1. Introduction

Zwicky & Pullum’s 1983 work on English *n't made the notion of clitic accessible to modern linguistics by defining a set of criteria by which clitics could be differentiated from affixes. Since then, a large body of work has developed addressing questions of clitic-hood. What are clitics? How are they different from full words? How are they treated by morphology? By syntax? No general consensus has been reached in response to these questions. Harris (2002, to appear) has shown that other languages of the Caucasus have clitics (Udi) or affixes (Batsbi) that have some characteristics of the other category. A recent movement in the literature has suggested that the cross-linguistic questions raised by Zwicky and Pullum’s work have not been adequately answered because the base assumption that a clitic is an independent linguistic category is flawed (Everett 1996, Bickel 2009, Spencer & Luís, to appear). Spencer & Luís (to appear) argue that it is impossible to identify a cross-linguistic class ‘clitic’ because objects called clitics have a broad range of characteristics from language to language. These linguistic objects fall somewhere on a spectrum between function words and affixes, but do not behave consistently from one language to another. Spencer & Luis admit that ‘clitic’ can be a useful label for objects within the study of a language, but argue that it cannot be used with any cross-linguistic consistency. The question remains, however, as to why linguistic objects exist which do not neatly fall into the category of affix or word. In this paper, we examine postpositions in Georgian and find that while they exhibit some properties of affixes (by the criteria identified in Zwicky & Pullum 1983), in other ways they behave like clitics or function words. We show that in Old Georgian these were function words, but that they have incrementally lost properties of function words and gained properties of affixes, which we argue reflects their transition from

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1 We would like to thank our informants: Tamrika Khvtisiashvili, Marina Kenchoshvili, Akaki Kenchoshvili, Salome Kenchoshvili, David Avasjanishvili, Nino Mgelaude, and Keto Aroshidze. We would also like to thank the organizers of the conference in Bremen, especially Nino Amiridze, Tamar Khizanishvili and Manana Topazde. Finally, we are grateful to members of the audience there for comments and questions about our paper.
function words to affixes. With further cross-linguistic study, we believe that many linguistic objects described as ‘clitics’ may be shown to be in similar transitional states. Spencer & Luís’ finding that clitics do not exhibit consistent characteristics across languages can be explained by the incremental nature of language change; objects in different stages of change will naturally exhibit different characteristics.

Our paper is organized as follows: in section 2, we provide some background information about nominals in Georgian, and also provide arguments from the literature for and against considering postpositions as cases (affixes). In section 3, we examine seven postpositions in Georgian with reference to Zwicky & Pullum (1983)'s criteria for distinguishing affixes from clitics, and find that the postpositions largely behave like affixes. In section 4, we provide seemingly contradictory evidence from conjoined DP complements of postpositions which shows the postpositions scoping over multiple DPs, which is characteristic of function words, but not affixes. In section 5 we argue that the mixed characteristics of Georgian postpositions suggest that in the synchronic grammar there are two lexical entries for each postposition in Georgian: an overt lexical head which selects a complement with null case, and a new null lexical head which selects a complement with a case marker derived from the former postpositions.

2. Postpositions and the Georgian nominal

Before beginning the discussion of the postpositional phrase, we must first establish some basic facts about the Georgian nominal system. Georgian lacks articles and any obligatory morphological expression of definiteness (though demonstratives can provide optional, infrequent marking of definiteness). Modifiers are prenominal in neutral contexts, but almost all adpositions are postnominal. Georgian orthographical rules require that monosyllabic postpositions be written together with the noun, and that polysyllabic postpositions be written as separate words. We follow the norms of conventional orthography, though this does not necessarily reflect our morphological analyses.

In this paper, we focus on seven postpositions/case markers which exhibit mixed morphological properties: -gan ‘from’, -ši ‘in’, -ze ‘on’, -(a)mde ‘until’, -dan ‘from’, -tan ‘with’, and -vit ‘like’. We also refer to the elements –tvis ‘for’, šesaxeb ‘about’, and kveš ‘under’, whose status as postpositions is unquestioned. There has been some previous discussion of the status of the items we focus on in the literature. Šaniże (1953/1973) argued that -gan, -(a)mde, -ši, and -ze (but not -tan or -dan) have become case markers in Modern Georgian, on the grounds that the markers of the cases which each one formerly governed have disappeared.
Old Georgian

1) c’q’al-sa šina
   water-DAT in
   ‘in the water’

Modern Georgian

2) c’q’al-ši
   water-in
   ‘in the water’

The Modern Georgian form in (2) was derived from the Old Georgian in (1) by a confluence of changes. The a was lost from the dative suffix -sa, which left s juxtaposed to š. As a consequence, the dative -s was lost, and finally -šina simplified to -ši. In Georgian, nouns in other contexts must occur with overt case marking; thus if these postpositions have come to attach directly to the stem, Šaniže reasons that they themselves must be the case endings. Čikobava (1961) notes, however, that every conjoined noun which is governed by the postposition must bear the case suffix except the last one (which appears with the postposition).

3) saxl-s(a) da bay-ši
   house-DAT and garden-in
   ‘in the house and garden’

4) *saxl da bay-ši

On the basis of examples like (3) and (4), Čikobava argues that -ši cannot be a case marker. It is well know that conjoined nominals must bear the same case; thus he argues that the final conjoined noun (bay-ši in (4)) must be in the dative case, like those which precede it. He also protests that there cannot be two cases called locative, an argument which can certainly be discarded.

Clearly, Šaniže assumes that every adposition must govern a case (i.e. an adposition cannot be added directly to a stem), and that the surface form of a case must be the same as the underlying. In addition in §93, he assumes that a postposition cannot govern the nominative case (-i). We do not share any of these assumptions. We do assume, however, that the difference between a case marker and an adposition, to the extent that a distinction exists, is the difference between an affix and a clitic.

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2 Šaniže makes similar phonological arguments for other postpositions.

-ze: Just as in the case of -ši, -ze governed the dative case, -sa. Šaniže argues that when the a was lost, -s was juxtaposed with ze, resulting in the loss of the remnant of the dative case, -s. (§95)

-dan: When used with places, -gan appeared with the instrumental case, -it. Šaniže argues that the [t] underwent voicing assimilation and the two together became -idgan. This later reduced to -idan. (§93)

-amde: The original form, -mde governed the adverbial case, -ad. According to Šaniže the two [d]s in -ad=mde were too phonologically marked, resulting in the loss of the [d] of the adverbial case. (§94)
Because we believe that an adposition could be added to a stem form or to a stem form plus an epenthetic or transitional vowel, we believe that the following are reasonable hypotheses for the structure of these examples: =idan, -i=dan (with a transitional vowel), =amde, -a=mde, =ze, =ši, where <=> marks the boundary of a clitic, <-> that of an affix. Because we believe that the surface form of a case may be different from its underlying form, we believe that the following configurations are reasonable hypothesized underlying forms: -it=dan, -ad=mde (-ad=mdis), -s=ze, -s=ši, where each underlying form is preceded by a case. Finally, because we do not accept that an adposition must govern a case other than the nominative, we think the structure -i=dan should also be considered, where -i is the marker of the nominative case. On the other hand, we believe that it is indeed a reasonable hypothesis that the following are cases today: -(i)dan, -(a)mde, -(a)mdis, -ze, -ši. We feel that this issue should be decided on the basis of the behavior of these elements as affixes or as clitics.

In this paper we argue that Georgian postpositions show characteristics of both clitics and affixes according to Zwicky and Pullum’s criteria. We believe this indicates that they are in a transitional period towards greater grammaticalization (morphologization). We also present novel data from nominal conjunction which we believe shows a more recent step toward morphologization. We assume, following Šaniże (1953/1973), that postpositions in Georgian are becoming case markers. Though we argue that the linguistic objects in question are, synchronically, neither pure postpositions nor pure case markers, we arbitrarily refer to them as postpositions in this paper for convenience.

3. Affixes vs. Clitics

In this section the discussion of postpositions in Georgian is framed with reference to the criteria for distinguishing affixes from clitics presented in Zwicky & Pullum (1983) (henceforth ZP). These criteria are presented below in (5).

5) Zwicky and Pullum (1983:503-504)
A. Clitics can exhibit a low degree of selection with respect to their hosts, while affixes exhibit a high degree of selection with respect to their stems.
B. Arbitrary gaps in the set of combinations are more characteristic of affixed words than of clitic groups.
C. Morphophonological idiosyncrasies are more characteristic of affixed words than of clitic groups.
D. Semantic idiosyncrasies are more characteristic of affixed words than of clitic groups.
E. Syntactic rules can affect affixed words, but cannot affect clitic groups.
F. Clitics can attach to material already containing clitics, but affixes cannot.

Though we refer extensively to ‘clitics’, we do not assume that such a category exists in a pure form. Rather, we take any clitic-specific behavior (in the terminology of ZP) to be more generally clitic-like behavior.

In this section we examine Georgian postpositions with respect to each of ZP’s six criteria for distinguishing affixes from clitics. We find that in Old Georgian the adpositions in question behaved as function words; however the derived Modern Georgian postpositions exhibit some affix-like characteristics. The affix-like characteristics do not apply evenly to all of the items we examined, rather different postpositions seem to be in different stages of affixation. We take this as further evidence that the mixed behavior is not characteristic of a separate linguistic category (clitic) but instead of gradual linguistic change.

A. Selectivity

ZP argue that clitics are less selective than affixes. Degree of selectivity is measured by two factors: the number of word classes a morpheme can appear with and the percentage of words within a word class that a morpheme can appear with. Affixes tend to select specific word classes and attach idiosyncratically to words within that class. Clitics are more likely to select broadly. Certain particles in Georgian have very broad selectivity, and would fall under the category of clitic for ZP, for example the quotative particle =o.

6) a. **rez-o m ake-dan ar c’ai’y-o t es c’i gn-i= o?**
   Rezo-ERG here-from not take-OPT.2PL this book-NOM=QUOT
   ‘Did Rezo say we shouldn’t take this book from here?’

b. **did-i= o**
   big-NOM=QUOT
   ‘S/He said ‘big’”

c. **exla= o**
   now=QUOT
   ‘S/He said ‘now”

d. **qvela sakme kveq’ana-ze rigdeba, col-kmaroba k’i zeca-ši= o**
   all-NOM affair-NOM earth-on arranged, marriage-NOM but heaven-in=QUOT
   ‘They say all affairs are arranged on earth, but marriages in heaven”

e. **ra ginda= o**
   what 2SG.want=QUOT
   ‘S/He said ‘what do you want?’”

Example (6) shows that the quotative =o can attach to a variety of grammatical categories, in line with ZP’s first criterion for clitic-hood. We will take this to indicate that quotative =o exhibits clitic-like
behavior. Georgian postpositions are highly selective with regards to word class (they only select nouns and other nominals), but they attach freely to words within that word class. It is not unexpected for an adposition only to take nominal complements. However, the postposition -vit, ‘like’, is able to appear with a restricted set of verbs.

7) momšivdasa-vit
   I.got.hungry-like
   ‘It is as though I got hungry.’

The five other postpositions under investigation may only occur with nominal hosts. In respect to selectivity, then, we can conclude that six of the postpositions exhibit affix-like behavior, and -vit exhibits clitic-like behavior.

B. Arbitrary Gaps

The presence or absence of arbitrary gaps in the set of possible hosts is ZP’s second criterion for distinguishing affixes from clitics. The presence of arbitrary gaps is a characteristic of affix systems, and such gaps should not occur with the juxtaposition of elements which are not morphologically dependent on each other (for example clitics or function words and their hosts).

The pronoun me ‘I, me’ at first appears to be exactly such a gap, since we find, for example, čemgan ‘from me’, using the possessive as the stem, not the genitive. However, this is a fact about ‘I, me’, not about -gan, and the same form is the base for other items that are universally considered postpositions, such as čemtvis ‘for me’.

We know of no actual arbitrary gaps in the combinations of hosts with postposition. The presence of arbitrary gaps would be indicative of affixation; however the absence is indicative of neither affixation nor cliticization, as affix systems do not always contain arbitrary gaps. Thus, we can make no positive conclusion from criterion B.

C. Morphophonological Idiosyncrasies

ZP argue that the existence of morphophonological idiosyncrasies is an indication of affixation. We know of no idiosyncratic forms of host+postposition in Georgian of the sort that is seen in English irregular plurals such as oxen and cherubim. Nonetheless, in this section we will discuss a regular but certainly relevant morphophonological process called pre-sonorant syncope, which is outlined in (7) and
illustrated in (8-9). Non-high vowels delete in the last syllable of a nominal root when followed by a sonorant and a suffix of the minimal shape -VC.

7) Pre-sonorant syncope
\[ V_{[-hi]} \rightarrow \emptyset / \_ C_{[+son]}^{+VC} \]

8) a. bal-i
   cherry-NOM
   ‘a cherry’

   b. bl-ad
   cherry-ADV
   ‘as a cherry’

9) a. sopel-i
   village-NOM
   ‘a village’

   b. sopl-is
   village-GEN
   ‘of a village’

In (8-9) we see that the when the stem appears with a suffix of the shape -VC, \( a \) or \( e \) will delete from the stem if they are immediately followed by a stem-final sonorant. This process is subject to some degree of lexical variation on the part of the stem, but all minimally -VC suffixes trigger syncope in syncopating nominal stems. The sequence \(-i=c\), where \(-i\) is nominative case and \(-c\) is a particle meaning ‘too, also’, does not trigger syncope.

10) a. sopel-\( i=c \)
    village-NOM=too
    ‘the village, too’

   b. *sopl-\( i=c \)

From (10) we conclude that triggering pre-sonorant syncope is a characteristic of true suffixes, and thus can be used as a diagnostic of affix-like behavior. This diagnostic can only be used to test -amde, -idan and -(i)vit, because they are the only postpositions with the requisite minimal shape.

11) a. sopl-amde
    village-until
    ‘up to the village’

   b. *sopel-amde

12) a. sopl-i-dan
    village-i-from
    ‘from the village’

   b. sopel-idan

13) a. *mgl-i-vit
    wolf-i-like
    ‘like a wolf’

   b. mgel-i-vit

Examples (11-13) show that the postpositions at issue exhibit a range of behavior with respect to pre-sonorant syncope. -amde shows the most affix-like behavior in that it obligatorily triggers syncope in syncopating stems. On the other hand, we see that syncope is optional with -idan, and impossible with -

\[ \text{Circumfixes can also trigger syncope in nouns, even if the suffixal portion of the circumfix is not of the shape -VC.} \]

i. mgel-i
   wolf-NOM
   ‘wolf’

ii. mgl-eb-i
   wolf-PL-NOM
   ‘wolves’

iii. sa-mgl-o
   PLACE-wolf-PLACE
   ‘place for wolves’
(i)vit. The three postpositions present a typology of morphologization according to the phonology: -amde has been fully morphologized in this respect, -(i)vit remains morphologically independent, and -idan is in an intermediate state.

D. Compositionality

ZP argue that affixed words can take on non-compositional meanings, while clitic groups cannot. We suggest that this criterion is only applicable to clitic groups which are not constituents. Both morphologically complex words and syntactic phrases are candidates for developing idiomatic meaning, however, this would be unexpected for adjacent strings of words which are not constituents. For example, English has idiomatic DPs (a little slice of heaven), APs (bright eyed and bushy tailed), VPs (shoot the breeze), TPs (be that as it may) and, most certainly, PPs (over the hill, under the weather, for certain, at all). Therefore it must be expected that, like affixed words, postpositions and their complements (which form syntactic phrases) can take on non-compositional, idiomatic meaning. Compositionality, then, cannot be used as a criterion for determining the morphological status of postpositions.

E. Syntactic Operations

The fact that postpositions and their complements form a syntactic constituent also prevents ZP’s fifth criterion from applying to postpositions. ZP argue that movement operations should not apply to clitics and their hosts as a unit. For example, in English a tensed auxiliary may form a phonological phrase with a modal, but they do not form a syntactic constituent (e.g. [ModP would [TP ‘ve [vP]]]). It would be unexpected for them to move together since they are not a constituent (i.e. *Would’ve you left?). Adpositions, however, form a syntactic unit with their complements (e.g. [vP under [DP the bed]]), so we expect that they should be visible to syntactic operations (e.g. Under the bed is a good place to hide things). Thus we expect Georgian postpositions to behave as a syntactic units with their complements regardless of whether they are affixes or function words.

F. Morpheme Stacking

According to criterion F, clitics can be added to material already containing clitics, but affixes cannot. This entails that if one of the items of interest follows an enclitic, our item must also be a clitic; but the reverse order yields no conclusion, since a clitic can follow either a clitic or an affix. The process of comparing the order of clitics and affixes presupposes that a category clitic exists. We can rephrase ZPs generalization: more affix-like material appears closer to the stem, while less affix-like material appears
further from the stem. We can identify three phonologically weak morphemes in Georgian which display otherwise entirely clitic-like behavior. The relativizer =c, quotative particle =o, and copula =a all select complements very broadly and can scope over units much larger than the word they attach to (the entire clause or even, in the case of -o, an entire unit of discourse).

14) a.  romel-ši=c     romel-ze=c     romel-amde=c     romel-i-dan=ac
     which-in=REL which-on=REL which-untill=REL which-I-from=REL
     ‘in which’  ‘on which’  ‘until which’  ‘from which’
     b.  *romel=ac=ši     *romel=ac=ze     *romel=ac=amde     *romeli/a=c=dan

15) a.  saxl-ši=o     saxl-ze=o     saxl-amde=o     saxl-i-dan=o
     house-in=QUOT house-on=QUOT house-until=QUOT house-I-from=QUOT
     b.  *saxl=lo=ši     *saxl=lo=ze     *saxl=lo=amde     *saxl=lo=(i)-dan

16) a.  saxl-ši=a     saxl-ze=a     saxl-amde=a     saxl-i-dan=a
     house-in=is house-on=is house-until=is house-I-from=is
     ‘is in the house’ ‘is on the house’ ‘is until the house’ ‘is from the house’
     b.  *saxl=ia=ši     *saxl=ia=ze     *saxl=ia=amde     *saxl=ia=dan

The relativizer -c is compared to -ši, -ze, -amde and -idan in (14). They are strictly ordered; the postposition must occur closer to the stem than the relativizer. The same is seen to be true for the quotative particle (15) and the copula (16). The relativizer, quotative particle, and copula would all be classified as clitics according to ZPs criteria. Thus we do not expect them to appear closer to the stem than affixes, but it is perfectly possible for other clitic-like material to appear closer to the stem as well. It is also possible, particularly in the case of the relativizer (in 14) and the copula (in 16) that their order relative to postpositions could be determined on the basis of semantic scope. Thus, because there is a possible semantic explanation for their relative ordering, and because preceding a clitic does not provide evidence for affixhood or clitichood, this diagnostic does not provide any insight into the nature of postpositions.

Interim Summary

On the basis of ZPs criteria we can now make the following statements about the behavior of Georgian postpositions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERION</th>
<th>AFFIX-LIKE</th>
<th>CLITIC-LIKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A - Selectivity</td>
<td>-ši, -ze, -gan, -tan, -amde, -idan</td>
<td>-vit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - Arbitrary gaps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C - Morphophonological idiosyncracies</td>
<td>-amde, -idan</td>
<td>-idan, -(i)vit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As summarized in Table 1, most positive evidence from ZP’s criteria shows that the Georgian postpositions at issue exhibit affix-like behavior, except for -vit, which exhibits distinctly clitic-like behavior for both criteria A and C. The conclusion for the majority of these postpositions is in line with Šaniże (1953/1973) and contra Čikobava (1961). We have not addressed, however, the data in (3-4) in support of Čikobava’s claim that postpositions are not affixes: that conjoined nominals can all share a single instance of the postposition which appears on the final conjunct.

4. Conjoined complements

The criterion used by Čikobava (1961) has been used by others, including Kahr (1976), and is widely accepted. Yet some languages, notably Turkish, display “suspended affixation”, the omission of certain affixes from all conjuncts except the last; these are nevertheless widely considered affixes, not clitics (see, for example, Kabak 2007). The criterion that postpositions but not suffixes have scope over all conjuncts cannot, therefore, be considered absolute.

Most prescriptive grammars of Georgian, like Čikobava, state that postpositions can appear with conjoined complements (see (3-4)). It should be noted that true adpositions can optionally appear with each conjunct (e.g. in the house and in the garden). Thus it is only the ability to occur without an adposition/case marker that provides any evidence. Our investigation has found a range of behavior within the set of postpositions at issue. In the speech of the native speakers we consulted, none of the postpositions freely appeared with conjoined complements; however, with speaker variation, conjoined complements were acceptable in some cases depending on the grammatical number of the conjoined nouns and the number of elements conjoined.

Grammatical Number of the Conjoined Nouns

For some speakers, two or more nouns in the plural are more easily conjoined than singular nouns.

17) a. *megobr-isa da amxanag-isa gan
friend-GEN and comrade-GEN-from

b. megobr-eb-isa da amxanag-eb-isa gan
friend-PL-GEN and comrade-PL-GEN-from
‘from friends and comrades’

18) a. *kvab-sa da botl-ši
   pot-DAT and bottle-in
   ‘in pots and bottles’
b. kvab-eb-sa da botl-eb-ši
   pot-PL-DAT and bottle-PL-in
   ‘in pots and bottles’

19) a. *sk’ola-sa da ek’lesia-mde
   school-DAT and church-up to
   ‘up to schools and churches’
b. sk’ol-eb-sa da ek’lesi-eb-amde
   school-PL-DAT and church-PL-up to
   ‘up to schools and churches’

20) a. *megobar-sa da amxanag-tan
    friend-DAT and comrade-with
    ‘with friends and comrades’
b. megobr-eb-sa da amxanag-eb-tan
   friend-PL-DAT and comrade-PL-with
   ‘with friends and comrades’

Examples (17-20) show that for -gan, -ši, -amde, and -tan plural nominals can be conjoined but singular nouns cannot. Such behavior is puzzling in a synchronic grammar, but can be at least partially understood through historical change. If these postpositions are moving toward morphologization, we would expect the environments in which they could take conjoined complements to reduce incrementally.

In (17-20) we can see that grammatical number is interacting with this change.

Number of Elements Conjoined

For some speakers, the last complements in a list of three or more can be conjoined more easily than two elements.

21) a. *megobr-is-a, amxanag-is-a da nacnob-is-a-gan
    friend-GEN comrade-GEN and acquaintance GEN–from
    ‘from a friend, comrade and acquaintance’
b. ?megobr-is-gan, amxanag-is-a da nacnob-is-a-gan
    friend-GEN–from comrade-GEN and acquaintance GEN–from
    ‘from a friend, comrade and acquaintance’
c. megobr-is-gan, amxanag-is-gan da nacnob-is-gan
    friend-GEN–from comrade-GEN–from and acquaintance GEN–from
    ‘from a friend, comrade and acquaintance’

22) a. *lambak-sa, tevp-š-sa da magida-ze
    saucer-DAT plate-DAT and table–on
    ‘on a saucer, plate and table’
b. ?lambak-ze, tevp-š-sa da magida-ze
    saucer–on plate-DAT and table–on
    ‘on a saucer, plate and table’
c. lambak-ze, tevp-š-ze da magida-ze
    saucer–on plate–on and table–on
    ‘on a saucer, plate and table’

23) a. *sk’ola-sa, baɣ-eb-sa da ek’lesia-mde
    school-DAT garden-PL-DAT and church–up to
    ‘up to school, gardens, and church’
b. ?sk’ola-mde, baɣ-eb-sa da ek’lesia-mde
    school–up to garden-PL -DAT and church–up to
    ‘up to school, gardens, and church’
c. sk’ola-mde, baɣ-eb-amde da ek’lesia-mde
    school–up to garden-PL–up to and church–up to
    ‘up to school, gardens, and church’

    friend-PL-GEN comrade-PL-GEN and acquaintance-PL–with
    ‘with friends and comrades’
b. megobr-eb-tan, amxanag-eb-sa da nancnob-eb-tan
    friend-PL–with comrade-PL-GEN and acquaintance-PL–with
‘with friends, comrades and acquaintances’

Examples (21-24) show that for -gan, -ze, -amde and -tan conjunction of conjoined elements improves in the last conjuncts in lists. Like (17-20), this is strange behavior within a synchronic grammar, but can find explanation through language change. If these postpositions are moving toward morphologization, it is expected that full suffixation be required in some cases before others. In (21-24) we see that lists exhibit some sort of structure preserving property.

5. Grammatical representation

In section 3 we saw that Modern Georgian postpositions exhibit many characteristics that ZP identify with affixes. In section 4 we showed that (with some restrictions) they can also appear with conjoined conjunctions, which is a characteristic of function words. We have argued that these objects exhibit mixed characteristics because they are in transition from function words to affixes. What does it mean, in the synchronic grammar, for a morpheme to be in a period of transition? In this section we explore one possibility: that in the synchronic grammar these postpositions have two lexical representations.

In Old Georgian, it seems clear that postpositions were lexical P heads which selected DP complements in a specific case.

Old Georgian
25) c’q’al-sa šina
   water-DAT in
   ‘in the water’

The lexical entry for šina in Old Georgian clearly included selectional information for a dative-marked DP complement. As the postposition and its complement became phonologically incorporated, evidence of the presence of the dative case marker disappeared.

Modern Georgian
26) c’q’al-ši
   water-in
   ‘in the water’

At some stage between Old Georgian (25) and Modern Georgian (26), the DP complement of the postposition must have been reinterpreted as being marked with null case. At this stage, -ši must still be a lexical head, as it would not otherwise be able to scope over conjoined complements. A possible representation is sketched out in (27).

27) saxl-s(a) da bay-ši (= (3) (Tschenkéli 1958:36))
In (27) we present a possible representation of (3). The P -ši selects an &P complement and checks null case on the highest DP. The lower DP receives inherent dative case. For some speakers of Georgian today, sentences such as (27) are only marginally possible (see section 3), however conjoined complements are better if the conjoined DPs are plural or are the final elements in a list. It seems that in the dialect of these speakers, the lexical head -ši is further constrained in that it has some plurality restriction (which is not satisfied by binary conjunction).

If the lexical head -ši is only available with plural nouns for some speakers, why can -ši attach to singular DPs so long as they are not conjoined? We suggest that postpositions have been partially reanalyzed as case markers which are selected by null postpositions (though the assigner of case here could be any number of DP internal functional heads). A possible representation for a postposition with a singular noun is shown in (28).

The representation in (28) shows a null postposition selecting a complement with the case marker -ši (perhaps the inessive case). We argue that both the null functional head in (28) and the overt postposition in (27) are available in the synchronic grammars of speakers of Modern Georgian. The overt postposition seems to be restricted to selecting complements with some sort of plural feature (either morphological or semantic), while there is no evidence that the null postposition has any selectional restrictions.
The analysis outlined above suggests that any postposition which has both clitic-like and affix-like properties is a reflection of two independent entries in the lexicon. It is an initial attempt to account for the mental representation of the transition from function word (or perhaps clitic) to affix; however it makes strong predictions. Under this analysis, the lexical postposition (illustrated in (27)) is predicted to display none of the affix-like properties described in section 3 (such as triggering syncope and only attaching to nouns) while the case marker (illustrated in (28)) is predicted to display none of the clitic-like properties (such as appearing with conjoined complements). As the lexical postposition and case marker are homophonous, it is difficult to test these predictions.

6. Conclusion

In this paper we have argued for two positions; that no clear line can be drawn between affixes and linguistic objects commonly referred to as clitics (Spencer & Luis, to appear) and that Georgian postpositions are function words in the process of morphologization. Our first claim is supported by a range of affix-like and clitic-like behavior exhibited by Georgian postpositions. According to ZP’s criteria, postpositions show largely affix-like characteristics, however in section 4 we saw that in some cases they can occur with conjoined complements; a distinctly clitic-like characteristic. The explanation for this comes from language change; these former function words are taking on affix-like characteristics in an incremental manner. In section 5 we sketched a possible analysis of how this instance of language change is represented in the synchronic grammar. We believe that with further investigation, many of the linguistic objects which are called clitics in the literature may be found to be undergoing a similar process.

References


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