

## Origin of Sets I-II person suffixes in South Caucasian

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In the South Caucasian languages, finite verbs are specified for one or two sets of person-number features (Set I and Set II). For instance, (1) is specified for Set I 3pl while (2) is specified for Set I 3sg and Set II 2sg (the examples are in Laz). The paradigm realizing Set I features is called ‘Set I paradigm’, while the paradigm realizing Set I and Set II features is called ‘Sets I-II paradigm’. In each South Caucasian language, both the Set I and the Sets I-II paradigms contain prefixes and suffixes. Tables 1 and 2 give the person markers of Laz (for the sake of brevity, some details of the morphology are omitted). The dash indicates the position of the stem.

- |     |   |     |   |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| (1) | <i>lal-um-an</i><br>bark-TH-I3PL<br>‘they bark’ | (2) | <i>g-dzir-om-s</i><br>II2-see-TH-I3SG<br>‘he sees you <sub>sg</sub> ’ |
|-----|---|-----|---|

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1	b—	b—t
2	—	—t
3	—s	—an

**Table 1** Set I paradigm in Laz

I \ II	1sg	2sg	3sg	1pl	2pl	3pl
1sg		g—	b—		g—t	b—
2sg	m—		—	m—t		—
3sg	m—s	g—s	—s	m—an	g—an	—s
1pl		g—t	b—t		g—t	b—t
2pl	m—t		—t	m—t		—t
3pl	m—an	g—an	—an	m—an	g—an	—an

**Table 2** Sets I-II paradigm in Laz

Notice that some affixes are portmanteaus expressing both Set I and Set II features. Furthermore, some affixes occur with quite an erratic distribution. For instance, in a verb form specified for Set I only like (1), *-an* realizes <Set I 3pl>; by contrast, in a verb form specified for both Set I and Set II like (3), *-an* realizes the features <Set I 3sg> and <Set II pl>.

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| (3) | <i>g-dzir-om-an</i><br>II2-see-TH-I3SG.IIPL<br>‘he sees you <sub>pl</sub> ’ |
|-----|---|

In the system of person marking reconstructed for proto-South Caucasian, Set II features were realized by *prefixes* only (Tuite 1998:88-89; Oniani 1978:244). According to Tuite (1998), Set II was then structured by the features <speaker> and <addressee>; there was no distinction of number. The introduction of the feature <plural> is a later development. Table 3 gives the paradigm of Set II prefixes in proto-South Caucasian (Tuite 1998:89).

- |      |                        |
|------|------------------------|
| *m-  | <+speaker, –addressee> |
| *gw- | <+speaker, +addressee> |
| *g-  | <–speaker, +addressee> |
| *x-  | <–speaker, –addressee> |

**Table 3** Proto-South Caucasian Set II prefixes

The person suffixes of the modern South Caucasian languages (Laz and Mingrelian *-s*, *-t* and *-an*, Svan *-x*, etc.), which appear both in the Set I and in the Sets I-II paradigms, originally realized Set I features only. Thus, any

account of the development of person-marking morphology in the South Caucasian family must address the question how the person suffixes came to be associated with Set II features or, conversely, how Set II features, which were originally realized by prefixes only, came to be realized both by prefixes and suffixes. The only explanation to have been proposed so far is analogy (Oniani 1978:211; Deeters 1930:58; Nižaradze 1961:89; Tuite 1998:218-219). For instance, Oniani suggests that the suffix *-t* has been extended to Set II by analogy with Set I.

The analogy hypothesis leaves several facts unexplained. In particular, it does not account for the exact distribution of suffixes in the Sets I-II paradigms, a problem which is readily accounted for by the scenario I will propose in my talk. The central idea can be summarized as follows. As we have seen, in proto-South Caucasian Set II was realized by prefixes. At this stage, the ancestors of the suffixes *-t* and *-an* realized Set I features only. At a subsequent stage, *-t* and *-an* continued to be associated with the features of Stage 1, but in addition, in constructions including a plural argument triggering Set I agreement and a plural argument triggering Set II agreement, *-t* and *-an* were reanalyzed as indicating the plurality of the Set II argument. This can be schematized as follows (the arguments in bold are those which are associated with person suffixes).

Set II argument	Set I argument	verb-suffixes
<i>*dʒoɣo-epe-s</i>	<i>k'intf-epe</i>	<i>udziru-nan</i>
dog-PL-DAT	<b>bird-PL</b>	see-I3PL
'The dogs have seen the birds.'		

Stage 1 Person suffixes realize Set I features only

Set II argument	Set I argument	verb-suffixes
<i>*dʒoɣo-epe-s</i>	<i>k'intf-epe</i>	<i>udziru-nan</i>
dog-PL-DAT	<b>bird-PL</b>	see-I3PL.IIPL
'The dogs have seen the birds.'		

Stage 2 Person suffixes are reanalyzed as marking the plurality of the Set II argument

At Stage 1, cross-referencing suffixes were only associated with Set I features; at Stage 2, they became portmanteaus associated both with Set I and Set II features. In other words, the Set II paradigm complexified: while at Stage 1, it was realized by prefixes only, at Stage 2 it came to be realized by prefixes and suffixes. For instance, the development of the Set II second person marker can be summarized as in table 4. As we see, at Stage 2 Set II acquired the feature <plural>.

<u>Stage 1</u>	<u>Stage 2</u>
*g— <—speaker, +addressee>	g— <2sg>
	g— <i>t</i> <2pl>

**Table 4** Development of the Set II 2nd person marker

As will be shown, this historical scenario neatly accounts for the paradigmatic distribution of person suffixes in Laz, Mingrelian, Svan and west Georgian dialects.

Cross-linguistically, several historical sources for portmanteaus are attested. In particular, these may develop by fusion between two elements. The scenario proposed here involves another type of source: the portmanteau suffixes developed by association of some already existing suffixes with new morphosyntactic features.

In the west Georgian dialect of Adjara, the root of the verb 'come' in the future has two allomorphs. Their distribution can be accounted for by a scenario similar to the one proposed above for the development of person suffixes, as will be argued in the talk.

**Abbreviations** DAT = dative; PL = plural; SG = singular; TH = thematic suffix; I = Set I; II = Set II.

**References** Deeters, Gerhard. 1930. *Das kharthwelische Verbum. Vergleichende Darstellung des Verbalbaus der südkaukasischen Sprachen*. Leipzig: Markert et Petters — Nižaradze, Š. 1961. *Kartuli enis zemoač'aruli dialekt'i*. Batumi: Saxelmč'ipo gamomcemloba — Oniani, Aleksandre. 1978. *Kartvelur enata ist'oriuli morfologiis sak'itxebi*. Tbilisi: Mecniereba — Tuite, Kevin. 1998. *Kartvelian Morphosyntax. Number Agreement and Morphosyntactic Orientation in the South Caucasian Languages*. Lincom Europa.