



## Articles

# Grammaticalization Cases Through the Four Linguistic shifts

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## ABSTRACT

The present study aims at describing the grammaticalization phenomenon of some Hijazi Arabic (HA) elements that, to the best of the author's knowledge, have not been dealt with. It argues that the elements *xən*, *ʕsəs* and *lissa* have gradually developed from the verb *xalla*, the preposition phrases (PP) *ʕla asa:s* and *ila al-sa:ʕah* respectively. To achieve this, the paper speculates that these developed forms have followed the prevalently agreed upon grammaticalization chains where they have undergone desemantization (semantic shift), decategorialization (morphosyntactic shift), cliticization (morphophonological shift) and erosion (phonetic shift). These chains exhibit the grammaticalization stages of the elements under study.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Grammaticalization, as a linguistic term, was coined by Meillet (1912) and is used in the literature to convey two main meanings; one refers to the research framework accounting for the change, the other is the phenomenon itself (Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 2). The current paper uses the latter meaning where grammaticalization is a linguistic phenomenon referring specifically to some steps by which some elements have become more grammatical. More specifically, the paper describes some Hijazi Arabic (HA) lexical forms that have undergone some linguistics shifts (Section 4) to serve grammatical functions. The paper should contribute to the HA studies on grammaticalization. Several linguists have been exploring different linguistic aspects of HA (see, for example, Al Zahrani, 2020 for more studies on HA). However, with respect to grammaticalization, it has not received much attention. Eifan (2017) has explored some grammaticalized elements including *ga:m* 'stand', which marks the inceptive aspect, *gaʕad* 'sit', *ʒālas* 'sit', and *fiḍil* 'remained',

which mark the progressive aspect. The syntactic distribution, the selectional properties and the hierarchical placement of these aspectual elements have been explored in Al Zahrani (2016). Also, some studies on HA have shown that the prefixes *b-*, derived from *abya* 'I want', and *ħ-*, derived from *ra:ħ* 'went/has gone' have been grammaticalized to either mark future time references (Al Zahrani, 2013, 2020; Eifan, 2017) or hypothetical and counterfactual interpretations (Al Zahrani, 2020).

Furthermore, Eifan (2017) has concluded that the prepositions *ʕind* 'at', *maʕ* 'with', and *fi:* 'in, at' show some grammaticalization features where they behave as markers for the possessive function: a function that can also be coded by the grammaticalized nouns *hagg* and *tabaʕ* 'belong to'. Another grammaticalized form that Eifan (2017) has explored is the subordinate conjunction *ʕašān* 'because'. These previous HA studies have shown, to some extent, that the elements have undergone some grammatical changes, i.e., they have developed, on the one hand, from being purely lexical to being purely grammatical or moving

towards the grammatical pole; or from being less grammatical to more grammatical, on the other hand, as is the case with the afore-mentioned prepositions.

The significance of the present study is that it particularly contributes to the HA literature by exploring some more forms/phrases that the grammaticalization studies to date, to the best of my knowledge, have not dealt with. The present study includes the verb *xalla* ‘allow’ and the prepositional phrases *ʕala asa:s* ‘on the basis of’ and *lisa:ʔah* ‘to the moment/time of’. The study also contributes to the field of grammaticalization, in general, as it uses the mechanisms of the grammaticalization phenomenon to describe the dialect of question. In essence, the paper shows that the forms under study have followed a grammaticalization path that results in some linguistic shifts by which they serve grammatical functions. For the descriptive sake, following Heine (1993), these linguistic shifts are crosslinguistically seen as four chains including desemanticization, decategorialization, cliticization and erosion (See section 3). The findings show that the verb *xalla* has developed to cover a variety of modal meanings ranging between permission, obligation, suggestion, adhortative, threatening, and imperative. The imperative form of *xalla* has developed a form functioning as an introductory particle. The prepositional phrases *ʕala asa:s* ‘on the basis of’ and *lisa:ʔah* ‘to the moment/time of’ have developed constituents functioning as cause and purpose subordinators, and as negative adverbial markers. However, due to the absence of diachronic evidence for the grammaticality developments of the elements under study, the paper presents the shifts and changes of the elements according to what appears to me from their morphophonological features. That is to say, all the developments of each form show constituents existing in HA and thus the order of these constituents is presented according to their morphophonological features at best. This method is not so unusual; as a matter of fact, investigating the variations and changes of the language through time without its diachronic data or any written documents is impossible (see, for example, Jarad’s (2013, 2014, 2017) and Fleischman’s (1982) studeis, to mention a few). This being said, unless otherwise stated, the examples come from the

author’s intuition and/or introspection.

The organization of the paper is as follows. Section 2 presents grammaticalization as a linguistic phenomenon. Section 3 introduces the theoretical assumptions needed in the current study. Section 4 and its subsequent Sections (4.1 & 4.2) explore the HA elements under study, and Section 5 concludes the paper.

## II. THE GRAMMATICALIZATION PHENOMENON

Hopper and Traugott (2003: 5) defines the phenomenon of grammaticalization as “the process whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistics contexts to serve grammatical functions, and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions”. Thus, as a phenomenon, grammaticalization is concerned with “how grammatical items develop grammatical functions” (Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 7). Being developed to serve grammatical functions does not always imply a full change of the form from being lexical into grammatical. Put differently, Haspelmath (1999: 1044) argues that the most general definition of grammaticalization would not restrict the phenomenon to a full change of a lexical form to a grammatical form, but would admit that grammaticalization “shifts a linguistic expression further toward the functional pole of the lexical-functional continuum”. Against this background, grammaticalization shows some linguistic shifts of contentive elements via a grammaticalization path by which they serve grammatical functions. Notably, the grammaticalization path, as pointed out by Heine (2003: 589), is referred to in the literature as ‘pathway’ (Bisang, 1986), ‘path’ (Bybee *et al.*, 1994: 14), ‘grammaticalization chain’ (Heine, 1993: 53), and ‘cline of grammaticality’ (Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 7). The paper uses these terms interchangeably.

The grammaticalization path shows a gradual language change that Bybee (2015: 10) claims to be “an inevitable outcome of language use”. This gradual change, more or less, results in the loss of the semantic and phonological properties of the lexical items, as well as their syntactic freedom and morphological features (Norde, to appear in ORE : 1). Hence, the change that grammaticalization shows

is actually a composite change that encompasses simultaneous or successive “microchanges” at the different linguistic levels: syntax, morphology, semantics, and phonology (Norde, 2012; Norde & Beijering, 2014). These linguistic changes, as suggested by Hopper and Traugott (2003:7), as well as by many others (see references above), follow a “cline of grammaticality” that presents continuous series of changes that the lexical elements may undergo. For instance, Hopper and Traugott’s (2003:7) cline in (1) suggests that the items occurring to the very right edge of the cline are more grammatical than those in a preceding level of the cline. Hopper and Traugott (2003: 99) admit that grammaticalization is assumingly unidirectional. Put differently, the left end of the cline is less grammatical than the right one.

1. content item > grammatical word > clitic > Inflectional affix

The literature shows dozens of examples that follow the cline in (1) (see, for example, Al Zahrani, 2020; Eifan, 2017; Hopper & Traugott, 1993, 2003; Jarad, 2014, 2017; Norde, 2012; Norde & Beijering, 2014, to mention a few). Some typical examples include the change of some lexical motion verbs into future markers as is the case with the English *to be going to*, the French *aller* and the Dutch *gaan* (Norde, to appear in ORE ); this is the case in all Roman languages (see, Fleischman, S. (1982), for more examples). Similar cases are present in other languages such as the HA *raah* and *abya* (Al Zahrani, 2020; Eifan, 2017), the Levantine varieties: *bi-widd* (Mitchell & Al-Hassan, 1994: 19), the Yameni Arabic *yafaʔ* (Versteegh, 2014), the Moroccan Arabic *bat* (Stewart, 1998: 110). Other examples also include the development of the indefinite articles out of the numeral ‘one’ as is the case in English *a(n)*, French *un(e)*, and Dutch *een* (Norde, to appear in ORE). An important point to be considered here is that the concept of unidirectionality does not necessarily require all crosslinguistic elements undergoing grammaticalization to move through all the stages of the cline of grammaticality, and this is evidenced by many grammaticalization studies (I show this with the grammaticalized constituent *lissa*, Section 4.2).

Once again, the aforementioned studies have shown that the cross-linguistic elements follow the same cline of grammaticality, which in turn suggests a cross-linguistic regularity, which is an important aspect of grammaticalization. Heine (1993, 1997, 2003) argues that the crosslinguistic regularity is resulted by the cognitive processes that, as the examples have shown, cannot be language-specific. This is also evidenced by the regularity across languages where the concepts of some body parts are extended to function as locative markers (Heine, 1997, 2003; Heine & Kuteva, 2002). Examples include the English *back*, the HA *Dahr* ‘back’, the Danish *bag* and the Old Danish *baker* (Norde, to appear in ORE ) that can express the special notion of ‘behind’. Also, the HA *wadʒh* ‘face’ and *ra:s* ‘head’ have been developed as locative markers expressing front and the higher spatial notions. This concludes that grammaticalization is a linguistic phenomenon exhibiting a fact where concrete meanings develop to more abstract concepts (Heine & Kuteva, 2002).

Having presented this overview, the paper now shifts to briefly present some theoretical assumptions needed for the present discussion of the grammaticalized elements.

### III. THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS: LINGUISTIC SHIFTS

Following Heine (1993: 54), when contentive elements start to grammaticalize, they exhibit a number of linguistic shifts, each of which constitutes a distinct chain/continuum. Each chain shows a specific linguistic behaviour and this signifies that the chains are related to the four aspects of linguistics, referred to in the literature as ‘stages’ or ‘mechanisms of change’. These chains are the semantic shift (desemanticization), the morphosyntactic shift (deategorialization), the morphophonological shift (cliticization) and the phonetic shift (erosion). This section provides a brief definition of each shift and presents some of its basic and salient features.

*Desemanticization*, coined by Heine and Reh (1982), is the first shift in a grammaticalization process. It is known as the semantic shift, and semantic bleaching. It is believed that early stages of grammaticalization must exhibit a shift in meaning

where the form gradually and slowly strips out from its contentive meaning (Hopper & Traugott, 2003). Heine (1993: 54) defines the semantic shift as the “process whereby in specific contexts a lexical item is emptied of its lexical semantics and acquires a grammatical function”. However, according to Heine and Kuteva (2002), desemanticization must be triggered by *extension*: context generalization, i.e., the element is used in new contexts where its meaning is extended to cover other more meanings and consequently increases its frequency. Hence, they argue that *extension* is the basic principle in grammaticalization. This paper considers *extension* an indivisible part of the semantic shift so that it treats them together under desemanticization.

The term *decatégorialization* was introduced by Hopper and Thompson (1984). Heine (1993: 55) classifies this shift as the second stage of a grammaticalization process. Decatégorialization is a morphosyntactic shift in which a form increasingly loses some morphological and syntactic properties as well as some privileges of its grammatical category.

*Cliticization* is the third linguistic shift of a grammaticalization process whereby a form gradually develops “to an operator of another item” (Vangaveer, 2019: 260) in that it forms a part of the morphophonological structure of its complement, indubitably, after having lost its lexical content (Heine 1993: 55). In this shift, the linguistic element forms an independent constituent that is separate from its complement and then develops into a clitic.

*Erosion* exhibits the fourth linguistic shift of a grammaticalization process by which the linguistic element undergoing grammaticalization loses its phonological substance and does not carry distinctive tone or stress (Heine, 1993: 56) and this may lead to fusion. Erosion is the last to happen in the linguistic shifts.

Following this brief discussion of the linguistic shifts, it is important to emphasize that not all these shifts are relevant in each grammaticalization process as is the case in some of the elements under study. However, the semantic shift, including *extension*, is, on the one hand, the primary stage that “precedes all other shifts” (Heine 93: 58). On

the other hand, the phonetic shift ‘erosion’ is not a necessary process in grammaticalization, and if it happens it is “the last to apply” (Heine & Kuteva, 2002: 42).

In view of this discussion, when an element undergoes grammaticalization, *extension* implies that it gains some more properties due to its use in other linguistic contexts though it loses (some of) its semantic and syntactic (and probably phonetic) properties that it has as a pure lexical element. Notwithstanding, grammaticalization does not insinuate the elimination of the lexical item. Hopper (1991) argues that when a lexical element is grammaticalized, it may remain “as an autonomous element and undergo the same changes as ordinary lexical items” (Hopper, 1991: 22). This is the characteristic known as “divergence” (Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 118) or “split” (Heine & Reh, 1984: 57).

In light of these linguistic chains, the paper now shifts to the discussion of the HA elements under study.

#### IV. HA GRAMMATICALIZED ELEMENTS AND THEIR LINGUISTIC SHIFTS

Due to the different behaviour of the elements under study, the paper explores them in two subsequent sections. It aims to explore the linguistic behaviour of the elements under study: the verb *xalla* and the prepositional phrases *ila al-sa:ʕah* ‘to the moment/time’ and *ʕla asa:s* ‘on the basis of’. It also shows that their behaviour has undergone some shifts that consequently have developed some grammatical elements. Subsection (4.1) starts with the morphological derivation of the various forms of *xalla* and its inflectional properties. Then, in subsection (4.2), the paper discusses the prepositional phrases *ila al-sa:ʕah* ‘to the moment/time’ and *ʕla asa:s* ‘on the basis of’ and shows that they are the source from which the grammaticalized *lissaʕ* and *ʕasa:s* have been developed.

##### 4.1 The Verb *xalla*

Following the majority of linguists including Ryding (1994, 2014; 2005), Bahloul (2008) and Al Zahrani (2013), the Arabic perfective form is the basic verbal form since it shows the least amount of inflection when derived from a radical



verbal root. Accordingly, the verb *xalla* is the basic form from which other root-related derivatives are created. Like other HA lexical verb forms, the basic form *xalla* derives perfective, imperfective and imperative forms inflecting for the phi features as the following three paradigms show (see Al Zahrani 2013 for more on HA morphology).

**Table 1. The Perfective Paradigm of *xalla***

Person	Number	Gender	Inflected form	Basic notion
1	SG	M/F	<i>xallai-t</i>	'I allowed'
1	PL	M/F	<i>xallai-na</i>	'We allowed'
2	SG	M	<i>xallai-t</i>	'You allowed'
2	SG	F	<i>xallai-ti</i>	'You allowed'
2	PL	M/F	<i>xallai-tum</i>	'You allowed'
3	SG	M	<i>xalla</i>	'He allowed'
3	SG	F	<i>xall-at</i>	'She allowed'
3	PL	M/F	<i>xall-u</i>	'They allowed'

**Table 2. The Imperfective Paradigm of *xalla***

Person	Number	Gender	Inflected form	Basic notion
1	SG	M/F	<i>a-xalli</i>	'I allow'
1	PL	M/F	<i>n-xalli</i>	'We allow'
2	SG	M	<i>t-xalli</i>	'You allow'
2	SG	F	<i>t-xalli</i>	'You allow'
2	PL	M/F	<i>t-xall-un</i>	'You allow'
3	SG	M	<i>y-xalli</i>	'He allows'
3	SG	F	<i>t-xalli</i>	'She allows'
3	PL	M/F	<i>y-xall-u</i>	'They allow'

**Table 3. The Imperative Paradigm of *xalla***

Person	Number	Gender	Inflected form	Basic notion
2	SG	M/F	<i>xall-i</i>	'You allow'
2	PL	M/F	<i>xall-u</i>	'You allow'

Notice that all the subject pronouns appearing under the three Basic notion columns in the paradigms are indicated by the agreement morphemes. The basic notion of the verb *xalla* in HA indicates the act of allowing something/someone to do something or act in a specific way as the examples in (2a-d) show. Notice that the colon diacritic */:* following vowel sounds indicates the length of the vowels.

- 2 a. *b-a-xall-i:-k* *t-sa:fir* *maʕ-na*  
 FUT-IMPF.1sg-allow-1sg-2sg.M 2sg.M-travel with-1pl  
 'I will allow you to travel with us.'
- b. *b-a-xall-i:-ha* *t-sa:fir* *maʕ-na*  
 FUT- IMPF.1sg-allow-1sg-3sg.F 3sg.F-travel with-1pl  
 'I will allow her to travel with us.'
- c. *xalla-it-ak* *t-sa:fir* *maʕ-na*  
 PF.allow-1sg-2sg.M 2sg.M-travel with-1pl  
 'I allowed you to travel with us.'
- d. *xalla-it-ha* *t-sa:fir* *maʕ-na*  
 PF.allow-1sg-3sg.F 3sg.F-travel with-1pl  
 'I allowed her to travel with us.'

The examples in (2a-d) show the perfective and imperfective forms of the verb *xalla* along with their inflectional properties indicating the grammatical features of tense, aspect, voice, person, number and gender. The basic notion of the verb *xalla* in these examples is permission/allowing. Further to this basic notion, the verb can be used in a causative function as in (3).

- 3 a. *b-a-xall-i:-k* *t-tʕallam*  
 FUT-IMPF.1sg-make-1sg-2sg.M 2sg.M-learn  
 'I will get you to learn.'(causative reading)
- b. *xalla-it-ha* *t-ħus* *b-ilmasu:liyāh*  
 PF.made-1sg-3sg.F 3sg.F-feel P-responsibility  
 'I got her to feel the responsibility.'  
 'I had her feel the responsibility.'

Both the perfective and imperfective forms in (3) express a causative meaning; this implies an extension of the verb's basic notion of permission. The verb is used in other general contexts where its meaning is extended to cover other interpretations. Furthermore to this causative-meaning extension, context generalization cases are provided with the imperative form of *xalla* in (4).

- 4 a. *xall-i* *Nada* *t-uktub*  
 let-2sg Nada 3sg.F-write  
 'Let Nada write.'
- b. *xall-i* *al-maḍʕar* *yi-wagif*  
 wait-2sg D-rain 3sg.M-stop  
 'Let the rain stop.'
- c. *xall-i:-h* *lain* *bukrah*  
 leave.2sg-3sg.M until tomorrow  
 'Leave it/Wait until tomorrow.'
- d. *xall-i:-h* *maa* *yxa:lif*  
 allow-2sg-3sg.M Neg matter  
 'It's fine/OK.'
- e. *xall-i* *al-ixtiba:r* *bukrah*  
 make-2sg D-exam tomorrow  
 'Make the exam tomorrow.'
- f. *Ali* *maa gidir* *yu-k-tub,* *xall* *ba:gi Sami*  
 Ali Neg M.3sgM. 3sg.M-write, let alone still Sami  
 'Ali couldn't write, let alone Sami.'
- g. *xall-ak* *hina*  
 be-2sg.M here  
 "Stay here."

The example in (4a) can be causative, but it can also be used in different scenarios to convey different meanings. It can give permission for Nada to write, an obligation to the addressee that Nada should write, or a suggestion to the addressee to invite Nada to write. What we may assume in these causative and modal senses is that the addressee may have authority upon Nada to cause her, allow her, oblige her or invite her to write. This, however, is not the case in (4b) where neither the speaker nor the addressee can stop the rain. The meaning here can be a suggestion or a request from the speaker

to the addressee to wait until the rain stops. In like fashion, in (4c) the speaker asks the addressee to ‘leave it, wait’ until tomorrow. The examples in (4b-c) present cases where the basic meaning of the verb has extended to cover suggestion or request interpretations. Example (4d) exhibits another meaning where the speaker expresses his acceptance/satisfaction. In this example one can consider the verb as a particle to convey the meaning of ‘allow it, leave it’. In (4e), we can suggest a scenario where some students are asking their teacher to make the exam tomorrow instead of today as they haven’t prepared well. While the examples in (4a-e) can employ the other forms of the verb *xalla*, the examples in (4f-g) are particular to the imperative form *xall*. Examples (4f-g) show that *xall* conveys the meanings of ‘let alone’ and ‘be/stay’ respectively.

The salient point that one can draw from the examples in (4a-g) is that they provide clear evidence for further meaning extension cases. That is, they exhibit more semantic meanings to the verb in question beside its permission and causative meanings expressed in (2a-d) and (3a-b).

In relation to the morphosyntactic properties of the verb, the above examples show that the verb inflects and that the subject of the verb is indicated by the inflections signifying the phi features. However, the verb can also show a different case where the plural inflectional suffix *-na* can refer to third person singular features as in (5).

- 5 a. *xall-i:-na n-uktub*  
 let-2sg.1pl 1pl-write  
 ‘Let us write.’  
 ‘lets write’ = ‘let me write.’
- b. *xall-i:-na n-sa:ʕid-ak*  
 let-2sg.1pl 1pl-help-2sg.M  
 ‘Let us help you.’  
 ‘Lets help you.’ = ‘let me help you.’
- c. *xall-i:-na ana wa Ali n-sa:ʕid-ak*  
 let-2sg.1pl I and Ali 1pl-help-2sg.M  
 ‘Let us Ali and I help you.’

Both (5a) and (5b) show the third person plural suffix *-na* and this is compatible with the first translation of each example. However, the second translation of each example shows that *-na* can be used to refer to first person singular subject. This reference implies some ambiguity. Notwithstanding, the ambiguity resulted by (5a-b) can be solved by emphasizing the plural object

of *xall-i-na*, as in (5c), by a referring expression such as *ana wa Ali* (I and Ali). Thus, the referring expression reinforces the meaning that *-na* is a plural marker. This analysis is not unusual, and it is on a par with the use of the English *lets* (without an apostrophe) as shown in (6) and (7), adopted from Hopper and Traugott (2003: 10).

6. “*Lets* give you a hand. (i.e., let me give you a hand.)”

7. “Let’s *you and I* take ‘em on for a set.”

Quirk *et al.* (1985: 830) argue that the *lets* here is “no more than an introductory particle”. The presence of the first person plural in (7) is reinforced by *you and I*, and in this case the verb appears with an apostrophe: *let’s*.

With reference to the four chains, examples (4a-e) and (5a-c) demonstrate desemanticization, i.e., they clearly show the semantic shift that unequivocally features the extension of the basic notion to other notions in other general contexts. Desemanticization is the first shift in a grammaticalization process. It involves a shift in meaning, which occurs only in a highly specific context (Hopper & Traugott, 1993, 2003). Stated differently, the contextualized scenario due to the frequent use in other contexts gives the rise for the appropriate interpretation, be it permission, obligation, suggestion or request. In this connection, the element undergoes the conceptual shift that Hopper and Traugott (2003: 51) describe as the first obligatory step in grammaticalization. The conceptual shift that we have noticed is actually triggered by the semantic generality of the verb, which is an important semantic property for its grammaticalization (Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 101). What the semantic generality implies is that lexical meanings that are subject to undergo grammaticalization are “quite general” and “basic words”, but not very specific and specialized terms such as *whisper*, *chortle* or *squirm* (ibid). The semantic generality of the verb of question is evident and it has shown that it is a quite general and basic word whose basic notion has been extended to cover a range of other meanings.

Further to this conceptual shift, other frequent uses of the verb provide ample evidence for extending its basic meaning to adhortative — suggestion/encouraging interpretations, again, in a highly specific context. This latter meaning has more

grammaticalization features as shown next in examples (8) through (12).

The decategorialization of the verb is witnessed in (5) where the use of *xall-i:-na* ‘you-let-us’ refers to first person singular in a context expressing adhortative meaning. Thus, in addition to the foregoing semantic shift, (5) shows a morphosyntactic shift where the verb has lost some morphological and syntactic properties of its grammatical category. That is, the verb *xall* selects for the plural suffix *-na* not to indicate a speaker with first plural agreement features, but with first person singular features. This exhibits a remarkable stage of the grammaticalization of the verb of question as shown in (8).

- 8 a. *xall-i:-na*    *n-uktub*  
 let-2sg.1pl    1pl-write  
 ‘(You) let me write.’  
*xall-u:-na*    *n-uktub*  
 let-2pl.1pl    1pl-write  
 ‘(You all) let me write.’

The paradigm in *Table 3* shows that there are only two imperative forms, which are used in (8a-b). Using Quirk *et al*’s (1985: 830) expression, these two imperative forms can be used as “introductory particles” with first person singular reference although they exhibit the plural suffix *-na*. This being the case, the previously mentioned features of the plural suffix *-na*, as well as the person, number and gender agreement morphemes *-i-* and *-u-*, represented in *Table 3*, are lost as shown in the different verb forms in (9a-c). One can consider the first person plural features expressed by *-na* frozen. Therefore, from now on, I gloss the verb *xall* as PRT (particle) without any hyphens.

- 9 a. *xalləna*    *n-uktub*  
 PRT        1pl-write  
 b. *xənnə*    *n-uktub*  
 PRT        1pl-write  
 c. *xən-n-uktub*  
 PRT.1pl-write  
 ‘Let me write.’

The example in (9a) shows a morphophonological shift where the agreement morphemes *-i-* and *-u-* have shifted to the schwa sound /ə/ that is followed by the plural suffix *-na* (*xalləna*). (9b) shows another morphophonological shift in which more sounds have been deleted so the resulting form is *xənnə*. (9c) presents another stage where the form has been reduced to *xən* and encliticized to the

lexical verb following it. Notice that (9a-c) have the same translation: “let me write”. The linguistic shifts that the verb has undergone are represented in (10).

10. *xall-i:-ni* > *xall-i:-na* AND *xall-u:-na* > *xalləna* > *xənnə*  
 > *xən*

In addition to the cliticization shift, the linear representation in (10) also shows the fourth shift: erosion, in which the verb, as suggested by Heine (1993: 56), has lost its phonological substance and does not carry distinctive tone or stress. If this analysis is right, the paper argues that *xən* functions as an introductory particle basegenerated in the left periphery of the clause after it has been stripped out from its basic notion, morphosyntactic and morphophonological features.

So far, the grammaticalization process of the imperative form of the verb *xall* and its agreement features *xall-i:-na* and *xall-u:-na* shows that its use to indicated permission and obligation has extended to other more frequent uses that result in both semantic and morphosyntactic shifts. Following these two shifts, there are two other successive shifts, namely– the cliticization and erosion shifts where the verb functions as an independent constituent separate from its following constituents and then develops into a first person singular proclitic that has lost its phonological properties as shown in (10). These shifts are on a par with Bybee and Pagliuca’s (1985: 76) claim that “as the meaning generalizes and the range of uses widens the frequency increases and this leads automatically to phonological reduction and perhaps fusion”. Further to this, the grammaticalization of the expressions *xalli:na* and *xall-u:-na* to *xən* can be traced via the cline of grammaticality, represented in (1), where *xən* has been grammaticalized from the basic-form content item *xalla* into the grammatical element *xən*.

Evidence for the grammaticalization of *xall-i:-ni* ‘you-let-me’ into the introductory particle *xən* springs from the fact that the particle *xən* can also be used in examples where its following lexical verb carries first person singular features as is presented in (11a), which is the counterpart of (9c) above.



- 11 a. *xən-a-ktub*  
 PRT.1sg-write  
 ‘Let me write.’
- b. *xən-a-xalli:kum*                      *tu-ktub-u*  
 PRT- IMPF.1sg-make-1sg-2pl 2pl.IMPF-write-2pl  
 ‘Let me make you write.’  
 ‘Let me allow you to write.’
- c. \**xən-t-uktub*  
 PRT.1sg-write
- d. *xall-i:-na*              *a-ktub*  
 let-2sg.1pl              1sg-write

In HA, a speaker may convey the meaning of “let me write” by uttering the statement in (9c) above, which has the first person plural morpheme *n-* attached to the verb *-uktub* ‘write’ = (*n-uktub*) [literally ‘we-write’], or the statement in (11a), which has the first person singular morpheme *a-* attached to the verb *-ktub* ‘write’ = (*a-ktub*) [literally ‘I-write’]. It should be mentioned that while *a-ktub* [literally ‘I-write’] can follow the grammaticalized form *xən*, i.e., the introductory particle, it cannot follow the form *xall-i:-na* [literally ‘you-let-us’] since the agreement features of the two verbal forms are incompatible. This fact provides another piece of evidence for the grammaticalization of *xən*.

Another piece of evidence supporting the argument of the grammaticalization of *xən* is the fact that it can be followed by any perfective/imperfective form derived from its basic-form content item *xalla*, introduced in *Table 1* and *Table 2*, as shown in (11b). In this latter example, both the grammaticalized element *xən* functioning as an introductory particle and the imperfective form *a-xalli:kum* co-occur. In (11b) the introductory particle *xən* conveys the adhortative interpretation (suggestion), whereas *a-xalli:kum*, according to its context, may convey either the causative interpretation or permission. Further to this analysis, (11b) also shows that the grammaticalization of *xən* does not eliminate the lexical derivatives introduced in *Table 1* and *Table 2*. This shows the “divergence” (Hopper & Traugott, 2003: 118) or “split” (Heine & Reh, 1984: 57) characteristic of the basic form *xalla* (and its derivatives) in that it still exists in the dialect and may undergo more grammaticalization cases.

On the flip side, the particle *xən* has been grammaticalized as a first person singular proclitic. However, it is not used for other persons (second or third). This explains the ungrammaticality of (11c). At the present juncture, it is worth reiterating that grammaticalization is a continuous process

and grammaticalized elements do not stop at a specific stage as they may “continue to develop new grammatical functions” (2003: 5). This claim is evidenced in HA by Al Zahrani’s (2020: 176) argument asserting that although the HA grammaticalized elements *b-* and *raah* developed as future markers, they continued to develop other hypothetical functions. This being said, there are signs that *xən* can be used for other persons if and only if an adverbial element or a pronominal expression intermediates between the introductory particle *xən* and the verb carrying the agreement features of the second/third person as the examples in (12) illustrate.

- 12 a. *xən awal Somaya t-uktub*  
 PRT first Somaya 3sg.F-write  
 ‘Let, first, Somaya write (then...).’
- b. *xən bukraḥ al-awla:d y-sa:fir-u*  
 PRT tomorrow D-boys 3pl-travel-pl  
 ‘Let, tomorrow, the boys travel.’
- c. *xən aḥam shai int/intum t-sa:fir/u*  
 PRT tomorrow D-boys 2sg.M/3pl-travel/pl  
 ‘Let, the more important thing, you(sg)/you(pl) travel.’

(12) clearly shows the function of the element *xən* as an introductory particle in the left edge of the clause introducing the proposition following it. In these examples *xən* appears with verbs carrying second and third person agreement features.

So far we have seen the linguistic behaviour of the verb *xall* across the four chains (shifts), and how it has developed some grammatical constituents through its grammaticalization journey, one of which is *xən* that serves as an introductory particle. The next subsection explore the PPs *ʕla asa:s* and *ila al-sa:ʕah*.

#### 4.2 The Prepositional Phrases *ʕla asa:s* and *ila al-sa:ʕah*

I briefly show that these two PPs have gone through some linguistic shifts that resulted in the two grammaticalized elements *ʕsəs* and *lissaʔ*. The expression *ʕla asa:s* is composed of the preposition *ʕla* ‘on, upon’ and the noun *asa:s* ‘base, basis, core, fundamental’ that constitute the preposition phrase (PP) [<sub>pp</sub> *ʕla asa:s*] meaning ‘on the basis of, on the fundamental that’. In like fashion, [<sub>pp</sub> *ila al-sa:ʕah*] is built from the preposition *ila* ‘to’ and *alsa:ʕah* ‘moment, hour, time’ and conveys the meaning of ‘to the moment of’.

The literal use of the lexical phrase *ʕla asa:s* ‘on



a base' and its plural variant *ʕla usus* 'on bases' refers to concrete bases/objects as in (13).

- 13 a. *al-bait ʕla asa:s mati:n*  
 D-house P basis strong  
 'The house is on a strong basis.'  
 b. *al-bait ʕla usus mati:n-ah*  
 D-house P bases strong  
 'The house is on strong bases.'

This literal interpretation of the content phrase *ʕla asa:s* and its plural variant becomes more generalized when used metaphorically. Traugott and Dasher (2002: 27) argue that desemanticization happens when metaphorical uses are involved. The illustration of this claim is shown by the phrases in (14a-b) where the PPs do not refer to concrete objects.

- 14 a. *ʕla asa:s aluxuwah*  
 P basis brotherhood  
 'On the basis of the brotherhood.'  
 b. *ʕla asa:s alsʕħbah*  
 P basis friendship  
 'On the basis of the friendship.'

Recalling that context generalization gives rise to expanding the frequency of the expression, examples (14a-b) present context generalization cases wherein the basic meaning of the PP *ʕla asa:s* is extended to cover other contexts. By way of illustration, the basic meaning of a physical base, as in (13), is extended to metaphorically cover more abstract bases: *aluxuwah* 'brotherhood' and *alsʕħbah* 'friendship'. The NPs that can replace the abstract bases (14a-b) to convey metaphoric interpretations are definitely infinite and this suggests a high frequent usage of the PP. The metaphorical use of the PP is in the vein of Heine and Kuteva's (2002) argument asserting that in grammaticalization concrete meanings are developed to more abstract concepts, and this is due to the semantic generality of the expression.

Both the extension of the basic notion of a concrete basis and the frequent metaphorical uses of the PP *ʕla asa:s* trigger the semantic shift. This conclusion is corroborated by the two interrelated interpretations of cause and purpose illustrated by (15a-b) respectively.

- 15 a. *sa:maħt-uh ʕla asa:s inn-uh*  
 forgave-3sg.M P basis C-3SG.M  
*maa yi-dri*  
 NEG 3sg.M-know  
 'I forgave him on the basis that he did not know.'  
 = 'I forgave him because he did not know.'

- b. *sa:maħt-uh ʕla asa:s inn-uh*  
 forgave-3sg.M P basis C-3SG.M  
*maa yi-ʕi:d-ha*  
 NEG 3sg.M-repeat-3sg.F  
 'I have forgiven him on the basis that he does not do it again.' = 'I have forgiven him so that he does not do it again.'

Example (15a) shows the cause for the forgiveness whereas (15b) shows the purpose behind the forgiveness. Both cause and purpose are interpreted by the same PP expression *ʕla asa:s*. In their product of ten years of research, Heine and Kuteva (2002) have provided hundreds of grammaticalized elements, some of which are elements functioning as subordinators of cause and purpose clauses (see Heine and Kuteva (2002: 210-213)) as is the case with the HA element in question. Following Heine and Kuteva's (2002) argument, the cause and purpose interpretations must have evolved significantly from the quite frequent usage of this PP, which in turn results in the semantic shift (desemanticization) featuring the meaning extension and the metaphoric usage of the PP *ʕla asa:s*.

With reference to the cline of grammaticality, represented in (1) above, the grammaticalization journey of the PP *ʕla asa:s* can be summarized as in the linear development in (16).

16. *ʕla asa:s > ʕlasa:s > ʕasa:s > ʕasəs > (ʕ)səs*

What this linear development shows along with the metaphorical interpretations in (15a-b) is that Stage 1 in (16) started with two separate elements forming the PP. That is, the content item *asa:s* is basically selected as a complement by the preposition *ʕla* (Stage 1) that has been agglutinated to its complement (Stage 2). This latter stage discloses that the two elements have been united to create one syntactic unit functioning as a subordinate conjunction. The agglutinating process has resulted in a new grammatical element: a subordinator of cause and purpose. This process shows a morphosyntactic shift (decategorialization) by which the PP category has vanished, and this accounts for the ungrammaticality of (17) where I gloss the subordinator of cause and purpose as SUBO.

- 17 \**al-bait ʕlasa:s mati:n*  
 D-house SUBO strong

The decategorialization of [<sub>PP</sub> *ʕla asa:s*] is reflected in the fact that the element *ʕlasa:s* has undergone some changes by which it has lost some of its morphosyntactic properties and lost the privileges of the original PP category; hence, it cannot function as a PP as shown by the ill-formed clause in (17).

By pointing out that the phonological reduction follows the conceptual shift (Heine, 2003: 52), the reduced form *ʕlasa:s* is precluded when *ʕla asa:s* is used in its lexical meaning; this is supported by the ungrammaticality of (17). The preclusion of reduced forms is further evidenced by the fact that while the grammaticalized elements in (16) can replace the grammaticalized expression *ʕla asa:s* in (15a-b), only the lexical meaning of the PP *ʕla asa:s* is allowed in (17), as is the case in (13a-b). This suggests that there are two expressions: the grammaticalized *ʕla asa:s* that serves a grammatical function (Cf. the cause and purpose function in (15a-b)), and the lexical *ʕla asa:s* that expresses the basic lexical notion of a concrete base (Cf. (13a-b)). This linguistic paradox of precluding the reduced forms from conveying lexical meanings can be further supported by examples from English where the ungrammaticality of (18d) is attributed to the fact that the reduced grammaticalized constituent *is gonna* in (18c) cannot express the lexical meaning of *is going to* in (18a), although *is going to* can also function as a grammatical expression as in (18b) (examples adopted from Heine (2003: 51)).

- 18 “a. *John is going to town soon.*”  
 “b. *John is going to get sick soon.*”  
 “c. *John is gonna get sick soon.*”  
 “d. \**John is gonna town soon.*”

(18) shows that there are the lexical expression *is going to* indicating a physical movement/motion and the grammatical expression *is going to* marking grammatical features.

Following the semantic and morphosyntactic shifts, the final product in (16) (Stage 5) provides ample evidence for the other grammaticalization chains. To unravel this claim, recall that the agglutination of *ʕlasa:s* in Stage 2 results in the deletion of the final vowel of the preposition *ʕla*. Following this process, Stage 3 of the linear development in (16) shows a morphophonological shift (cliticization) by which the remaining part of the preposition *ʕla* is further reduced into the proclitic *ʕ-* that is cliticized into the noun *asa:s* and thus resulting in

*ʕasa:s*. By this stage, the resulting structure *ʕasa:s* shows an independent constituent that is discrete from the original PP.

Further to these grammaticalization chains, the final two stages (Stage 4 and Stage 5) exhibit the pure cause and purpose subordinate forms *ʕasas / (ʕ)sas* that no longer convey the lexical meaning of *ʕla asa:s*. Beside the previous phonetic reductions that happened simultaneously with agglutination, these two stages clearly show the phonetic shift (erosion) that the constituent has undergone. Stage 4 has two instances of the schwa sound whereas Stage 5 shows only the final schwa with the possibility of the deletion of the voiced pharyngeal fricative sound: the clitic *ʕ-*. These two stages demonstrate how in the phonetic shift the lexical content loses its phonological substance and does not carry distinctive tone or stress (Heine, 1993: 56).

Having discussed the grammaticalization of the cause and purpose subordinate conjunction across the four chains and seen its linguistic behaviour as a grammaticalized element, the section now shifts to the PP *lisa:ʕah* ‘to the moment’.

To avoid repeating the facts discussed so far and to be more succinct, I start by the linear development in (19) that I assume the PP *lisa:ʕah* has gone through to develop the adverbial negative element *lissa?* ‘not yet’.

19. *laa lisa:ʕah* > *laa-lissa?* > *lisa:ʔ-(X)* > *lissa(?)*

The grammaticality development of *lissa?* represented in (19) suggests that it started out as a negated PP constituent: *laa lisa:ʕah* ‘no, to this moment, to the moment of’. Underlyingly, this stage shows the negative *laa* ‘no’, the preposition *li-* ‘to’ and the noun phrase *al-sa:ʕah* ‘moment/time/hour’ = [<sub>NEG</sub> *laa* [<sub>PP</sub> *li* [<sub>NP</sub> *al-sa:ʕah*]]. Notice that the lexical meaning of the PP *lisa:ʕah* ‘to this moment, to the moment of’ can be used in affirmative and negative statements as shown in (20).

- 20 a. *ana mistani lisa:ʕah thi/xamsah*  
 I waiting to-moment this/five  
 ‘I have been waiting until this moment/five o’clock.’  
 b. *maa katab lisa:ʕah thi/xamsah*  
 NEG wrote to-moment this/five  
 ‘He has not written until this moment/five o’clock.’

Semantically, the NP *lisa:ʕah* is frequently used to cover a variety of time slots including ‘to this

moment’, ‘to this hour’, ‘to this time’ and ‘to that time’. Apart from the lexical use, (19) shows that the constituent *lisa:ʔah* is in the domain of the negative particle and this entails that it cannot occur in affirmative clauses (see example (21) below).

Stage 2 of the linear development in (19) exhibits the morphosyntactic shift in which the negative particle *laa* is agglutinated to its complement and thus resulting in *laalisa:ʔ*. This stage also features the deletion of the intrinsic gender marker *-ah*. It is intrinsic because the gender inflection in *al-sa:ʔah* is grammatically inherent in the derivation of the noun form. This is not the case when the gender is contextualized as in adjectives such as *hilw-ah* ‘beautiful.F’ and *hilu* ‘beautiful.M’. Against this background, unlike adjectives, the deletion of the intrinsic feminine marker does not derive a counterpart masculine noun. In spite of this morphological analysis, the grammaticalization of the constituent *laalisa:ʔ* featuring the deletion of the intrinsic gender marker *-ah* has allowed for suffixing all subject agreement markers. Put it another way, Stage 3 of the grammaticalization development of *laa lisa:ʔah* introduces the constituent *lisa:ʔ-(X)* where (X) represents the subject accusative agreement suffixes shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 The subject agreement markers in *lisa:ʔ*-**

Inflected form	Translation
<i>lisa:ʔ-i</i>	‘I haven’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-na</i>	‘we haven’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-ak</i>	‘you (M.sg) haven’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-ik</i>	‘you (F.sg) haven’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-akum</i>	‘you (Pl) haven’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-uh</i>	‘he hasn’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-ha</i>	‘she hasn’t’
<i>lisa:ʔ-hum</i>	‘they haven’t’

The paradigm suggests that the subject agreement markers can be suffixed to *lisa:ʔ*, and by deduction the form *lisa:ʔ* can stand alone without any agreement markers when it is nonreferential, which is the resulting constituent in Stage 4 of the grammaticalization development of *laa lisa:ʔah* = *lissa(ʔ)*. Notice that Stage 4 also features the possibility of the deletion of the voiced pharyngeal fricative sound ʕ; hence, it is represented in brackets in (19). The deletion of the agreement markers is not infrequent in HA; for example the adverbial time expression *taww* ‘just’ can take the agreement markers represented in Table 4: *taww-i* ‘I

have just’, *taww-na* ‘we have just’... etc. Besides, other functional elements can take these agreement markers and can stand alone without them such as the prepositions *l-*, *fi*, and *ʔan*, to mention a few. Against such a backdrop, the element *lisa:ʔ-* is considered a functional element at this stage and it can behave in such a way. It is worth mentioning that Stage 4 exhibits the grammaticalized form *lissa(ʔ)* ‘not yet’ which underlyingly features the agglutination of the negative particle *laa*. Hence, negation constitutively forms an underlying principle ingredient of the grammaticalized element *lissa(ʔ)*, as illustrated by the examples in (21).

- 20 a. *katab-t*                      *al-risa:lah?*  
 wrote-2sg.M    D-letter  
 ‘Have you written the letter?’  
 b. *lissa*  
 ‘not yet’  
 c. *maa*    *katab-t*                      *al-risa:lah; lissa*  
 NEG    wrote-2sg.M    D-letter;    *not yet*  
 ‘I haven’t written the letter. Not yet!’  
 d. *\*i:h!*    *katab-t*                      *al-risa:lah; lissa*  
 Yes!    wrote-2sg.M    D-letter;    *not yet*

In (21b) the grammaticalized negative-adverbial element *lissa* ‘not yet’ provides the negative response to the question in (21a). This negative-adverbial element features an intrinsic negative interpretation and this explains why it is compatible with negative clauses as in (21c), but not with affirmative clauses as in (21d).

With reference to the cline of grammaticality, represented in (1) above, our discussion has clearly shown that *lissa(ʔ)* ‘not yet’ has developed from the negated content NP *laa lisa:ʔah* meaning ‘no, to this moment, to the moment of, to the hour of, to this time, to this hour’. However, the other stages of the cline of grammaticality are not witnessed here, i.e., *lissa* does not serve as a clitic or an inflectional affix. The following section concludes the paper.

**V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present study shows that the forms *xən*, *ʕsəs* and *lissa* have evolved from the verb *xalla*, the preposition phrases *ʕla asa:s* and *ila al-sa:ʕah* respectively. Presumably, the gradual development of these elements has presented changes related to the different linguistic chains. That is to say, the forms have been grammaticalized through the cline of grammaticality exhibiting desemanticization (semantic shift), decategorialization



(morphosyntactic shift), cliticization (morphophonological shift) and erosion (phonetic shift).

The paper has shown that the grammatical element *xən* functioning as an introductory particle has evolved from the content verb *xall* ‘notion of allowing’. While the content verb form and its perfective, imperfective and imperative derivatives inflect for the grammatical features of tense, aspect, voice, person, number and gender, the evolved element *xən* does not.

The grammatically functioning cause and purpose conjunction particle *ʕasa:s* has evolved from the PP *ʕla asa:s*. In like fashion, the negative adverbial element *lissəʕ* ‘not yet’ has evolved through a grammaticalization journey from the negated PP constituent [<sub>NEG</sub> *laa* [<sub>PP</sub> *lisa:ʔah*].

The paper is a contribution, on the one hand, to the growing literature of HA in that it helps gain a

better understanding of the dialect. On the other hand, it contributes generally to the linguistic phenomenon of grammaticalization in that it enriches the literature exploring the elements changing through the cline of grammaticality and undergoing the four linguistic shifts. However, because the paper has only looked at three elements, future research on HA may explore more grammaticalized elements by which other studies may explore the features of all the elements that have gone through (or towards) the grammaticality pole.

Further studies may also investigate HA and English causative expressions. They may compare the ways of causative expressions in English with the facts of HA, briefly shown in this paper, to make such HA expressions more familiar to the expert interested in grammaticalization but ignorant of HA.

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