

COMPOUND-SIMPLEX VERBAL
ITERATION IN PLAUTUS

The use of a simple verb with the meaning of a preceding compound verb is now widely recognized as a feature of several Indo-European languages, including Latin and Greek; it is quite possible that the usage descends from the original Indo-European tongue itself.¹ In the case of Latin, Housman, Clausen, and Fraenkel have provided the documentation.² Clausen describes the usage as "a native feature of Latin."³ Fraenkel observes, "Diese Art der Wiederaufnahme hat an sich mit poetischer Sprache nichts zu tun; sie gehört der Sprache des Lebens an. . . ."⁴ Watkins agrees: "It will be observed that the authors cited above . . . quite correctly attribute this feature to genuine popular speech; in no wise can it be considered by origin a purely literary phenomenon."⁵

Such is the consensus. What is the evidence? Of over sixty Latin examples hitherto adduced, only one comes from prose—*Twelve Tables* 8. 12: "si im occisit, iure caesus esto" (cited by Fraenkel). An archaic legal document is good evidence for a native feature of the language, perhaps less decisive for "popular speech." Of the other examples the great majority come from poets of the first century B.C. and later (Lucretius, Catullus, Vergil, Horace, Propertius, Ovid, Manilius, Seneca, Lucan, Martial, *Priapea*). This evidence is ambiguous, since the possibility that in these poets the construction is a Grecism cannot be absolutely excluded.⁶ What remains? Plautus (seven examples), Ennius (one example), Pacuvius (two examples), Terence (three examples). In the case of Ennius and Pacuvius, and perhaps even of Terence (?), one could attempt to explain the usage as a literary Grecism. Plautus therefore provides our best proof that compound-simplex verbal iteration was in fact a feature of everyday Latin speech. Additional documentation from him would be useful.⁷

1. For the evidence and bibliography, see esp. C. Watkins, "An Indo-European Construction in Latin and Greek," *HSCP* 71 (1966): 115–19; and my *Greek Textual Criticism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 77–85 and *Studies in Greek Texts*, Hypomnemata, vol. 43 (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 11 ff.

2. A. E. Housman (ed.), *M. Manilii "Astronomicum" libri*² (Cambridge, 1937), ad 1. 271, 3. 122, 3. 328. Wendell Clausen, "Silva Coniecturarum," *AJP* 76 (1955): 49–51; idem, rev. of P. J. Enk, *AJP* 86 (1965): 97–98. Eduard Fraenkel, "Zum Text der Vögel von Aristophanes," *Kleine Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* (Rome, 1964), 1:441–42 (= H. Dählmann and R. Merkelbach [eds.], *Studien zur Textgeschichte und Textkritik* [Cologne, 1959], pp. 20–22).

3. Review of Enk, p. 97.

4. "Zum Text der Vögel," p. 441.

5. "I-E Construction," p. 117.

6. In raising this difficulty I am setting up no straw man; the possibility of such Grecisms is not merely theoretical. There still survives a clear instance where a Roman poet has employed compound-simplex verbal iteration in conscious imitation of his Greek model. An undergraduate student of mine at Boston College, Robert Loplatto, pointed out to me that the sequence in Vergil *Ecl.* 3. 29 ff. ("ego hanc vitulam . . . depono . . . non ausim quicquam deponere . . . pocula ponam . . .") is modeled directly on Theocritus 8. 11 ff. (. . . καταθεῖναι ἄεθλον . . . καταθεῖναι ἄεθλον . . . θησεύμεσθ' . . . μόσχον ἐγὼ θησῶ . . . οὐ θησῶ ποκα ἀμνόν κτλ.) In response to my inquiry, Wendell Clausen courteously informed me *per litteras* that he too had observed this imitation, but that, so far as he knew, no scholar had noted it in print.

7. Lest there be any misunderstanding: I do not intend to suggest in any way that Clausen, Fraenkel, and Watkins were unjustified in concluding, on the basis of their evidence, that this linguistic feature belonged to genuine popular speech. Their judgment was certainly correct. The purpose of this paper is (a) to point out that most (not all) of their examples could, theoretically, admit of another explanation; and (b) then to provide enough new and unambiguous examples to settle the matter.

The value of such Plautine evidence is obvious. The *comoediae* of Plautus constitute the oldest extant body of Latin of any real bulk and continuity. His language is clearly that of genuine spoken Latin. And Grecisms are out of the question: "Nor can we suppose that Graecisms were employed by Plautus, as by the Augustan poets . . . , to embellish his style. This is out of keeping with the colloquial tone of Comedy. . . . The imitation of a Greek construction is as suitable for the literary style of Augustan poetry as it is unsuitable for the every-day language of Plautus. . . ."⁸

Before adducing further examples from Plautus, I should like to call attention to an aspect of this construction which has been quite ignored—namely, that a simple verb may bear the force of a preceding compound verb even when there is change of speaker.⁹ One speaker "picks up" what another speaker has just said. In the following examples change of speaker is indicated by the letters A (= first speaker) and B (= second speaker).¹⁰

The Plautine Evidence

- Amph.* 368–69 A: . . . tunicis . . . huc *advenio* . . . B: . . . pedibus, non tunicis *venis* . . .
750–51 A: . . . huc *aspice*. / B: *specto*.¹¹
- Asin.* 285 A: . . . nostro *devincti* beneficio. B: *vinctos* nescioquos ait.
403–5 A: . . . *incedit*. / quisque . . . *occesserit* . . . B: . . . *cedit* (s.v.l.).
613 certum est *eficere* in me omnia eadem quae tu in te *faxis*.
- Aul.* 202–3 A: . . . *intervisam* domum. / B: quo abis? A: . . . *visam* domum (cited by Clausen).
255–56 A: . . . *despondes* filiam? B: illis legibus . . . A: *sponden* ergo?
754–55 A: . . . non *attactam* oportuit. / B: ergo quia sum *tangere* ausus . . .
- Bacch.* 358–59 . . . quom hoc senex *resciverit*, / quom se excucurrisset illuc frustra *sciverit* . . .
745 A: *adscribendum* etiam. B: loquere quid *scribam* modo.
980 A: *congregere*. B: *gradior* (cited by Fraenkel).
- Capt.* 65–66 . . . faciam ut pugnam *inspectet* non bonam, / adeo ut *spectare* postea omnis oderit (cited by Clausen).
123–24 A: . . . ut *praedicas*. / B: ita ut *dicis* . . .
- Cas.* 697 A: *exoret*. B: *orat*.
- Curc.* 493–94 A: . . . *commeminisse* ego haec volam te. / B: *memini* . . .
- Men.* 122–23 . . . virum *opervare* desines. / atque adeo, ne me nequiquam *erves* . . . (cited by Fraenkel).
- Merc.* 681 *disperii*, *perii* (cited by Clausen).
709 A: *disperii*. B: . . . *perii* (cited by Clausen).
- Miles* 476–77 A: . . . si *elocutus* essem ero? B: ergo, si sapis, / mussitabis: plus oportet scire servom quam *loqui*.
908–9 A: . . . volo <ted> *adsimulare*. B: fiat. A: . . . *simulare*.¹²

8. W. M. Lindsay, *Syntax of Plautus* (Oxford, 1907), pp. 2, 13.

9. I pointed this out, perhaps for the first time, in *Studies in Greek Texts*, pp. 45–46 (where I attempted to demonstrate, on the basis of this, something about the nature of the Theognidean corpus and cited, in passing, an example from Plautus).

10. In a few cases, one speaker uses the compound, then another speaker comments, then the original speaker uses the simplex. This does not seem to me essentially different from compound-simplex iteration with change of speaker.

11. Strictly, these are from distinct, but cognate, verbs. The principle is the same; compare, e.g., *Capt.* 65–66; *Most.* 835.

12. The text of 908 is doubtful; I give Lindsay's text. Despite this uncertainty, the compound verb seems to be accepted by all.

- 917-18 *constitutast* . . . bene *statutast*.
Most. 468 aedis ne *attigatis*. *tangite* . . .
 553-54 A: immo *pernegat*. / B: *negat* . . .
 843-44 . . . *circumduce* . . . nam egomet *ductarem*, nisi . . .
 1030-31 . . . *disperii* . . . *perii* . . .
 1169-72 A: . . . *remitte* quaeso . . . B: . . . A: *mitte* quaeso . . .
 1175-76 A: . . . sine ted *exorariet*. / B: nolo *ores*.
Pers. 214-15 A: . . . *confitere* ut te autumo? / B: *fatear* . . .
Poen. 61-64 alter *est emortuos* . . . qui *mortuost* . . .
 213-14 . . . forte si occeperis *exornare*, / neque umquam sat istae duae res *ornantur* . . .
 284-85 A: . . . *exornatae* ut simus. B: . . . *ornatae* sumus.
 710-11 A: . . . *inspectes* . . . B: quid est? . . . A: *specta* . . .
 726-27 A: . . . volo ergo vos *commeminisse* omnia . . . B: *meminimus*.
 1156-57 A: . . . filiam *despondeas*. / B: pactam rem habeto. A: *spondesne* igitur?
 1267-68 A: *omitte* . . . B: *mitto*.
 1397 A: *omitte* . . . B: *mitto* . . .
Pseud. 40 A: tace, dum tabellas *pellego*. B: ergo quin *legis*?
 61-63 A: sine *pellegam*. / B: sino . . . *lege*.
 517 *praedico* ut caveas. *dico*, inquam, ut caveas.
 531-33 siquidem . . . *perfeceris* . . . sed si non *faxis* . . .
 549-50 A: . . . *constitueram*. / B: . . . *statuisti* . . . (cited by Fraenkel).
 698-99 A: . . . benevolentem *adducerem* . . . B: . . . benevolentem *ducis* . . .
Rud. 89-90 . . . vos . . . *abduxi* . . . vos *duxi* . . .
 249 A: nunc *abire* hinc decet nos. B: quo, amabo, *ibimus*?
 250 A: litus hoc *persequamur*. B: *sequor* quo lubet.
 267-69 A: . . . *advectae* . . . sumus. / B: . . . estis *vectae*.
 480-81 . . . ut hanc *accipiat* urnam . . . *cape* hanc urnam . . .
 544-45 A: . . . *devoraturum* insulam? / B: . . . *voravit* . . .
Stich. 66-67 iam ego domi *adereo* . . . si quis me quaeret . . . iam egomet hic *ero*.
 211-12 . . . plurimae *demortuae*; . . . quas deflevi *mortuae* . . .
 266-68 *demiror* quid . . . *miror* quid . . .
Trin. 144-45 A: . . . id tibi *concedere*. / B: mihi quod *credideris* . . .
 387 nimio citius *transiges* . . . quod tu *egeris*.
 857 ut ille me *exornavit*, ita sum *ornatus*.
 1059 A: . . . *asta* ilico . . . B: . . . non *sto*.
 1156-57 A: filiam . . . *desponsatam* esse audio . . . B: *sponden* ergo . . .
 1173 . . . male *promerita* ut *merita* sunt . . .
Truc. 276 A: ne *attigas* me. B: egon te *tangam*?
 512 A: *consequere* . . . B: *sequor*.
 632-33 A: . . . *condoluit* caput. / B: . . . ancillae *dolent*.
 778-79 . . . sitis *confessae* . . . *fateamini*.

I have set out some sixty examples of compound-simplex verbal iteration in Plautus. That is a larger number of instances than the sum total of passages hitherto adduced from all other Latin authors. And these examples come from just that author whose evidence should count for most in establishing a usage as a genuine piece of old Latin popular speech. The Plautine statistics further suggest that this usage must have been extremely common in early Latin.¹³

13. The second volume of the Leumann-Hofmann-Szantyr *Lateinische Grammatik* has several confused and erroneous statements about compound-simplex verbal iteration; I take this oppor-

Simplex Verb Followed by Compound Verb

The opposite sequence, i.e., simplex verb followed by compound, also occurs frequently. Sometimes the sequence is merely coincidence; the simplex and following compound verb have distinct meanings and their occurrence together is to be explained solely by the demands of context. One category of simplex-compound sequence, however, is sufficiently interesting to be mentioned here; it consists of passages "in which the compound is used in conscious 'correction' of the simplex; the compound, being the stronger word, suggests that the preceding simplex has understated or inadequately emphasized the realities of the situation."¹⁴

Plautus makes frequent use of this device; here again we may safely assume that he has preserved, and artistically elaborated, a genuine native feature of old Latin. As with compound-simplex verbal iteration, so here there is great variety in its application. Sometimes there is change of speaker, sometimes not; the verbs may, but need not, be juxtaposed (with or without change of speaker). The intensifying, "corrective" force of the succeeding compound verb will be immediately apparent in many of the following examples:

- Amph.* 87-89 *ne miremini . . . quid? admiratin estis?*
 551 A: *age i tu secundum.* B: *sequor supsequor te.*
 645 *feram et perferam* usque . . .
 671-73 *si . . . cepero . . . si accepo . . .*
Aul. 764-65 A: *negas?* / B: *pernego immo.*
Bacch. 695 A: *vix videtur fieri posse.* B: *perge ac facile ecfeceris.*
 761-62 . . . *magnum molior negotium / metuoque ut hodie possim emolirier.*
 1059-61 A: *cape hoc tibi aurum . . .* B: *non equidem accipiam.*
Capt. 139 A: *ne fle.* B: *egone illum non fleam? egon non defleam . . .*
 295-96 . . . *hic fassust mihi; / haec tu eadem si confiteri vis . . .*
Cas. 705 *dic med uxorem orare ut exoret . . .*¹⁵

tunity to correct them. (I thank Wendell Clausen for calling my attention to these references.) (1) *P. 300, Zusatz*: "Wo im Altlatein Simplex und Kompos. unmittelbar nebeneinander stehen, liegt durchweg steigernde Häufung vor, darum meist das Simpl. an erster Stelle, z. B. *Plt. Amph. 645 feram et perferam*, *Poen. 221 poliri expoliri . . .*" (2) *P. 818 i* "Abwechslung zwischen Simplex und Kompositum. Ein spezieller Fall davon, nämlich die Verbindung von Simplex und Kompos. im Dienste der Steigerung (*αὔξησις*), wurde bereits oben . . . behandelt, ebda auch über den Typus mit Voranstellung des Kompos. Anders ist die Abwechslung in verschiedenen Sätzen (Gliedern), z. B. *Plt. Trin. 23 ff. castigare . . . concastigabo*, *Cic. Catil. 4, 1 perferrem, feram . . .*" A comparison of these two statements shows that no attempt is made to distinguish the meaning in cases where compound precedes simplex and in cases where simplex precedes the compound (on this latter usage, see pp. 246-47). And there is no hint at all that when the simplex follows it carries the semantic force of the compound! On the other hand a distinction is made between cases where simplex and compound (in either order) are juxtaposed and cases where they are not. Apparently *Steigerung* can only be present with juxtaposition. In fact, in neither order, compound-simplex or simplex-compound, does the separation of the two verbs by a word, a clause, or a sentence essentially affect the fundamental usage, as my examples show. That is to say, Leumann-Hofmann-Szantyr distinguish where they should not and fail to distinguish where they should. On their mistaken notions about the "literary" origins of compound-simplex iteration, see n. 18.

14. Despite Watkins' comment in "I-E Construction," p. 116, juxtaposition is not a "necessary condition" of the simplex-compound sequence, nor can it be in origin an "artificial feature." See *Studies in Greek Texts*, pp. 22 ff.

15. Plautine alliteration (*uxorem-exoret*) may be a factor here.

- Most.* 835 ad me *specta*, cornicem ut *conspicere* possies.
 907 ecquid *placeant* me rogas? immo hercle vero *perplacent*.
 1032 A: . . . *turbavit*? B: immo *exturbavit* omnia.
- Pers.* 176 *memini* et scio et calleo et *commemini*.
 761 . . . *facta* haec sunt quae volui *ecfieri*.
- Poen.* 221 *poliri*, *expoliri* . . .
 304–5 . . . magis *deceat* . . . magisque . . . *condeceat*.
 430 A: *i* modo. B: . . . A: *abi* modo.¹⁶
- Pseud.* 31 A: *lege* . . . B: immo enim *pellegam*.
 125–27 *dico* omnibus . . . omnibus amicis notisque *edico* meis . . .
 457–59 A: *statur* hic . . . B: statum vide hominis . . . C: bene confidenterque *astitisse* intellego.
 859 si quo hic *gradietur*, pariter *progreddimino*.
 936–37 . . . quantum tu tibi *optes*; / nam si *exoptem* . . .
 986–88 A: *nosce* imaginem . . . B: . . . A: . . . *cognosce* signum
 1221–22 A: . . . iam *morior*, Simo. / B: hercle te hau sinam *emoriri* . . .
 1230–31 A: . . . ut *solvam*. B: . . . C: . . . A: peregrinos *apsolvam* . . .
- Rud.* 53–57 . . . *suadere* . . . *persuadet*.
 459–61 . . . ut hanc *traxi* lubens! . . . ut sine labore hanc *extraxi*!
 720–21 A: . . . *tange* utramvis digitulo minimo modo. / B: quid si *attigero*?
 946–48 A: quin *loquere* quid vis. / B: . . . A: *eloquere* quid id est?
 1015 A: *mitte* rudentem . . . B: *mittam*. *omitte* vidulum.
 1219 et tua filia facito *oret*: facile *exorabit*.¹⁷
- Stich.* 326–27 A: quisnam . . . has *frangit* fores? . . . B: . . . A: ean gratia fores *ecfringis*?
- Trin.* 23, 26 *castigare* ob *meritam* noxiam . . . *concastigabo* pro *commerita* noxia . . .
 292 . . . *laudent* . . . *conlaudent*.
 954–57 . . . mi . . . *crederet* . . . mihi *concrederet* . . .
- Fragmenta*
 9–10 L. A: *sequere* . . . meam spem cupio *consequi*. / B. *sequor* . . . meam speratam *consequor*.
 87 L. A. . . . *specta* . . . B: iam *inspexi*.¹⁸

16. Cf. *Poen.* 424, 426; *Trin.* 583–91.

17. Note, however, 1218 *fac ut exores*.

18. I have already referred in n. 13 to certain errors in Leumann-Hofmann-Szantyr; I give here their most serious one, on the origin of these constructions. Pp. 789–90, *Zusätze c) α)* “Das bereits oben . . . erwähnte Nebeneinander von Simplex und Kompos. . . ist schon bei Plt. häufig und findet sich bei ihm meist in den Cantica, also im gehobeneren Stil (vgl. noch z. B. Amph. 551 *sequor*, *subsequor* te, *Poen.* 224 *lavando*, *eluendo*), auch bei Ter., z. B. Eun. 962 *dico*, *edico* vobis . . . dies ist ursprünglich vielleicht in der Sakral- und Gesetzessprache zu Hause. . . . Davon beeinflusst ist der künstliche und seltenere Typus mit Voranstellung des Kompos. . . .” Of some forty examples of the simplex-compound sequence adduced on pp. 246–47, approximately three-fourths occur in iambic senarii and trochaic septenarii. There are no grounds for stating that this usage occurs “mostly” in the *cantica*. Clearly it is well established for the *Umgangssprache* and cannot be exclusively characteristic of an “elevated style.” The available evidence does not therefore lend support to the conjecture that this usage first arose in religious and legal diction. Moreover, the main purpose of the present paper is to document that the reverse order, compound followed by simplex, was native to Latin popular speech and *not* a literary artifice; in this I merely “dot the i” on the work of Fraenkel and Clausen. Plautus himself is the best proof that compound-simplex verbal iteration belongs to popular speech. I adduce sixty examples of this (pp. 244–45) versus forty of the simplex-compound sequence. To refer to “der künstliche und seltenere Typus mit Voranstellung des Kompos.” is doubly erroneous.

Plautus employs a similar technique with adjectives and adverbs:

- Capt.* 176-77 A: sed si *pau-xillo* potes / contentus esse. B: ne *perpau-xillum* modo . . .
 289 A: *tenaxne* pater est eius? B: immo edepol *pertinax*!
Most. 1112 non *radicitus* quidem hercle verum etiam *exradicitus*.¹⁹

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19. Clausen (review of Enk, p. 98) cited two examples of compound-simplex iteration from Terence (*Heaut.* 404 *disperii perii*; *Phorm.* 265 *cognoris* [s.v.l.] . . . *noris*). Fraenkel ("Zum Text der Vögel," p. 441) added a third (*Eun.* 377 *abduc duc*). As an *epimetrum* I give here some more Terentian material:

- Ad.* 546-48 A: primu' *rescisco* omnia . . . B: . . . primum ait se *scire*.
 694-96 illam . . . in cubiculum iri *deductum* domum . . . *duces* uxorem.
Andr. 978-79 A: . . . *abi* domum . . . B: *eo*.
Eun. 537 A: amabo ut illuc *transeas* ubi illast. B: *eo*.
 584-86 *suspectans* . . . id *spectare* coepi . . .
 1063-66 *edico* . . . *dictumst*.
Hec. 484-85 A: . . . *inpulsus* ira . . . B: quibus iris *pulsu'* [s.v.l.] . . .
 486-87 *commeritast* . . . *meritam* scio.
 787 A: . . . vin ego *introeam*? B: *i*.

For the simplex-compound sequence, compare:

- Ad.* 178 A: *tetigin* tui quicquam? B: si *attigisses* . . .
Andr. 592 *oro* vixque id *exoro*.
Eun. 31-34 *negat* . . . *pernegat*.
 962 *dico edico* . . .

For a similar technique with nouns, see

- Hec.* 9-10 *orator* ad vos venio . . . sinite *exorator* sim.

LUCRETIIUS 3. 444

quippe etenim corpus, quod uas quasi constitit eius, 440
 cum cohibere nequit conquassatum ex aliqua re
 ac rarefactum detracto sanguine uenis,
 aere qui credas posse hanc cohiberier ullo,
 corpore qui nostro rarus magis † incohibescit? 444

The obelized MS reading *incohibescit* represents E. J. Kenney's judgment on conjectural emendations, too numerous to list here. With his encouragement I venture to suggest that the correct reading is *incohibentist*. Paleographically this presupposes the easiest of transpositional or "anagrammatic" corruptions, and is, I think, unexceptionable in syntax and style. *Incohibens* would admittedly be making its unique appearance here, not only in Lucretius, but in the whole of Latin literature known to the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. But that need occasion no distrust in an author so often forced into neologisms: the same is true of, for example, the incontestable *inolens* at 2. 850. More diffidently, I suggest that the compound participle yields more pointed meaning if, as with *inolens*, the preverb negates rather than emphasizes, picking up *cohibere nequit* in 441, and giving to 444 the sense, ". . . which is more rarified than our own body, failing [*sc.* on the occasion of its dissolution] to hold it in."

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