

A morphological paradox of Modern Eastern Armenian: inflected adpositions

Traditionally, adpositions are said to belong to the uninflected parts of speech, mainly developed from original adverbs. The usually denote relations between elements regarding basic semantic relations, like locality, temporality, causality, modality.

In Modern Eastern Armenian adpositions are used in the same functions, but they show a rather interesting linguistic behaviour: particularly for specific local meaning they may be inflected in Ablative and Instrumental case. In colloquial Armenian, so called possessive suffixes may also be attached to the postpositions instead of using personal pronouns.

(650) a. *Mer arjew-ic' mek'ena ē gal-is.*
 we-gen post-abl car.nom it is come-ptcp.pres.
 ‘‘In front of us a car is coming.’’ i.e. the coming car is directed towards us,
 an oncoming car.

b. *Mer arjew-ic' mek'ena ē gn-um.*
 we-gen post-abl car.nom it is go-ptcp.pres.
 ‘‘In front of us a car is going.’’ i.e. the car in front of us is moving in the
 same direction as we are; we have the same starting point direction.

(660) *et'e imanay-i ayspes ē het-s mi k'ani*
 conj know-subj.past.1.sg so it is post-poss some
 vermak kber-ei.
 blanket.nom bring-cond.past.1.sg
 ‘‘If I knew that it was so, I would have brought some blankets with me.’’

(Examples from J. Dum-Tragut, *Armenian* (2009); p. 304 and p. 307)

The paper will describe this specific feature of Armenian postpositions with many examples from actually written and spoken Eastern Armenian (Republic of Armenia), and even dialects and will investigate the diachronic development of ‘‘inflected postpositions’’ in Armenian language.

Furthermore it will also discuss possible contact induced influences from Russian or other neighbouring languages into account. Particular attention will be paid to the question, whether this ‘‘inflected adpositions’’ might be regarded as one of the areal linguistic feature of the region Southern Caucasus and Anatolian/Armenian highland.