Verb-verb sequences in Tibetan and Ladakhi
(1200 years of stable transition)
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1.   Introduction

The Tibetic languages constitute a large family with several regional branches and many dialects. Old Tibetan is documented since the mid 8th c., with the Old Tibetan Annals being a copy of a text that started to be written in the mid 7th c. The shift to Middle or Classical Tibetan takes place around the 11th c. Some of the modern varieties are documented since the late 19th c.

Ladakhi is one of the western-most Tibetic languages, spoken in Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, India. It is documented since ca. 1900 and consists of at least two quite different dialect groups, Kenhat and Shamskat, with the main dialect of Leh belonging to the first group, but being phonologically close to the second.

Tibetan complex verb + verb constructions consist of
– TMA-constructions: verb (+ x) + auxiliary
– modal constructions: verb (+ x) + modal verb
– causative constructions: verb (+ x) + causative verb
x = additional morphological material that tend to get dropped in the later stages.

Diachronically, these constructions start as complementiser constructions, but end up with a syntactic restructuring based on the semantics of the first verb (TMA constructions) or of the compound expression (modal and causative constructions).

Another, more problematic type of complex verb + verb constructions consists of (more or less) semantically related verb pairs, mostly type-verb + path-verb combinations, with the first one formally modifying the second one. This is the contruction I want to talk about.

2.   Complex predicates consisting of semantically related verb pairs

2.1. Formal properties

There are two different construction types for these verb pairs in Tibetan:
(a) serial construction: the first verb appears in one of its bare stem forms (stem II) without additional morphemes
(b) converb construction: a clause chaining marker ({ste} or nas) is added to the first verb stem (stem I or II)

The serial construction, type a) is found in modern Central Tibetan and some East Tibetan (Kham) varieties. It is also attested in the Ladakhi varieties in the construction of hightened intentionality (stem II + taŋ) and as an alterna-

tive form in the Domkhar dialect of western Sham. The converb construction, type b) is prominent in Old and Classical Tibetan, it is the dominant form in West Tibetan (Balti and Ladakhi), and it is also found in North-East Tibetan (Amdo).

2.2.   Common combinations

function	2. verb	type of 1. verb	attestation (Tib)
1. directional (in relation to speaker or narrative focus)			
directional	come : go	intr. motion	all varieties
		trans. movement	excl. Ladakhi, Balti
directional	bring : take	trans. movement	Ladakhi, Balti
directional	give:bring:take	commercial activ.	Ladakhi, Balti
beneficiary	bring		Ladakhi (?Balti)
2. intensifying			
volitional	give, throw	all types [+ctr]	Ladakhi, Balti
3. 'aspectual'			
durative, resultative	stay↔	intr. & reflex. verbs	all varieties
	put	trans. verbs	
completive	negative result	annihilation	Classical, Ladakhi
completive	non-existence	disappearance …	Ladakhi
4. other (and perhaps questionable)			
syntactic	specific vs. unspecific *verba dicendi*		some varieties

As one can see, the Western Tibetan varieties (Balti and Ladakhi) have developed a few more specific combinations, most probably under the influence from Indoaryan languages, particularly from Shina. (Some of them may be found in other varieties as well, but if so, they have not yet been documented). Ladakhi, in particular, shows striking structural parallels with 'compound', 'vector', or 'light' verbs as found in Shina languages.

2.3. The basis for semantically related complex predicates: clause-chaining and embedded modifying constructions with the lhagbcas morpheme {ste}

Clause-chaining and subordination is indicated in Tibetan by adding specific morphemes to one of the verb stems. Implied or contextually given arguments are most often omitted (in certain cases, their deletion is even obligatory). Arguments shared by subsequent chained or embedded clauses are thus typically deleted from the second clause onwards, although it is also possible to omit a 'subject' argument in the first clause and present it in a following clause.

Most scholars would treat Tibetan clause-chaining constructions as instances of subordination, because the 'finite' TM markers are found only on the last element of the chain. However, as long as the chain of verbs iconically represents a chain of events along the time line, it is the first verb that triggers the case marker (absolutive vs. ergative vs. aesthetive) of the shared

'subject' (so-called backward control), cf. (1a). In the case of purposive clauses or other modifying clauses, it is the later 'main' verb that triggers the case marker of the shared 'subject', cf. (1b).

(1)   a.   *ŋ-i   phropa-s   ṭuṭu   kik-se,   ɕi.*
           I-GEN   friend-ERG throat-ø strangle-CC   die.PA

'A friend of mine strangled [him/herself] and died.' Or: 'A friend of mine strangled [him/herself] to death.'

      b.   *ŋ-i   phropa-ø   ṭuṭu   kik-se,   ɕi.*
           I-GEN   friend-   throat-   strangle-CC   die.PA

'A friend of mine died by having strangled [him/herself].'

The first construction puts the emphasis on the act of strangling, the second on the result of dying. In the latter case, the first verb merely modifies the second one. The first construction (1a) could also be understood as having a complex predicate *kikse-ɕi*, indicating the 'successful' completion of the suicide.

The most common morpheme used for clause chaining is the *lhagbcas* morpheme {ste} (in Ladakhi: *-se, -e, -ste, -te, -de,* or *-re*) or the ablative marker nas. The construction corresponds roughly to a converb, a conjunct participle, or an adverbial participle, signalling a temporal relation of immediate anteriority and/ or a close causal or modal correlation with the following event.

The 'subject' remains the same in most cases, but this is not a necessary condition. The converb cannot be negated in Ladakhi, and has to be replaced by a nominal form. In West Tibetan, the morpheme *-in* is used for a more explicit incidence relation. Both constructions may also be used for subordination and both are used for the semantically related verb pairs.

Nominalisers (± additional material) are used when the relation between the events is less immediate, particularly when the 'subject' switches. Except for the negated counterpart of the *lhagbcas* In Ladakhi, such constructions cannot be used for the semantically related verb pairs.

3.   Problems in analysing the Ladakhi constructions
3.1.   The translator's stance
A literal translation of both verbs would give the text quite an exotic touch. In a good literary translation, most of the semantically verb + verb constructions should be translated with a single verb (plus, if really necessary, a directional or aspectual adverb or particle).

A good translation, however, is not (and should never be) a linguistic analysis.

3.2.   The linguist's stance
For the linguist, the main problem is whether these combinations constitute also formal units, or more precisely, whether they have to be analysed as semi-lexicalised or semi-grammaticalised complex verb expressions with a single argument frame, or as bi-clausal constructions where both verbs have their own argument frames – which simply happen to be identical, due to shared semantics, cf. (2) - (5). Or are they perhaps hybrid constructions somewhere in between?

(2)   Frames of intransitive motion verbs:
      path verbs: *ʧha, soŋ* 'go', *joŋ, joŋs* 'come'
      type verbs, e.g. *kjok, kjoks*₁ 'turn round, change o's direction'
      path verbs: Abs;   +Abs; +Loc; +Abl; +Abl+Loc
      type verbs: Abs   +Loc; +Abl; +Abl+Loc

(3)   a.   *kho   <naŋ   jots>-ekana   soŋ.*
     DOM   s/he-ø   <house-ø   be.place>-pp:ABL   go.PA
           'S/he went away from the house(s).'

      b.   *kho   <naŋ   jots>-ekana   kjoks.*
           s/he-   <house-   be.place>-pp:abl   turn.round.pa
           'S/he changed direction at the house(s).'

      c.   *kho   <naŋ   jots>-ekana   kjok-se-soŋ.*
           s/he-   <house-   be.place>-PP:ABL   turn-(CC)-go.PA
           'S/he went, having changed /by changing direction at the houses (bi-clausal embedded).'
           OR: 'S/he turned away at the houses (mono-clausal).'
           NOT: *'S/he turned away at the houses and went (bi-clausal chained).'

(4)   Frames of transitive movement verbs:
      path verbs: *kher, khers* 'take away', *khjoŋ, khjoŋs* 'bring hither',
      type verbs, e.g. *kjok, kjoks*₂ 'turn sth round',
      both verbs: Erg   +Abs; +Abs-Loc; +Abl-Abs; +Abl-Abs-Loc

(5)   a.   *atʃe-(:)   ika-ne   galḍi   khers.*
     LEH   sister-ERG   this-PP:ABL car-ø   take.away.PA
           '[My] elder sister took the car away from here.'

      b.   *atʃe-(:)   ika-ne   galḍi   kjoks.*
           sister-ERG   this-PP:ABL car-ø   turn.PA
           '[My] elder sister turned the car from here.'

c. *aʧe-(:)*   *ika-ne*   *galḍi*   *kjok-ste-khers.*
    sister-ERG   this-PP:ABL   car-ø   turn-(CC)-take.away.PA
    '[My] elder sister brought the car away, by turning it from here (bi-clausal embedded).'
    OR: '[My] elder sister turned the car away from here (mono-clausal).'
    NOT: *'[My] elder sister turned the car and brought (it) away (bi-clausal chained).'

In the following, I shall give some rough statistics on the distribution of semantically verb-verb combinations in a text corpus (the Lower Ladakhi version of the Kesar epic, collected and written down at ca. 1900, LLV). The difficulties of defining a single verb phrase, and the ambiguous character of the verb-verb combinations do not allow, however, to give exact numbers.

Table 1: Percentage of verb-verb combinations

Total number of clauses / verbs (±)	8026	100%
Total number of SVVCs (±)	453	5,80%
Verbs that cannot appear in VVCs	3662	
Existential and attributive linking verbs *yin, yod, rag, ḥdug* & *ḥdug* 'sit, stay'	1015	
Unmarked *verbum dicendi zer*	938	
Directional motion verbs (incl. LVs)[1]	979	
Directional transfer verbs (incl. LVs)[1]	709	
Remaining clauses /verbs	4364	
Percentage of VVCs		10,38%

Table 2: Distribution of verb-verb combinations

		%
Total number of SVVCs (±)	453	%
directional motion verbs (intr)[2]	141	31,13
aspectual (durative, resultative)	112	24,72
intensifying (volitionality)	76	16,78
speech intro and extro	42	9,27
directional movement verbs (trans)[2]	36	7,95
give vs. take	21	4,64
aspectual (complete disappearance)	15	3,31
aspectual (complete destruction)	9	1,99
beneficiary	1[3]	0,2

[1] These verbs may appear infrequently in aspectual and intensifying constructions.

[2] A few verb-verb combinations should possibly be reanalysed.

[3] Some intensifying and give vs. take constructions should perhaps be reanalysed as beneficiary constructions.

Table 3: Motion and movement verbs

	total	SVVCs	%
all movement verbs	685	36	5,26
directional movement verbs	217	—	—
type movement verbs	**468**	**36**	**7,69**
all motion verbs (±)	1227	141	11,49
directional motion verbs	817	—	—
type motion verbs	**410**	**141**	**34,39**

3.3.   Discussion of the various construction types
3.3.1. Path-motion verbs: expression of directionality

The most common combinations in Tibetic languages are intransitive type-motion and transitive type-movement verbs, such as run, jump, carry, or steal, with the intransitive path-motion verbs go vs. come, example (3c).
In Ladakhi and some Balti dialects, however, (semantically) transitive type-movement verbs are typically combined with the transitive path-movement verbs take away vs. bring, example (5c).

From the perspective of German or English, one would say that such a combination expresses only a single semantic concept, that of a movement, directed towards or away from the speaker or narrative focus, for which German and English would use a type-movement verb plus an adverb or particle: weg, hin, and her or away and hither. From this perspective, the main focus would naturally lie on the movement type, and the path-motion verbs would be accidental, if not semantically bleached.

But one could also argue that a language like Tibetan draws the distinction between type-motion and path-motion verbs not for nothing and that the path is more important for the speakers than the type. The main focus would thus lie on the movement path and the movement type would be just an accidental adornment.

The honorific counterparts of path-motion verbs are not differentiated with respect to direction, so that the direction has to be inferred from the context. Honorific path-motion verbs are nevertheless commonly used in complex verb + verb constructions, cf. the following two combinations from Old and Classical Tibetan:

ḥkhor-te-mchi 'appear-and-come' (CT)
mchoŋs-te-mchis 'jump-and-gone' (OT)

(6)   *Iʒin_Nurbu*   *raŋmala*   *loks-e-skjotʧas*   *soŋʃik!*
KHAL   Dalai Lama-ø   immediately   turn-(CC)-go-NOM   go-DM
           'May it happen, that the Dalai Lama can return (lit. return-and-hon.go/come) [to Tibet] immediately.'

This indicates that the main focus actually lies on the path-motion verb, which is then modified by the type-verb. Otherwise, if the main function of path-verbs was to specify the direction of type-verbs, we would certainly find direction-specific honorific path-motion verbs.

Some problematic combinations:

ʒon, hon. *tʃhip* ('ride' or rather 'get onto the horse, bike bus') & directional motion verbs (intr)

(7) *aʒaŋ Domkharna Lea rhteka ʒone joŋs.*
   uncle-ø Domkhar-ABL Leh-ALL horse-PP:ALL ride-CC come.PA
   'The uncle came from Domkhar to Leh, riding on a horse' or 'came riding' or 'rode hither from Domkhar to Leh'?

(8) *rinbotʃhe tʃhipsika matʃhipspa skjot.*
   chief.priest-ø hon.horse-PP:ALL NG2-hon.ride-NOM hon.come.PA
   "The chief priest came / went without riding a horse' or 'did not come / go riding' or 'did not ride (hither /away)'?

skyon ('let ride' or rather 'let get onto …') & directional movement verbs (tr)

(9) *ñopaŋunis bagma rteka skjone khers.*
DOM bridesmen-ERG bride-ø horse-PP:ALL let.ride-CC take.away.PA
   'The bridesmen put the bride on the horse and took her along.' or 'took the bride along on the horse'?

Similarly in the epic: *rtamphongsla btangste ḥkhyers* 'took on the hind part of the horse and took along' or 'took along on the horse back'?

rdʒes tʃat ('follow, search'; lit. 'cut the trace') & directional motion verbs

(10) *khoŋ ~ khoŋis jayi rdʒes tʃate joŋs.*
   they-ø they-ERG yak-GEN trace-ø cut-CC come.PA
   'They followed the trace of the yak and came.' or 'came by following the trace' or 'followed the trace of the yak towards us.'?

Or in the epic: *lam bstan* ('show the way') & directional motion verbs: *lam bstante ḥkhyerte* 'showed (him) the way and took (him) along' or 'led (him) along the way'?

3.3.2. The use of give I: expression of a beneficiary
In Ladakhi and Balti, the verb *give* is frequently used to express a beneficiary or maleficiary, i.e., the agent aims at the benefit or detriment of another person:

(11) *goba-s julpa sami tshaŋma-(:)*
DOM goba-ERG villager farmer all-ALL
   sakjat rere skal-e-tʰaŋs.

land each-ø allot-(CC)-give.PA
   'The goba (village chief) alloted a piece of land each to all the farming villagers [ie, the individual households].'

3.3.3. Give, take, and bring: commercial transactions
In Ladakhi and Balti, the verb give and its directional counterpart take (away or hither) are also used to specify the direction of a (commercial) transaction, where the transaction verb itself is unspecific: lend/ borrow, exchange, return. In both cases, the common construction type is with a clause chaining marker (type b), but in the Domkhar dialect, the construction type with the bare stem (type a) is also frequently found.

(12) a. *ŋa-s kho-a pene maŋbo jars-pin. / jar-e-tʰaŋs-pin.*
DOM I-ERG s/he-ALL money much-ø lend.PA-RM lend-(CC)-give.PA-RM
   'I lent / lent (and gave) him/her a lot of money.'

  b. *ŋa-s kho-ikana pene maŋbo jars-pin. /*
   I-ERG s/he-PP:ABL money much-ø borrow.PA-RM
   jar-e-khjoŋs-pin.
   borrow-(CC)-take.PA-RM
   'I borrowed / borrowed (and took) a lot of money from him/her.'

With take and bring verbs, the interpretation depends very much on the implicit context. Here, all three logical possibilities have been attested:
– a sequence of two events (first a contract or an agreement on the transaction type, then the actual transaction)
– modification of the second verb (contrastive usage, e.g. taking by borrowing, not by stealing)
– a compound reading (focussing on the resulting state: the money has still to be payed back)

(The interpretation may depend on how one formulates the question!)

3.3.4. The use of give II: expression of hightened intentionality or force
In Ladakhi and Balti (occasionally also in other varieties), give (or throw) highlightens an actor's intentionality, often with a negative connotation of bad temper, destructive intentions, or performance against norms, expectations, or benevolent advice. The combination may also signal the application of force, that is, more than usual or necessary.

On a positive note, the construction is frequently used in commands, signalling that the addressee should just perform the task and not be shy. In this function, give has no directional counterpart.

The common construction type for all dialects is with the bare stem II (type a). This indicates a closer unity between the two verbs, and a narrowing down, if not bleaching of the semantic content of the second verb.

Conversely, one may then say that the combinations of type (b) used to express directionality or beneficial readings of the previous section should perhaps not be viewed as complex predicates.

(13)   *kha-s   laptse   lip   skon-teaŋ-sok.*
DOM   snow-ERG   sheaf-ø   onom   dress-give.PA-INF
           'Unexpectedly, the snow covered the sheaves completely.'

(14)   *riri-o   ḻtɕus-teaŋs-pa,   ʒik.*
DOM   radio-DF-ø   turn.PA-give.PA-NOM   break.down.PA
           'When [I] turned the radio on and off again and again (more than
            necessary), [it] broke down.'

3.3.5. The use of give II: ambiguous cases
Several usages, however, allow both the reading of hightened intentionality or force and a more literal reading of the verb give, even with type (a) constructions.

(15)   *aba-s   ŋa-(:) baik-tɕik   ɲos.   /   ɲos-teaŋs.*
DOM   father-ERG   I-ALL bike-LQ-ø buy.PA   buy.PA-give.PA
           'Father bought a bike for me.' / 'Father bought a bike for me' ~
            'Father bought a bike and gave [it] to me.'

Compare also the following example, where the informant, despite the clause-chaining construction of type (b), at least initially did not accept the meaning 'and gave':

(16)   *kho-i   miŋbo-s   kho-a   naŋ-tɕik   tɕos-e-teaŋs.*
DOM   s/he-GEN   brother-ERG s/he-ALL house-LQ-ø construct.PA-(CC)-give.PA
           'Her brother constructed a house for her.' ~ ?'... constructed a
            house and gave it to her.'

3.3.6. Aspectuals: expression of duration
Verbs with the meaning 'sit, stay' and 'put, keep' are used to describe an on-going situation or ongoing resulting state. The verb stay is used when the ongoing situation pertains to the subject or agent, the verb keep when the ongoing situation pertains to the patient.

   In some of the examples the bleached character of the second element is quite evident, cf. example (19)-(21), but in others one could always opt for a full lexical meaning, cf. examples (17), (18), and (22). In a few cases, the combination leads to a slight shift in meaning, cf. *ḻta* 'look', but *ḻtase-duk* 'stare'.

(17)   *kho dronpo-ŋun-la trhel-ba,   ip-se-duks.*
DOM   s/he-ø guest-PL-ALL   feel.shy-NOM   hide-(CC)-stay.PA
           'She felt shy before the guests and thus hid away.' ~ '... stayed hidden.'

(18)   *Waŋgjal-is   ab-ekana   pene   zba-se-bors.*
DOM   Wanggyal-ERG father-PP:ABL money-ø   hide-(CC)-keep.PA
           'Wanggyal hid (his) money from (his) father.' ~ 'Wanggyal kept
            (his) money away from (his) father.'

(19)   *...galḍi-u   ʒik-pa,   ŋa-(:)*
DOM   ...car-DF-ø   get.destroyed-NOM I-AES
           penʃin-po-aŋ   ul-e-duks.   / ul.
           pension-df-ø-CONJ loose-(CC)-stay.PA   loose.PA
           '[If I use the pension to buy a car, and] if the car gets destroyed, the
            pension will be (lit: will have been) lost for me for ever.' (not:
            *'will have stayed lost.') / '... will be (lit: will have been) lost.'

(20)   *Gjapa tɕo-se   mi-ɦun   nān-de-bor-aɦo-kanak.*
GYA   Gyapa ruler-ERG man-PL-ø suppress-(CC)-keep-PRS-DSTM
           'The lord of Gya must have suppressed the people (all the time).' /
            'must have kept the people suppressed.'

The continuous/ iterative form stem I + *-in* is frequently found with the verb *stay*, less frequently also with the verb *keep*.

(21)   *phrugu-ŋun baŋ   tʰaŋ-in-duk-se, ...*
DOM   child-PL-ø   running-ø give-(CONT)-stay-CC
           'The children are running [on the roof] ...' (not: 'the children stay
            running')

(22)   *trūgu cū:n-a,   pī-a   khap   tā-fa,   thok-te,*
GYA   child small-AES   hip-ALL injection-ø give-NOM have.pain-CC
           kh-e   am-e   lālok   pē-:n-bor-uk.
           s/he-GEN mother-ERG flipflop-ø turn-(CONT)-keep-PRS.VIS
           'Since the small child, when given an injection into the hip, had
            some pain [in the hip], his/her mother is turning him/her around
            repeatedly.' ~ '... is keeping [him/her] turned around for a while.'

(23)   *khoŋ-is rgun-ifia gri:nhaus   tɕo-se-bo:s.*
DOM   they-ERG winter-PP greenhouse-ø construct-(CC)-keep.PA
           'They constructed a greenhouse for the winter (and kept is so).'

With respect to the last example, the informant stated that the combination with /bor/ is used when one constructs or makes something not for immediate but for future usage or consumption.

   The verb stay mostly follows intransitive verbs, but it may also follow a transitive verb, when the event is reflexive or subject-related in the widest sense. The choice of the case marker for the 'subject' depends on a compound

or embedded reading, that is, when a compound reading is intended, the 'subject' is in the ergative:

(24) a. *kho-s   ŋaŋos-la   dun   stan-e-duks.*
DOM   s/he-ERG   I.direction-ALL front-ø show-(CC)-stay.PA
          'S/he faced me/ looked in my direction for some time.'

      b. *kho,   ŋaŋos-la   dun   stan-e,   duks.*
          s/he-ø   I.direction-ALL front-ø show-CC   stay.PA
          'S/he stood there, looking in my direction.'

      c. *ama-s   non-e   rdoŋ-po   ɲima-(:) stan-e-bors.*
          mother-ERG son-GEN face-DF-ø sun-ALL show-(CC)-keep.PA
          'The mother turned her little son's face into the sun.'

If the resulting state has a more negative connotation, the verb *lus* 'remain, stay behind, be left behind' is used instead of stay. Its occurrence is naturally less frequent.

(25) *ŋa-(:) ʒaktaŋ   trūgu-a   go   khor-de-li-arak.*
GYA   I-AES every.day child-ALL head-ø rotate-(CC)-be.left-PRS.AUD
      'I am always getting lost in thoughts about the child.' ~ 'My mind
      is always wandering about [what to do for] my child.'

The combinations with the verb stay are formally and semantically close to the fully grammaticalised present perfect construction. However, in the perfect construction the verb stay has become an evidential auxiliary, indicating visual knowledge, and does not inflect any more. Whereas in the double verb construction, the second verb can still take all finite and non-finite morphemes, including, of course, the evidential auxiliaries of the perfect construction. (In the dialect of Gya-Miru two different verbs are used: *duk* as (experiential) auxiliary and *dat* as vector verb.)

3.3.7. The perfect construction expressing complete disappearance
The present perfect consists of the verbs stem plus lhagbcas morpheme plus one of the auxiliaries *-in ~ -ɦin* 'be', *-jot ~ -ɦot* 'exist', *-duk* 'sit, stay', and *-rak ~ -nak* 'hear, feel'. The last two auxiliaries indicate visual and non-visual, mainly auditory evidence, the second one indicates authoritative knowledge of the main speech act participant, whereas the first one is used more neutrally.

   However, with verbs expressing the anihilation or disappearance of items, the negated auxiliaries have a double function: they may indicate either that the event did not take place or, quite in the opposite, that the event did take place and the item in question is no longer there or is completely or already gone. The latter usage appears to be more frequent.

The intended meaning is usually obvious from the context, but the informants admitted that they might get confused, cf. example (26). Again, in some cases, the notion of non-existence is not yet fully bleached, cf. example (28).

(26) *kho   ʃi-se-met.   ~ ʃi-se-met.*
DOM   s/he-ø die-(CC)-not.exist=PERF.ASS ~ die-NG.PERF.ASS
      'S/he has died (and is no longer there).' ~ 'S/he has not [yet] died.'

(27) *ŋa-(:) pene   rdzok-se-met. / -mi-nuk. / -mi-nak.*
TYA   I-AES money-ø finish-(CC)-not.exist=PERF.ASS /-VIS /-AUD
      'I happen to have (my) money spent (lit: finished) completely.'

(28) *bom   jes-tsana,   ŋa   tʃha-tshar-e-met-pin.*
DOM   bomb-ø explode-when I-ø go-end-(CC)-not.exist-PERF.ASS-RM
      'When the bomb exploded, I had already gone/ left (and was no
      longer there).'

3.3.8. Communication verbs
   The case of the *verba dicendi* and other communication verbs is similar to that of the motion and movement verbs: there are quite a few type verbs, but only one, semantically rather empty verb suitable for the end or introduction of a quotation.

   The quotation verb is adjacent to the proposition and the type verbs come on the outer periphery. That is, in speech introductions, we find the combination type verb & quotation verb. At the end of a quoted speech, we find the combination quote verb & type verb. The latter construction is commonly used in place of an indirect or embedded proposition.

   When closing a quote or propositon, the second element may be of a comparatively complex nature (light verb constructions or collocations) and additional arguments or adjuncts may be inserted.

   All in all, this combination seems to be the least likely candidate for univerbation. However, since the construction is used in order to avoid the incorporation of (indirect) propositions into the main sentence, it shows a certain tendency towards grammaticalisation.

(29) a. *gergan-is   trhugu-un-la ma-sil-khan-ifia   jat   ʃroks.*
TYA   teacher-ERG child-PL-ALL NG2-study-NOM-PP
          jat   ʃroks.
          memory-ø frighten.PA
          'Yesterday, the teacher scolded the children badly for their not hav-
          ing studied.'

b. *gergan-is   trhugu-un-la, «sil-ma-sil-ba!»   zer-e,*
    teacher-ERG child-pl-ALL study-NG2-study-EMPH say-CC
    jat   froks.
    memory-ø frighten.PA
    'Yesterday, the teacher scolded the children badly, saying: «[You]
    did not study at all!»'

3.4. Criteria for defining semantically related verb-verb combinations
None of the following criteria yield a reasonable result:
frequency or obligatoriness, accentuation and tonal features, conceptual
unity, and scope of negation.

Only the case marking behaviour gives some clues. But here only the resultative and/or durative construction with the intransitive verb ḥdug 'sit, stay' yields an unambiguous result: case marking is triggered by the first verb. In the case of combinations of a formally transitive, but semantically intransitive motion verb, such as gom 'step on, over', with a directional motion verb, case marking is ambiguous in type b) (converb) constructions, that is, it may be triggered either by the transitive first verb or the intransitive second verb.

However, in the Domkhar type a) (serial verb) constructions, case marking is triggered by the intransitive motion verb!

4.   Conclusion
Natural languages do not always follow the requirements of logic and the law of excluded middle. Ladakhi verb-verb constructions (particularly also modal verb constructions) feature the inclusion of the middle.

In the case of the semantically related verb-verb constructions, this means that they can or must be analysed sometimes as representing two sequential events (the contract situation), sometimes as representing a complex event, consisting of a path and a (contrastive) type, and sometimes as representing a simple event, possibly associated with connotations of surprise, completion, or remaining obligations.

My approach towards these constructions has changed over the years. Initially, I was overly enthusiastic, including verb pairs that I better had not included (e.g. mount a horse + go/come > go/come by horse). Presently, however, I wonder whether we deal with complex predicates, at all.

Aikhenvald (2005) would treat adverbial or modifying serial verb constructions as semantic units. This seems to be problematic, but could be motivated, if the serial constructions stand in contrast with converbial or other morphologically marked constructions.

In Ladakhi (and all Tibetic languages with type b constructions), such opposition does not exist, and there is no obvious formal feature, such as intonation or morphological reduction that could distinguish the semantically related verb & verb constructions from ordinary bi-clausal constructions with omitted arguments.

Sorting the different combinations according to how far they have developed towards semantic unity, one could set up the following hierarchy, from the most developed to the least developed combination, even though the different factors appear to be somewhat contradictory (semantic restriction vs. syntactic merging):

most advanced and mono-clausal
–   intentionality give (phonetically reduced, semantically unrestricted, alignment corresponding 1. verb, no semantic counterpart, no negation)
–   perfect with negated existential verb (semantically restricted but semi-grammaticalised: alignment corresponding 1. verb, negation impossible)

intermediate (mono-clausal?)
–   aspectual vector verbs (restricted to intransitive or transitive verbs respectively, moving towards grammaticalisation, alignment corresponding to 1. verb, negation: on second verb with wide scope or on 1. verb with narrow scope, possibly bi-clausal?)
–   modal verb and causative constructions (syntactically intertwined; negation on 2. verb, narrow scope)

least advanced, possibly still bi-clausal?
–   directional vector verbs (restricted to movement verbs intransitive or transitive respectively; alignment mostly invisible, ambiguous with type b constructions, 2. verb with type a construction)
–   beneficiary give (restricted to transaction verbs, alignment invisible, negation not attested, possibly ambiguous and bi-clausal)

Table 4: Locating the verb-verb constructions on the univerbatio path

type	semantic restriction	relative frequenc.	phonl. reduct.	syntactic:	
				alignm.	neg/scope
give intent.	**none**	low	+	**1.verb**	n.a.
spec.Perf	annihilation	high	−	**1.verb**	impossible
aspectuals	intr./reflx.	high	−	**1.verb**	2.verb wide / 1.verb narrow (bi-clausal?)
	trns.	high			
	intr.	low			
modal verb	**none**	high	+ (±)	**1.+2.**	2.verb narrow
directionals	move intr b	high	−	1. or 2.	2.verb wide / 1.verb narrow (bi-clausal?)
	(move intr a	low	+	2.verb)	
	move tr a/b	high	− (+)	invis.	
give benef.	transaction	medium	− (+)	invis.	n.a.

The most frequent verb-verb constructions, the combinations with directional vector verbs, should perhaps be analysed as bi-clausal embedded modifying constructions – in the process of becoming compound constructions.

However, within 1200 years of language development, the constructions show little progress in compounding or grammaticalisation. The reason might be that both components of the pair are usually semantically well-motivated.

Only in the case of some less frequent constructions, can one observe phonological and sysntactic developments that indicate a certain conceptual unity.

Frequency, therefore, cannot be taken as the sole or main indicator for semantical bleaching or grammaticalisation.

Thank you!
ありがとう!

Main informants

DOM　　Domkhar (Shamskat): Tshewang Tharchin, Jigmet Angcuk, and others
GYA　　Gya-Miru (Kenhat): Mengyur Tshomo
KHAL　　Khalatse (Shamskat), narrator and interlocutor: *meme* Tondup Tshering
TYA　　Tya (Shamskat): Tshering Dolkar

Other Abbreviations:

ø	absolute	GEN	genitive
ABL	ablative	hon	honorific
AES	aesthetive (experiencer marking)	LQ	limiting quantifier
ALL	allative	NG	negation marker
ASS	assertive	NOM	nominaliser
AUD	auditive evidence	ONOM	onomatopoetic word
CC	clause chaining	PA	past (stem)
CONJ	conjunction	PERF	(present) perfect
DF	definiteness marker	PL	plural marker
DM	directive marker	PP	postsposition
DSTM	distance marker	PRS	present
EMPH	emphatic	RM	remoteness marker
ERG	ergative (agent marking)	VIS	visual evidence

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