



ADPOSITIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN UPPER ŞİRVAN TAT

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INTRODUCTION

- “Southwestern” Iranian language spoken mainly in Azerbaijan, also in Dagestan (Russia), Georgia, and immigrant communities (in Israel, Russia-proper, the United States, etc.)
- Different from Tati (a cluster of Northwestern Iranian languages spoken in Iranian Azerbaijan)
- Number of speakers unknown; probably several tens of thousands (down from ca. 100,000 in the late 19th c.)
- Nominative-accusative alignment

INTRODUCTION

- Two main varieties: Judæo-Tat (smaller, written, well-described) and Muslim Tat (larger, non-written, under-described); little to no mutual intelligibility between them
- Muslim Tat is divided into four main dialect groups (limited mutual intelligibility) – Upper Şirvan Tat (UŞT) being one of them
- In contact with Turkic and East Caucasian, influenced heavily by Azeri (phonology, vocabulary, derivational morphology, subordinate sentence structures, etc.)
- All speakers are bilingual in Azeri

INTRODUCTION





ADPOSITIONS IN UPPER ŞIRVAN TAT

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- Simple and compound
- Why “adpositions”?
- Examples below will show that historical prepositions can be preposed and postposed to nominal dependents



SIMPLE ADPOSITIONS

SIMPLE ADPOSITIONS

- All have cognates in Modern Persian

UᅒT	Persian
<u>bä</u> (var.: <i>be</i> , <i>bə</i> , <u>ba</u>) ‘in, to’	<i>be</i> ‘to’
<u>ä(z)</u> ‘from’	<u>az</u> ‘from’
<u>vo</u> , <u>ve</u> ‘with’	<u>bā</u> ‘with’

SIMPLE ADPOSITIONS

(1) *bə həyot ye kərg=i hi*
LOC yard one chicken=IDF EXIST2/3
'There is a chicken in the yard.'

(2) *fürmo-re ä äs*
descend-PRF2/3 from horse
'He dismounted from his horse.'

(i) *be män ijozä ti ki vo ti bi-rom*
LOC I permission (IMP)give:2 SUB with you SBJV-come.1
'Allow me to come with you.'



COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS

- Grammaticalised prepositional groups / adverbs of place (incomplete list):

ba are ‘among’ (*ara* ‘gap’)

bä birun ‘outside of’ (*birun* ‘outdoors’)

bə darun ‘inside of’ (*darun* ‘indoors’)

bä kinor ‘near, beside’ (*kinor* ‘edge’)

bä mingäh ‘in the middle of’ (*mingäh* ‘middle’)

bä pišö ‘in front of’ (*pišö* ‘front’)

bä pišt ‘behind’ (*pišt* ‘back’)

bə sär ‘on top of’ (*sär* ‘head’)

bə tän ‘toward, at, next to’ (*tän*[†] ‘body’)

bä zir ‘under’ (*zir* ‘bottom’)

vo/ve darun ‘through’

vo/ve ruz ‘after, following’ (?*ruz* ‘day’)

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS

- Can be used as adverbs in the absence of a dependent:

(ii) *däsmol=a* *ba-šun-dan=im* *bə* *darun,*
towel=OBL IPFV-throw-PRS-1PL LOC indoors
där=ä *bas-tan=im*
door=OBL close-PRS=1PL

‘We throw the towel inside and we close the door.’

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS

- Two strategies:
 - ezafe
 - oblique-marked

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS – EZAFE

- Bares resemblance to the Persian ezafe structure:

kor xuna
work home
‘housework’

xune mällö
home.EZ mullah
‘mullah’s house’

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS – EZAFE

➤ Compound adpositions preposed to their dependents:

(3) *bə_darun qäzit=iš ye jif qaloš poy vor-de*
inside newspaper=ADD one pair people share bring-PRF2/3

‘And inside the newspaper, he brought a pair of clogs as a present.’

(4) *bə_sär qäbr-ho nōš-tond*
on tomb-PL write-PRF3PL

‘It is written on the tombstones.’

(5) [‘May God always send you bread to your door...’]
bä dūr nä=dö-yi vo_ruz nun
LOC far NEG=(SBJV)run-2 following bread

‘...so that you do not have to run far to get it!’

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS – EZAFE

➤ Compound adpositions preposed to their dependents:

(6) *daraf-tanbə babo=ra bä_zir qəravot=i*
enter-PQP3 grandfather=OBL under bed=POS3
'He would get under the grandfather's bed.'

(iii) *pärt bä-bi-rän dä ba_are jamaat*
embarrassed IPFV-be-PRS:3 DM among people
'He became embarrassed in front of the people.'

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS – OBLIQUE-MARKED

- Resembles the oblique possessive construction
 - oblique marker (*r*)*ä* + possessive marker

mäʕlim=ä *kitob=i*
teacher=**OBL** book=**POS3**
‘a/the teacher’s book’

imun=a *säy=mun*
we=**OBL** dog=**POS1PL**
‘our dog’ (lit. ‘of us our dog’)

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS – OBLIQUE-MARKED

➤ Dependent acts as the morphological possessor:

(9) *ye* *däqqä=rä* *bə_darun=i* *här* *kor* *dägiš* *bī*
one minute=OBL inside=POS3 each work [changing] be.PST3

‘Within one minute, everything changed.’

(10) *tojir* *lüt_šüryun* *taxta=rä* *bə_sär=i* *xisi-re*
merchant naked.STR board=OBL on=POS3 fall_asleep-PRF2/3

‘The merchant, naked as a jaybird, is sleeping on the board.’

(11) *yek=i=rä* *ve_ruz=i* *hazor-to* *biye*
one=POS3=OBL following=POS3 thousand-QNT SBJV.come:2/3

‘Following one of them, may a thousand come!’

COMPOUND ADPOSITIONS – OBLIQUE-MARKED

➤ Dependent acts as the morphological possessor:

- (12) *qurbun* *bu-bur-um* *ü=rä* *bä_zir=i*
sacrifice SBJV-cut-1 s/he=OBL under=POS3
'I would slaughter a sacrificial lamb under it.'



PLACEHOLDER CONSTRUCTION

PLACEHOLDER CONSTRUCTION

- Term coined for Middle Persian by Jügel (to appear)
 - an enclitic pronoun in its usual position followed by a preposition marked by a third-person ‘expletive pronoun’
 - the latter does not refer to an argument but instead secures the position of the fronted pronoun after the preposition

(13) *u=š* *dām* *dō –* *ēk* *merd* *ud* *ēk* *zan –*
and=s/he creature two one man and one woman

az=iš *dēs-ād*
from=EXPL build-2PL.SBJV

‘and [he] shall form two creatures – a man and a woman –
out of it’ [Jügel, to app.]

PLACEHOLDER CONSTRUCTION

➤ Similar construction in UŞT

➤ third-person pronoun *ü* as expletive pronoun

➤ (NB. fused forms *bä + ü > bö* and *vo/ve + ü > vö*)

(14) *in* *xö=rü* *üz=ü* *bendäm* *vogah* *bi-r-um*
this dream=OBL from=s/he at.this.moment awake be-PST-1
‘At this very moment, I woke up from this dream.’

(15) *hämum=a* *üz=ü* *dü-to* *min-de*
bathroom=OBL from=s/he two-QNT stay-PRF2/3
‘There are two of the bathhouses left.’

(16) *ye* *kälä* *qažqun=i=rü* *bö* *oš* *hist=i*
one big.ATR pot=IDF=OBL LOC.s/he cooked.rice EXIST=2/3
‘There is cooked rice in one big pot.’



DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

- Placeholder construction and oblique-marked construction are both dependent-final
- However, they are different!
- Placeholder construction:
 - is only possible with the third person

män=ä bə_darun=i ‘inside me’

**män=ä äz=män* ‘from me’

- requires a personal pronoun (‘expletive’) and not a possessive clitic

ħämum=a äz=ü ‘from the bathhouse’

**ħämum=a äz=i* ‘from the bathhouse’

DISCUSSION

- Placeholder construction – relic feature of Middle Persian origin or recent development due to Turkic influence?

DISCUSSION

- Placeholder construction is typical only for UŞT
 - absent in Judaeo-Tat and in all other Muslim dialects, including some UŞT-speaking villages
- attested in Lahıc and Əhən but notably absent in Gombori where migrants from the former two settled in the early 20th c.
 - THEREFORE: probably a recent development motivated by contact with Azeri, a language with no prepositions and a rich set of postpositions and case suffixes
- made possible by analogy with oblique-marked constructions
 - due to constraints, simple adpositions could not be combined with possessive markers and a more typical 'simple adposition + personal pronoun' formula was chosen

CONCLUSION

- Elicitations and spontaneous corpus analysis indicate lack of substantial semantic differences between preposed and postposed constructions in Tat
- Similar contact-induced phenomena are attested in other Iranian languages, namely Balochi:
 - dialects of Balochi in contact with postpositional Indo-Aryan shifted to postpositional constructions either entirely (e.g. Karachi Balochi) or partially, resulting in a parallel use of prepositions and postpositions (Farrell 2003: 196)

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**BĒ DIQQÄTŠMUN
QE SOĞ BOŠIND!**