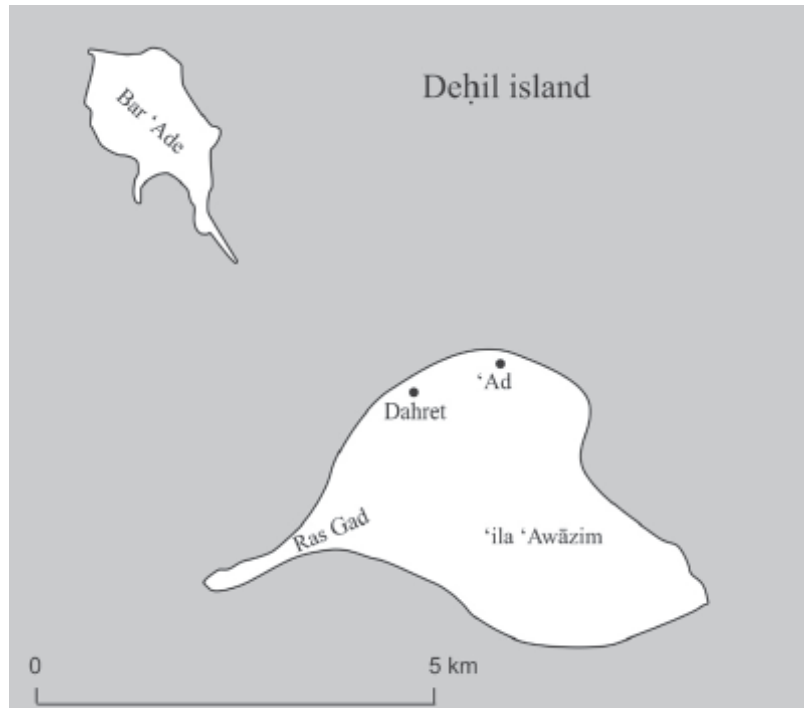




Dahlak Archipelago







Contact Languages

On Dahlak Kebir and Nōra: Dahālík, Arabic, ṡAfar

Deñil : Dahālík, Arabic

With Arabic from the Yemeni coastal region of Tihama

With Semitic languages : Arabic, Tigre, Tigrinya

Cushitic languages : ṡAfar, Saaho

on the Eritrean eastern coast



Endangered Language

- No official status
- under-documented
- Supremacy of Arabic
- Number of speakers increasingly reduced
- Generational transmission broken



Highly imperilled with extinction

Classification

AFRO-ASIATIC

Semitic

Southern Semitic

→ Northern Ethiosemitic

- close relation between Dahālik and Tigre,
- similarities with Tigrinya.

Divergences with Tigre are significant enough

not to consider Dahālik as a dialect of Tigre.

ana	dahālik	aharre,	luġet-na ...	min	salas	luġet	maxluġet-ta,
I	dahalik	I speak	speech-1PL.	from	3	speech	mixing-COP.F
tigre,	šē	min-ʿarab	be-dīb = a,	šē	min-tigrinya	be-dīb-a,	wal =
Tigre	thing	from-Arabic	to-in=3F.SG	thing	from-Tigrinya	to-in-3F.SG.	but=
aktar	tigre	taġarrib.	tigre	na = he	aharre	u-na = mīwaʿ	sammeʿ
more	Tigre	she comes near	Tigre	of-1SG.	I speak	and=of=Massawa	I hear

As for me, I speak dahalik. Our speech ... it is a mixture of three speeches: there are in it, Tigre, Arabic a little, Tigrinya, a little, but it is closer to Tigre. I speak my own Tigre (Tigre variety of mine), and I understand the Tigre variety of Massawa.



CHARACTERISTICS

Word order

Nominal phrase

Definite=Noun / Numeral+Noun

yā=bisít ‘the woman’

saman ḥaʔan ‘eight boys’

Determined + determining

bisit ʕabbay ‘old woman’

bet umm=u ‘his mother’s house’

<house/mother=3M.SG>

qussuʕet dahab <ball/gold> ‘a golden ball’

Verbal Phrase, Compound conjugation

AUX + V

kunna *nestayil*
AUX.1PL work.IPFV.1PL

‘We were harvesting’

V + AUX

maʔiyu *kūnayu*
come.IPFV.3M.PL AUX.3M.PL

‘They were coming’

Clause & Sentence

S. O. V.

ana wu kile ĥaw=he hōri kuná=l=na [kunánna]
PR.1SG and two brother=1SG boat be.PFV.3M.SG=to=1PL

‘Me and my two brothers we had a boat (there was a boat to us)’

Aux. O. V / V. O. Aux.

kūnet qusseġet wadet=l=o [wadettelo]
AUX.3F.SG ball do.PFV.3F.SG=to=3M.SG

‘She had made a ball for him’

wadet=l=o [wadettelo] *kūnet*
do.PFV.3F.SG=to=3M.SG AUX.3F.SG

raʔilluko < *raʔi=elle=u-ko*
see.IPFV=AUX=PR.3M.SG-1SG

‘I’m looking at you’

Subordinate - Matrix

ʕasa belafko emgabbi buqhet aw gifam hammen
fish eat.PFT.1SG if tomorrow or after_tomorrow be_sick.IPFT.1SG

If I eat fish the next day or the day after I am sick



CHARACTERISTICS

Verbal System

BASIC CONJUGATION

Perfective vs Imperfective (Binary aspectual opposition)

nasaʔa, *nasseʔ* « to take »

	Perfective		Imperfective	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1c	<i>nasaʔa-ko</i>	<i>nasaʔa-na</i>	<i>nasseʔ</i>	<i>na- nasseʔ</i>
2m	<i>nasaʔa-ka</i>	<i>nasaʔa-kum/n</i>	<i>te- nasseʔ</i>	<i>te- nasseʔ-u</i>
2f	<i>nasaʔa -ki</i>	<i>nasaʔa-kan</i>	<i>te- nasseʔi</i>	<i>te- nasseʔ-a</i>
3m	<i>nasaʔa</i>	<i>nasaʔay-u(n)</i>	<i>nasseʔ</i>	<i>nasseʔ-u</i>
3f	<i>nasaʔe -t</i>	<i>nasaʔay-a(n)</i>	<i>te- nasseʔ</i>	<i>nasseʔ-a</i>

COMPOUND CONJUGATION

with **copula** : V.IPFV = copula

Singular		Pural	
<i>tibil=</i> <u><i>tu</i></u>	<i>tibil=</i> <u><i>ta</i></u>	<i>tibilū=</i> <u><i>tun</i></u>	<i>tibilā=</i> <u><i>tan</i></u>
say.IPFV.3MF.SG=COP.MSG	IPFV.3MF.SG=COP.FSG	IPFV.3MPL=COP.MPL	IPFV.3FPL=COP.FPL

‘You’ll say’

Futurity*

The order of the constituents is unchangeable

* No precision about the time frame or efficiency of the process

with **Auxiliaries**

Morphology

V & AUX. conjugated

Syntax

V.IPFV & Aux.PFV/Compound Conj.

or

Aux.PFV/Compound Conj. & V. IPFV/PFV

Semantics

TAM Values

To be, to want

1) **elle** (var. (h)alle) & **kōna** (var. kūna) 'to be'

<i>umm=ak</i>	<i>iff=ellet ?</i>		<i>umm=ak</i>	<i>isse</i>	<i>kūnet</i>
mother=2M.SG	where? be.2F.SG		mother=2M.SG	where ?	be.2F.SG

'Where is your mother ?'

'Where was your mother ?'

2) **ħaddi** & **le=ħaddi** 'to want'

<i>walatti=ka</i>	<i>naħaddi</i>	<i>igi</i>	<i>wadd=e</i>
girl.GEM.EP.2M.SG	want.IPFV.1PL	for	boy.GEM=1SG

'We want your daughter for my son'

<i>may</i>	<i>le=ħaddi</i>
water	<i>elle.3M.SG=want.IPFV.3M.Sg</i>

'He wants water'

BASIC CONJUGATION

elle & kūna 'to be'

	<i>(h)elle/(h)alle</i>		<i>kūna/kōna</i>	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1c	<i>elli-ko</i>	<i>elli -na</i>	<i>kun-ko</i>	<i>kun-na</i>
2m	<i>elli-ka</i>	<i>elli-kum/n</i>	<i>kun-ka</i>	<i>kun-kum/n</i>
2f	<i>elli-ki</i>	<i>elli-kan</i>	<i>kun-ki</i>	<i>kun-kan</i>
3m	<i>elle</i>	<i>elliy-u(n)</i>	<i>kūna</i>	<i>kūnay-u(n)</i>
3f	<i>ell-et</i>	<i>elliy -a(n)</i>	<i>kūn-et</i>	<i>kūnay-a(n)</i>

BASIC CONJUGATION

ħade, ħaddi ‘to want, to desire’

	Perfective		Imperfective	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1c	<i>ħadi-ko</i>	<i>ħade-na</i>	<i>ħaddi</i>	<i>na-ħaddi</i>
2m	<i>ħadi-ka</i>	<i>ħadi-kum/n</i>	<i>ta-ħaddi</i>	<i>ta-ħaddiy-u</i>
2f	<i>ħadi-ki</i>	<i>ħadi-kan</i>	<i>ta-ħaddi(y)</i>	<i>ta-ħaddiy-a</i>
3m	<i>ħade</i>	<i>ħadiy-u(n)</i>	<i>ħaddi</i>	<i>ħaddiy-u</i>
3f	<i>ħad-et</i>	<i>ħadiy-a(n)</i>	<i>ta-ħaddi</i>	<i>ħaddiy-a</i>

WORD ORDER in Compound conjugation

Verb + Auxiliary

tuwallid *allet*
give_birth.IPFV.3F.SG AUX.3F.SG

‘She is going to give birth’

mandalét *beħin* *maʔiyu* *kōnáyū*
tortoise_shell before come.IPFV.3M.PL AUX.3M.PL

‘In the past they were coming for the tortoise shell’

darēt=da [darēdda] *tuwaddeq* [tuwaddey] *taħaddi*
house=DEM.F.SG fall.IPFV.3F.SG vouloir.3F.SG

‘This house is about to fall down’

Auxiliary + Verb

yā=sab d=elle maʔiyo
DEF=people REL=AUX.3M.SG come.IPFV.3M.PL

‘These people who are coming ...’

kulli nahar kōna gayisu
each day AUX.3M.SG go.IPFV.3M.PL

‘Every day they were going out’

lehaddi ana sakkīn amate
AUX.3M.SG PR.1SG knife bring.IPFV.1SG

‘I’m going to bring a knife’

elle : progressive, imminent future

Aux & V

*mi=elle** [mille] *waddiyu*
WHAT?=AUX.3M.SG do.3M.PL

‘What are they doing?’ (as I speak at the moment)

bis=a *fahar* *le=yayyib*
man=3F.SG month AUX.3M.SG=be_absent.IPFV.3M.SG

‘Her husband is (presently) absent for one month’

ana *aħmed* *ko=?anneħ*
PR.1SG Ahmed (AUX.)1SG=wait.IPFV.1SG

‘I’m waiting for Ahmed’

stomáko *yastereyt* *d=elle* *iblū=hu*
stomaco gastritis REL=AUX.3M.SG say.IPFV.3M.PL=3M.SG

‘Stomaco, gastritis they call it’

* for *milleyu* (3M.PL)

< /elle yāyyib/

< /elliko anneh/

< /elleyu iblū/

elle + V > reduced conjugation

anneh elliko > *anneh liko*

elliko anneh > *liko anneh* > *ko=anneh*

	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
1c	<i>elli-ko</i> >	<i>liko</i> >	<i>ko=</i>	<i>elli-na</i> >	<i>lina</i> >	<i>na=</i>
2m	<i>elli-ka</i> >	<i>lika</i> >	<i>ka=</i>	<i>elli-kun</i> >	<i>likun</i> >	<i>ka=</i>
2f	<i>elli-ki</i> >	<i>lika</i> >	<i>ka=</i>	<i>elli-kan</i> >	<i>likan</i> >	<i>ka=</i>
3m	<i>elle/le</i> >	<i>le</i> >	<i>le=</i>	<i>elliy-u(n)</i> >	<i>liyu</i> >	<i>le=</i>
3f	<i>elle-t</i> >	<i>le</i> >	<i>le=</i>	<i>elliy-a(n)</i> >	<i>liya</i> >	<i>le=</i>

kōna : habitual, past progressive, past continuous

Aux + V (IPFV)

kōkiyan *kunna* *nestayil*
mother_of_pearl AUX.1PL work.IPFV.1PL

‘We were harvesting the mother of pearl’

kōkiyan *ken* *kunna* *nadābbi*
mother_of_pearl there AUX.1PL buy.IPFV.1PL

‘There we were selling/ used sell mother of pearl’

kūnayu *ṣayobū=ni*
AUX.3M.PL wait.IPFV.3M.PL=1SG

‘They were waiting for me’

kulli *nahar* *kōna* *gayisu*
each day AUX.3M.SG go.IPFV.3M.PL

‘Every day they were going out’

kōna : habitual, past progressive, past continuous

V (IPFV) + Aux

mandalét behin maʔiyu kōnáyū
tortoise_shell before come.IPFV.3M.PL AUX.3M.PL

‘In the past they were coming for the tortoise shell’

ʔifár nuwaddi kunna
operculum do.IPV.1PL AUX.1PL

‘We were collecting (shell)opercula’

kōna : anteriority

V (PFV) & Aux

ḥāka *na=dahlāk* *ammerkunko* *saʕa* *tarassaʕko=ha*
 language CON=Dahlak know.PFV=AUX.1SG now forget.PFV.1SG=3F.SG

‘I had known the language of the Dahlak islands, now I forgot it’

Compound conjugation

	Sg	Pl.
1c	<i>ammerkunko</i>	<i>ammerkunna</i>
2m	<i>ammerkunka</i>	<i>ammerkunkum/n</i>
2f	<i>ammerkunki</i>	<i>ammerkunkan</i>
3m	<i>ammerkūna</i>	<i>ammer(u)kūna(yu)</i>
3f	<i>ammerkūnet*</i>	<i>ammer(a)kūna(ya)</i>

Aux & V (PFV)

kūnet *qusseʕét* *wadet*
 AUX.3F.SG ball make.PFV.3F.SG

‘She had made a ball’

ḥaddi : future

V(IPFV) & Aux

yimi radōt naḥarrud=u naḥaddi
today Radot slaughter.IPFV.1PL=3M.SG AUX.FUT.1PL.
‘Today we’ll slaughter/ we slaughter Radot’

darēt=da [darēdda] tuwaddeq [tuwaddey] taḥaddi
house=DEM.F.SG fall.IPFV.3F.SG vouloir.3F.SG
‘This house is about to fall down/ it’ll fall down’

Ordre figé

le=ħaddi / ħaddi=lle

dafeʕ d=elle=ħaddi nasseʔ
gift REL=AUX.3M.SG=want.IPFV.3M.SG take.IPFV.3M.SG
'He takes the gift he wants'

may le=ħaddi or *ħaddi=lle*
water AUX 3M.SG=want.IPFV.3M.Sg want.IPFV.3M.SG=AUX.3M.SG
'He wants water'

rayaha ʔawāle bīlaha (He saw her and without delay said):

walati=k ko-ħaddi digil marʕa
girl.2SG pfv.1sg-want.IPFV.1SG for marriage
'(now) I want your daughter for marriage'

ħaddi-leko min-ni-ka elf
want.IPF.1s-AUX.PFT.1s from-GEM.EPENTH-PR.2MS(O) 1.000

I want 1.000 (riyals) from you.

le=ħaddi 'to want' & AUX. Future

šoʔal

hayib-a=ki

ko=ħaddi

question

give.IPFV.1SG-EP=PR.2F.SG

1SG=want.IPFV.1SG

'I want to ask you a question / I'll ask you a question'

Sg.

Pl.

1c

ko-ħaddi

na-ħaddi

2m

ka-ħaddi

ka-ħaddiyu

2f

ka-ħaddiyi

ka-ħaddiya

3m

le-ħaddi

le-ħaddiyu

3f

le-ħaddi

le-ħaddiya

le=ħaddi (Aux) : probability, intent

V (IPV) + AUX

ʔannaħ.a=ki *le=ħaddi*
wait.IPFV.3M.SG.EP=3F.sg elle.3M.SG=want.IPFV.3M.Sg

‘he will wait for you’

AUX + V

le=ħa *ʔannaħ.a=ki*
elle.3M.SG=want.IPFV.3M.Sg wait.IPFV.3M.SG.EP=3F.sg

ana *gayis* *ko=ħad* *amaʔi*
1sg go.ipfv.1sg 1sg=fut come_back
‘I’m leaving, I’ll be back’

kūna=ħaddi (Aux) : irrealis

saddim-a=n=na *kūna* *ħaddi*
crash.IPFV.3M.SG.EP=PREP=1PL AUX.3M.SG want.IPFV.3M.SG
‘He would have bumped into us’



SUMMARY

Verb and Aux. both conjugated / Aux. conjugated

Aux. + V no number, gender index for 3rd persons

kōnayu > kōna

no number, gender index for 2nd & 3rd persons

elleyu > elle; elliki , elleka > leka; ellet > elle

V + kōna V (3m.sg.pfv) + conjugated Aux.

ammerkunko, ammerkunki ...

V(ipfv)=elle *elle* in the reduced form

elliko > liko, ellika > lika, elle > (el)le

(el)le=V(ipfv) new suffixal conjugation

ko=, ka=, le=V

Grammaticalization of the periphrasis with an auxiliary :

renewal of the verbal system

Degree of Grammaticalization depending on the auxiliary, its place



High degree of grammaticalization with **elle & V**

Auxiliary-Verb more **ancient**

Verb-Auxiliary more **recent**



Very low degree of grammaticalization with **kōna**

more **recent integration** ?

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