

# Thoughts on grammaticalization of adpositions: A case of Korean, English, and Spanish

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## 1. Introduction

Presumably, all languages have grammatical devices to encode the relationship among nominal constituents in a sentence, be they structural (such as word order) or morphological (such as inflection) or lexical (such as adpositions). This paper explores the manifestations and emergence of adpositions from three different languages, i.e., Korean, English, Korean and Spanish. Since the focus is on the incipient stage of the development, the primary focus is on complex adpositions, which are largely thought to have grammaticalized to a lesser extent as compared with the simple adpositions.

## 2. Case and Adposition

Case is “a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads” (Blake 2004: 1). It may be realized by means of inflection, morphological case markers, word order, adpositions, among others. It is among the primitive notions in linguistics. However, the system of case-marking shows considerable variation across languages as shown in part in (1):

- (1) a. No morphological marking for grammatical case: Thai, Chinese
- b. Extensive case systems: Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, Latin, Russian

It is also notable that even within a specific language, the system exhibits multiple layers of conceptual domains. e.g. even in languages where grammatical cases are not morphologically marked, there are diverse case-related adpositional markers with various semantic specifications. Case and case-related systems can be classified into three domains as in (2):

- (2) Three domains in case and case-related systems (cf. Lehmann 2004: 1845-1851; Blake 2004, Chs 2 & 3)
  - a. Grammatical case (= core case; nuclear case; non-local case): nominative, accusative, dative, genitive, absolutive, ergative
  - b. Local case: ablative (from), adessive (on), adelative (from), allative (to), delative (off), destinative (to), illative (into), inessive (inside), locative (at, in),

mediative (between), perlative (through), postessive (behind), prolative (along), subessive (under), superessive (above), terminative (up to)

- c. (Non-local) Case: benefactive (for), comitative (with), directional (to), equative (like), instrumental (with), motivative (by), partitive (of), referentive (about), vocative

Grammatical case typically indicates the role of a syntactic argument in the sentence (Sylak-Glassman et al. 2015: 83). Local case designates the relationship of two entities in terms of relative positions, such as the English prepositions from, between, through, behind, etc. do. Case, on the other hand, marks the general relationship of the argument with respect to the referenced event.

### 3. Simple vs. Complex Adpositions

Simple adpositions may refer to the adpositions whose composition is formally simple, i.e., those that involve monolexemic or monomorphemic forms. Complex adpositions, on the other hand, are those that involve multi-lexemic or multi-morphemic forms.

(3) Korean (Narrog & Rhee 2013)

- a. Simple (=primary) postpositions: -ey/lo/kkaci (allative), -wa/kwa/hako (comitative), -pwuthe/eyse (ablative), -lo (instrumental), -ey/lo (causative), -wa/kwa/ey/hako/hamye (enumerative), -pota (comparative), -mankhum/chelem/kathi (similiative)...
- b. Complex (=secondary) postpositions: -ul hyanghay (aditive), -ey aphse (antessive), -ul kalocille (perlative), -ul twuko/-ul nohko (topic)...

(4) English

- a. Simple (=primary) prepositions: of, in, to, for, at, on, for, by...
- b. Complex (=secondary) preposition: according to, ahead of, as for, away from, as far as, as part of, at odds with, by means of, by virtue of, by way of, for want of, in accordance with, in common with, in favor of, in relation to, in view of, on behalf of, with regard to...

(5) Spanish

- a. Simple (=primary) prepositions: a, en, de, por, para, entre, desde, sin, con, hacia, hasta, bajo, sobre, que, excepto, salvo...
- b. Complex (=secondary) prepositions: cerca de, junto a, a menos de, a causa de, en virtud de, debido a, por razón de, por parte de, a fuerza de, a base de, acerca de, en cuanto a, con/en referencia a, con relación a, en relación con, relacionado con, en torno a, en lo tacánte a...

Complex adpositions tend to encode more fine-grained configurational notions as compared to simple adpositions (perhaps of universal validity; cf. Blake 2004: 10).

#### **4. Grammatical Categories in Cognition**

Even though adpositions border on, and often blend into, case markers, thus creating fuzzy functional boundaries, it is observed that languages seem to have a limited set of concepts that they choose to encode with adpositions. This suggests that the types of inter-nominal relations are tied to the commonality in human cognition and conceptualization.

Grammatical cases, such as nominative, accusative, genitive, etc., tend to be unmarked (e.g. English nominative, accusative; Spanish nominative, accusative, etc.) or minimally marked (e.g. English dative, Spanish dative, Korean nominative, genitive, accusative, dative, etc.). Since these notions seem to be fundamental in human conceptualization of events or states of affairs denoted by a clause as they are closely related to the participants of an event, they seem to be grammatical primitives, regardless of their linguistic realization patterns on the level of surface structure. If grammatical case is more closely tied to the grammatical structure than adposition, the event-related notions are expected to surface as case rather than adposition.

Case or non-local case, as opposed to local case, tends to mark diverse relationship in general rather than local relations. The members in this category seem to make reference to such binary distinctions as presence/absence, proximity/distance, association/dissociation, similarity/dissimilarity, or to such relationship as accompaniment, cause, benefit, etc. These seem to form primary cognitive categories as well. Local case marks the local/positional relationship between two or more referenced entities.

Local relationship makes reference to axial relationship such as front-back, top-down, left-right, in-out, etc. or to direction, source, path, destination, etc. (These seem to be common notions in conceptualization of positionality of entities occupying space.)

However, it is noteworthy that there are a large number of complex adpositions whose meaning still bears the lexical meanings of the participating formants. e.g., there are large inventories of complex adpositions across languages.

#### **5. Comparisons**

Adpositions in the three languages can be shown non-exhaustively as in the following:

(6) Grammatical Case

nominative	주격	(subject)		이, 가, 께서	
accusative	대격, 직접목적	(object)		을, 를	
dative	여격, 간접목적	(direction)	to	보고, 더러, 께, 한테, 에 대고	a
genitive	소유격	(possessive)	∅, of	의	de

(7) Local Case

ablative	탈격	(from)	off, from	에서, 부터, 에서부터, 로부터, 한테서, 을 기해	de
addirective	방향	(in the direction of)	to, toward	로, 을 향해, 로 향해	hacia, en dirección a, con rumbo a
aditive	접근	(to)	to, toward	로, 를 향해,로 향해	hacia, en dirección a, con rumbo a
adelative	방향 이격	(movement from)		부터	de, a partir de, desde
adessive	접격	(present)	on, nearby	에, 근처에	en, acerca de, alrededor de
allative	향격 (방향)	(to)	onto, to	로, 까지	hacia, a
antessive	앞에 있음	(before)	before, prior to, ahead of, forward of, in front of	앞에, 전에, 에 앞서	antes de, delante de, enfrente de, frente a
apudessive	다음에 있음	(next)	next to	옆에, 곁에, 근처에	cerca, acerca de, junto a
relative	강격(위 에서 아래로)	(offasurface)	off, from, down from	에서,부터,에서부 터,로부터	abajo, debajo de, bajo
destinative	목적지	(to)	to	로, 을 향해, 로 향해	destinado a, con destino a, hacia, para, a
directional	방향	(towards)	towards	로	hacia, en dirección a
elative	분리격	(out of, away from)	out of, away from	로부터, 에서부터	fuera de
essive	상황격	(during, while)	during	동안, 적에	durante
illative	방향격	(into)	into	안으로, 내로, 로	dentro, dentro de
inelative	(안에서) 밖으로	(out of)	out of	밖으로, 로부터, 에서부터	fuera de
inessive	내부에	(location)	in, at, during, inside of	에, 에서, 안에	dentro de, en
lative	이동격	(motion to)	to, into, to from via	로, 을 향해, 로 향해	a
locative	처격 (장소,위)	(location)	in, on, at, by	에, 에서	en

	치)				
mediative	사이에	(between, among, in between)	between, among, in between	가운데에, 사이에, 새에, 중에, 간에	entre
perlative	통과, 건너, 넘어, 따라	(through, across)	through, across	가로질러, 통해	a través de, por
postdirective	향해	(towards)	towards	을 향해	hacia, en dirección a
postelative	뒤에서	(from)	from	에서, 부터,로부터, 에서부터	después de, detrás de
postessive	뒤에	(behind)	behind, in back of	뒤에, 후에	después de, detrás de
prolative	방법, 방편 (우편 편지 등등)	(by way of, along)	by way of, along	을 따라, 대로, 로	por medio de, por, vía
subelative:	아래로부터	(from below, from under)	from below, from under	아래로부터, 밑으로부터	desde abajo
subessive:	밑에, 아래에	(below, under)	below, under	아래에(서), 밑에(서), 하에(서)	debajo de
sublative:	아래로	(to under)	to under	아래로, 밑으로	bajo
superdirective	위에	(onto)	onto	에다가	hasta, en
superlative	위에서부터	(off, from above)	off, from above	위로부터	desde arriba
superessive:	위에	(above, on, over, on top of)	above, on, over, on top of	위에, 상에, 에다가	encima de, sobre
superlative:	넘어,	(over, to above)	over, to above	위로, 상으로, 너머	por encima de
terminative:	종결	(up to, up until, as far as)	up to, up until, as far as	까지	hasta
translative:	상태변화	(change of state, purpose, across)	into	로	en
lateral-general	측면(전체)	(along, next to, on the side of)	along, on the side of	옆에, 곁에, -을 끼고	al lado de, junto a, a lo largo de
lateral-laevus	측면(좌)	(left of, left to)	left of, left to	왼쪽에	a la izquierda de
lateral-dexterum	측면(우)	(right of, right to)	right of, right to	오른쪽에	a la derecha de
external	외부의	(outside, outside of)	outside, outside of	밖에	fuera de
	주변	around	around	둘레에, 주변에	alrededor de, en torno a

(8) Case (Non-local)

abessive	결격	(lack/absence)	without, except for, apart from, but for, other than, save for, excluding, for lack of, for want of	없이, 말고, 을 제외하고, 을 빼고	sin
approximative	근접	(near)	close to, near, near to	가까이, 쯤에	cerca de
associative	결합, 연합	(near)	next to, close to	가까이, 옆에, 곁에, 에 면해, 에 연해, 에 이어	cerca de, junto a
benefactive	수혜자	(for)	for	를 위해	por, para
caritive	결격	(lack/absence)	without	없이, 말고	sin, a menos de
comitative	수반	(accompaniment)	together with, along with, in company with	와, 과, 함께, 더불어, 하고	con
distributive	분배	(each)	per, each	마다, 씩	por
equative	비교	(like)	as, like	만큼, 처럼, 같이, 대로	como
instrumental	도구	(means)	with, by means of	로, 로써, 가지고, 갖고	con
motivative	동기화	(cause)	by, because of, due to, on account of, owing to, thanks to, by virtue of, by dint of, by reason of	에, 때문에, 에 의해, 로 인해	por, a causa de, en virtud de, por causa de, por parte de, por razón de, debido a, a fuerza de, a base de
partitive	부분	(some of x)	of		como parte de
pegative	수여자	(agent of giving)			
privative	결핍	(lack/absence)	without, except for, apart from, but for, other than, save for	없이, 말고, 을 제외하고	sin, excepto, salvo, a excepción de
propriative	소유	(having)	with		con
referentive	관계, 대상	(about)	about, over, with reference to, with regard to, with respect to	에 대해, 에 관해	sobre, acerca de, referente a, (con) respecto a, tocante a, en cuanto a, con/en referencia a, con relación a, en relación con, relacionado con, en torno a
revertive	회귀, 가역	(going backwards to another)		을 거슬러	hacia, atrás, al revés, en lo tocante a
similiative	유사	(similar)	as, like	만큼, 처럼, 같이, 대로	como
transformative	변경	(becoming)	as, into	로	en
vocative	호격	(calling)		아, 야	

(9) Other Complex Adpositions

topic	주제	(as for, as to)	as for, as to	은, 는, 을 두고, 을 놓고	sobre
reciprocatve	호혜, 상호	(each other)		끼리, 간에, 사이에	
comparative	비교	(than, vis-à-vis)	than, vis-à-vis	보다, 에 비해	que, de (+number)
hypothetical topic	가상의 주제	(speaking of)		치고	
disimilative	이화	(unlike)	unlike	달리	diferente de, a diferencia de
enumerative	열거	(plus)	plus	에, 와, 과, 하며, 하고, 며, 나	además de, aparte de
status	상황	(as)	as	로서	
focus	집중	(focus)	nothing but, no less than, as much as	만, 밖에, 뿐, 조차, 까지, 마저	solamente, solo, incluso, hasta
mirative	의외	(surprise)	even, as much as	커녕, 따라, 조차, 까지, 마저	
adversative	역겹, 반의, 반대	(in spite of, against, contrary to, in face of, up against)	in spite of, against, contrary to, in face of, up against	에도 불구하고, 에 반해	afuerzade, apesard e, contrario a, contra
oppositive	반대로	(opposite to)	opposite to	반대쪽에, 건너편에	opuesto a, contrario a, enfrente de, frente a
additive	추가	(as well as, in addition to, aside from, further to, together with)	as well as, in addition to, aside from, further to, together with	에다가, 을 겸해, 등, 외에, 따위, 서낀	además de, aparte de
consequitive	결과	(according to, following, as per, depending on, in view of)	according to, following, as per, depending on, in view of	에 따르면, 에 따라, 을 따라, 에 준해	según, en base a
distantive	멀리떨어진	(far from)	far from	에서 떨어져(서), 을 격해	lejos de
substitutive	대신	(instead of, on behalf of, in lieu of)	instead of, on behalf of, in lieu of	대신에	en vez de, en lugar de
restrictive	제한	(restriction)		에 한해	
conditional	조건	(in case of)	in case of	의 경우에	en caso de
consensual	합의, 공감, 동감	(in favor of)	in favor of	을 위해	a favor de
disregard	무시, 묵살	(regardless of)	regardless of	에 무관하게	a pesar de
cardinal direction	북		north to	북쪽에	al norte de
cardinal direction	남		south to	남쪽에	al sur de

## 6. Grammaticalization Sources: A Cursory Survey

Some of the notable finding about the grammaticalization sources are as shown in (10), focusing on Spanish:

(10) Spanish local and non-local case (complex) prepositions

- about: sobre < over; acerca de < circle; referente a < carry back; (con) respecto a < look back; tocante a < strike; en cuanto a < how great; con/en referencia a < tell, carry back; con relación a / en relación con / relacionado con < carry back; en torno a < dividers
- above: encima de < top; sobre < over
- across/through: a través de < turn across; por < by
- along/by way of: por medio de < middle; por < for, before; vía < way, go
- around: alrededor de < to perimeter; en torno a < dividers
- before: antes de < before; delante de < before; enfrente de / frente a < front, forehead
- below/under: debajo de < of low
- beside: a lado de < side; junto a < joined; a lo largo de < abundant
- between/among: entre < between
- down: abajo / debajo de / bajo < low, below, fat
- during: durante < endure
- for: por < for, before, in behalf of
- from: de < from; a partir de < divide; desde < from from from; fuera de < out of doors; después de < from after; detrás de < from after;
- in: en < in, into; dentro < inside
- into: dentro < inside; en < in, into
- left of: a la izquierda de < left
- like: como < how
- near/on: en < in; acerca de < circle; alrededor de < perimeter
- near: cerca < circle
- next to: junto a < joined; cerca < circle; acerca de < circle
- of: de < from
- off: de < from
- out of: fuera de < out of doors
- outside: fuera de < out of doors
- over: por encima de < top
- right of: a la derecha de < straight
- to/towards: a < to, toward; hacia < face toward; en dirección a < aiming; con rumbo a < room, space; destinado a / con destino a < determine; hacia < face toward; para < before
- with: con < near
- without: sin < outside; a menos de < less, smaller; excepto < take out; salvo < safe, healthy
- [causal]: por < for...; a causa de < cause, reason; en virtud de < virtue, strength, manliness; por parte de < part; por razón de < reason, calculate; debido a < owe; a fuerza de < strong; a base de < base,

pedestal

[go gainst]: faz a < face toward; atrás < toward after; al revés < turn back; en lo tocante a < touch

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