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Multiple exponence: sometimes two is better than one

In this talk, I will discuss three cases of Multiple Exponence. Multiple Exponence is defined as the occurrence of multiple realizations of a single morpho-semantic feature in a domain (Caballero & Harris 2012: 165). Multiple Exponence is viewed as a problem for morphological as well as semantic composition, since it involves a redundant exponent, i.e. , one additional form in a linguistic expression without additional meaning. The three case studies I will discuss from a cross-linguistic perspective are: i) double causatives, ii) double plurals, and iii) double comparatives. On the basis of these three cases and enriching the empirical domain by adding code-switching data, I will argue that there are no redundant exponents: Multiple exponents actually reflect the building blocks in the composition of complex units. I will show that Multiple Exponence provides a window into the complex relationship between a) grammar components, and b) semantic features and their lexicalization across and within languages/language varieties.