

Selected Papers

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Locative prepositions as possessums

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Abstract

We study the first parts of *Complex Preposition* structures (Ps) in Greek with respect to their construal with clitics and their option of being stranded, focusing primarily on those that refer to *location*. We provide evidence that the associated clitics are genitive, a fact we take to argue for nominal properties of the *locative* Ps. We do not resort to nominal (categorical) features in order to explain the aforementioned behavior however, as we wish to offer an analysis that does not employ categorical features (Chomsky 2001). We propose that the *locative* substantive Ps enter a possession relationship with their genitive clitics, which therefore turn out to be their (oblique) subjects rather than their objects. In doing so we account for their behavior with respect to stranding and construal with clitics and have identified a domain other than the sentential (Kayne 1993, Dikken den 1995, 1997) in which location interacts with possession.

Keywords: prepositions, locatives, location, possession, 'apo', 'se', clitics

1. Locatives of complex prepositions

1.1 The facts

The term complex Prepositions (Ps) has been associated in Greek with structures such as those in (1) below which consist of an element referring to location (1a, b), but also to time and manner (1c, d), and are followed by a smaller Preposition (*light* P), followed in its turn by a DP that carries accusative Case (Θεοφανοπούλου-Κοντού 1992, 2000). In this paper we focus primarily on the first part of complex Ps, and, in particular, on those that denote location. These are elements that have been referred to as *substantive* Ps but also as adverbials

in the traditional literature (see Θεοφαντοπούλου-Κοντού 1992, 2000 for Greek, and Campos 1991 for Spanish).

(1a) Kathisa píso apo ti Maria
sat-1s behind apo the-Mary-acc
'I sat behind Mary'

(1b) Epesa epano s' to Yianni
fell-1s on se the-John-acc
'I fell on John' (I ran into John)

(1c) Eftase prin apo emena
arrived-3s before apo me/full pronoun-acc
'S/he arrived before me'

(1d) Irtha mazi me ta pedia
came-1s with me the-children-acc
'I came with the children'

The second part of *complex P* structures, that is, the *light Ps*, are limited in number: 'apo' or 'se' (the latter contracted as *s'* on the determiner) are used with locatives, 'apo' with temporals, and 'me' with others (Θεοφαντοπούλου-Κοντού 1992). The presence of a *light P* is obligatory in complex *Ps*, as the ungrammaticality of the following demonstrates.

(2a) *Kathisa píso ti Maria
sat-1s behind the-Mary-acc
'I sat behind Mary'

(2b) *Epesa epano to Yianni
fell-1s on the-John-acc
'I fell on John'

The grammaticality of the same sentences is restored in the absence of a *light P* if the *substantive P* is followed by a clitic rather than its counterpart pronoun (or full DP). The Case that the clitic carries is genitive (in section 3.2 we will present empirical evidence supporting the view that the Case of the clitic is genitive rather than the morphologically indistinguishable dative of Modern Greek).

(3a) Kathisa píso tis
sat-1s behind she-cl-gen
'I sat behind her'

(3b) Epesa epano tou
fell-1s on he-cl-gen
'I fell on him' (I ran into him)

Construal of *light Ps* with clitics is impossible, hence the paradigm in (4)

(restricted to locatives in the remainder of the paper) is ungrammatical when the DP is replaced by the corresponding clitic, regardless of the Case that the clitic carries.

(4a) *Kathisa píso apo tis/tin
sat-1s behind apo she-cl-gen/acc
'I sat behind her'

(4b) *Epesa epano s' tou/ton
fell-1s on se he-cl-gen/acc
'I fell on him'

It thus emerges from the above that the behavior of the two types of *Ps* involved in complex Preposition structures is different at least with respect to the Case of the associated DPs/clitics and the possibility of being construed with a clitic or a full DP. We will begin our study of the behavior of *substantive Ps* by focusing precisely on these properties. For the same reason, we continue immediately below with a brief presentation of current views on the relationship of Prepositions and object clitics.

2. Prepositions and object clitics

In recent work, Abels (2003) points out that Prepositions tend not to accept clitics as their complements, as demonstrated by the examples below:

(5a) *Gia ton milise o Petros
about him-cl talked the-Peter-nom
Greek

(5b) *Sobre le habló Pedro
about him-cl talked Pedro
Spanish

(5c) *Prema joj Jovan i Milan isli
toward her-cl Jovan and Mary went
Serbo/Croatian

The very same structures become grammatical when the clitic is replaced by the corresponding full pronoun (or DP).

(6a) Gi' afton milise o Petros
about him talked the-Peter-nom

(6b) Sobre el habló Pedro
about him talked Pedro

(6c) Prema njoj Jovan i Milan isli
toward her Jovan and Milan went

This is also the behavior manifested by the *light Ps* of the previous section, as illustrated by the contrasts in (7) vs. (8).

(7a) Kathisa piso apo ti Maria
sat-1s behind apo the-Mary-acc
'I sat behind Mary'

(7b) Epesa epano s' to Yianni
fell-1s on se the-John-acc
'I fell on John'

(8a) *Kathisa piso apo tis/tin
sat-1s behind apo she-cl-gen/acc
'I sat behind her'

(8b) *Epesa epano s' tou/ton
fell-1s on se he-cl-gen/acc
'I fell on him'

Abels (2003) associates the incompatibility between Ps and their object clitics with the lack of P(reposition) stranding in the language. He notices that the ban on Ps with object clitics seems to be waived for those languages that allow P stranding. English is taken to be such an instance, (9), provided one is ready to consider 'I in (9b) a counterpart of the Slavic/Romance clitics.

(9a) What did you see Mary sitting on?

(9b) I saw Mary sitting on 'I

Icelandic, (10), Norwegian, and Gbadi (West African) are further instances, with examples from Hellan and Platzack (1999) and Koopman (1984) (cited in Abels 2003), who argue for the clitic status of the pronominal objects of Ps.

(10) Ég hugsaði um 'ana
I thought about her

In short, Abels's idea is that clitics have moved past the P, even when we see them to follow Ps. It is, therefore, expected that they are encountered as complements of Ps in languages that also allow for P stranding (which are considered to differ from non-P-stranding languages in terms of P not heading a phase).

3. Construal of prepositions with clitics

3.1 Locative Ps and clitics

Substantive Ps, such as the *locatives* of the paradigm below, appear stranded (11a), by contrast to the *light* Ps that follow them (11b):

(11a) Se ti_i to evalues epano ti_i?

(11b) *Ti_i to evalues epano se ti_i?
what it-cl put-2s on se
'What did you put it on?'

Similar behavior is manifested by counterpart structures in Spanish, (12), as has been discussed by Campos (1991). Campos adds that other prepositions which allow for 'stranding' are *debajo* (under), *lejos* (far), *enfrente* (in front), *detrás* (behind). Notice that they all refer to location.

(12a) De qué edificio_i está cerca ti_i la facultad?
de what building is close the school

(12b) *Qué edificio_i está cerca de ti_i la facultad?
what building is close de the school
'What building is the school near to?'

Another similarity between Greek and Spanish *locative* Ps is that both can stand on their own, by contrast to the *light* Ps that follow them.

(13a) Ine to vivlio epano s' to trapezi?
is the book on se the table
'Is the book on the table?'

(13b) Ne, ine epano
yes, is on

(13c) *Ne, ine epano s(e)
yes, is on se
'Yes, it's on'

(14a) Julia vive cerca de la universidad?
'Does Julia live near the university?'

(14b) Sí, vive bastante cerca
yes, lives enough close

(14c) *Sí, vive bastante cerca de
yes, lives enough close de
'Yes, (she) lives pretty close'

Hence, the contrasts in (11) and (12) are at first glance consistent with Abels' (2003) proposals which relate the ban on P stranding with the incompatibility of Ps and object clitics. That is, while *light* Ps cannot be stranded and cannot be construed with an object clitic, the *locative* Ps above are compatible with clitics and may stand without being followed by a *light* PP or a clitic.

However, the behavior of the latter structures, in particular, such as (11a), comes as a surprise, if one holds that Greek is not a P stranding language (see

stranding in Greek). Similar considerations have led Campos (1991) to propose a more plausible view to *locative* Ps (rather than assuming that they involve an exceptional instance of P stranding). In short, he proposes that:

- (15) Substantive 'Ps' are [+N], a feature responsible for their noun/adjective behavior.

Hence, structures such as (12a) are more similar to (16a), rather than to genuine instances of P stranding of the English type. At first glance it seems that Campos' (1991) proposal can extend to the Greek *locative* parts of complex Ps, along with the counterpart extraction facts from nominals in (16b).

- (16a) De qué, libro no sabes por qué censuraron la resena t_i ?
 of which book_i neg know-2s why censored-3p the review t_i ?
 (16b) Piou vivliou, den kseris giati logokrinan tin kritiki t_i ?
 which-gen book-gen neg know-2s why censored-3p the review

Proposals claiming a nominal character for *locative* Ps are not new. They have been proposed on different grounds and for languages as different as English (Bresnan 1991, 1994) and Hungarian (Maracz 1984).

When it comes to Greek and the *locative* Ps of interest, the idea that they have nominal properties, setting aside for the moment how these are to be captured, gains empirical support from the fact that the Case of the clitic construed with them is genitive and genitive is a Case associated with nominals in Greek.

3.2 *Locative Ps and genitive clitics*

Notice that we have assumed so far that the clitics construed with *locative* Ps carry genitive Case, an assumption that is not immediately obvious. This is so because there is also the possibility that the clitics construed with *locative* Ps carry dative Case instead, a Case that has collapsed morphologically with genitive in Modern Greek. There is however evidence which demonstrates that the Case of the clitics following *locative* Ps is indeed genitive and we will present it immediately below. The evidence comes from Macedonian Greek.

In Macedonian Greek the dative-accusative distinction of Standard Greek is not present. Thus, indirect objects of ditransitives are inflected for accusative (17a), rather than the dative of Standard Greek (17b), namely, they bear the same inflection as the accusative objects of transitive verbs (17c) (see Dimitriadis 1999).

- (17a) Ton edhosa xrimata
 him-cl-acc gave-1s money

- (17b) Tou edhosa xrimata
 him-cl-dat gave-1s money
 'I gave him money'
 (17c) Ton ida
 him-cl-acc saw-1s
 'I saw him'

Although dative has collapsed with accusative in Macedonian Greek, (17a) vs. (17c), genitive remains distinct, as is manifested by complements of nouns, (18a). Example (18b) demonstrates that when the possessor is inflected for accusative rather than genitive the result is ungrammatical.

- (18a) To vivlio tou
 the book his-cl-gen
 'His book'
 (18b) *To vivlio ton
 the book his-cl-acc
 'His book'

Within this line of reasoning, one expects that if clitics following *locative* Ps carried dative Case they would also surface as accusative in Macedonian, hence (19a) would be grammatical. The ungrammaticality of (19a) demonstrates that this is not the case: instead, clitics that follow *locative* Ps are inflected like complements of nouns (19b), (cf. 18a).

- (19a) *Piso ton
 behind him-cl-acc
 (19b) Piso tou
 behind him-cl-gen
 'Behind him'

Therefore, based on the empirical support provided by the Case morphology of complements of *locative* Ps in Macedonian Greek, we conclude that *locative* Ps bear similarities with nominals since the Case of their clitic complement is genitive rather than dative and genitive is a Case associated with nominals in Greek. Hence, the evidence from Macedonian Greek suggests that Campos' (1991) claims in (15) seem to be on the right track and can extend to the Greek *locative* Ps as well, which therefore can also be considered to have nominal properties, or else, a nominal (categorical) feature.

A problem that an idea along these lines currently presents, however, is that it does not transpose easily to latest theoretical developments which dispense

arguments against Bresnan's (1991, 1994) claims that *locative* Ps are nominal, based on the above, and other, considerations.

4. An alternative

The line we would like to pursue here is that the genitive Case of clitics in the structures of interest is related to the locative interpretation of the *substantive* Ps with which they are construed rather than to the nominal features of these Ps. In other words, we suggest that the genitive Case of the clitics construed with *locative* Ps is not a direct consequence of the nominal nature of the P, but follows from the relation between location (to which the *substantive* Ps refer) and possession and the fact that possession is (also) expressed via genitive Case crosslinguistically. In order to develop this idea, some background on the relation between location and possession in the sentential and nominal domains is presented immediately below.

4.1 Location and Possession in the sentential domain

In Freeze (1992) it is proposed that sentences such as (20b) and (21b) derive from (20a) and (21a) respectively, via incorporation of the locative P to Infl and its subsequent transformation to 'have'.

- (20a) The book is on the bench
 (20b) Lupe has a book
 (21a) kniga byla na stole
 book.nom.fem was on table.loc
 'The book was on the table'

- (21b) u menja byla sestra
 at 1sg.gen was sister.nom
 'I had a sister'

Similar ideas are expressed by Kayne (1993) who, in the spirit of Beveniste (1966), proposes that 'have' is an inverted 'be'. If we consider the 'be' structure in (23) that gives rise to 'have' in (22) to be essentially a locative, we observe again the relation that holds between location and possession. See also Dikken den (1995, 1997) and Muromatsu (1997) for precise proposals regarding the role of the prepositions 'to' in these contexts (and 'of' in nominals) and the inversion of 'be' to 'have'.

- (22) John has a book
 (23) is [to John] a book

With this much in mind, let us now proceed to the nominal domain

4.2 Possession (and genitive) in nominals

In the nominal domain possession is a relationship expressed via genitive Case on the possessor DP. Genitive is a case associated with a number of *th-roles* crosslinguistically, such as possessor (23a), agent/creator (23b), or theme (23c), (see Wit de 1997, Alexiadou 2003), all of which are instantiated in Greek:

- (24a) To vivlio tou Nikou
 the-book-nom the-Nick-gen
 'Nick's book'
 (24b) To piima tou Cavafy
 the-poem-nom the-Cavafy-gen
 'Cavafy's poem'
 (24c) I katastrofi tis polis
 the-destruction-nom the-city-gen
 'The city's destruction'

Possession comes in two variants in nominals: alienable (25a) and inalienable (25b).

- (25a) To vivlio tou Yianni
 the-book-nom the-John-gen
 'John's book'
 (25b) To xeri tou Yianni
 the-arm-nom the-John-gen
 'John's arm'

Based primarily on languages in which, unlike Greek, morphology is different for inalienable and alienable possession, Alexiadou (2003) proposes a different structure for each relationship. She attributes the structure in (26a) to alienable possession and the structure in (26b) to inalienable possession. Her idea is that in alienable possession the possessor behaves like an agent that introduces the possessum, and draws empirical support from languages such as Tolai (Chappel and McGregor 1989) in which the possessor is marked outside the DP, introducing a possessum which presupposes selection. No comparable marking has been encountered in inalienable possession, in which possessor and possessum constitute a whole, as a result of which they are considered to appear within one phrase, the PP in (26b).

- (26a) [DP [FP possessor [F [NP possessum]]]] alienable possession
 (26b) [DP [XP possessum [X [PP possessor]]]] inalienable possession

4.3 Genitive clitics of locative Ps as possessors

The idea that locative Ps are in a possession relationship with the clitic that follows them accounts for the genitive Case of the clitic and attributes to it the th-role of the possessor. If so, the corresponding structure is as in (27a) below:

(27a) [YP ... [FP tou [F [XP [piso behind
he-cl-gen

If we are right with respect to the above, the clitic that is construed with locative Ps is not their complement. Therefore, it is compatible with substantive locative Ps (unlike with *light* Ps) and the relationship with Preposition stranding discussed in section 2 becomes irrelevant. Moreover, if the genitive clitic of locative Ps is the possessor, it is reasonable to consider it to occupy a 'subject' position, in (27).

The fact that clitics follow rather than precede locative Ps can be considered to follow from movement of the locative P to a position past the clitic.

(27b) [YP piso_i ... [FP tou [F [XP [t_i]]]]
behind he-cl-gen

Notice that substantive Ps that do not refer to location, although parts of complex Ps, (28a)-(29a), are not construed with a genitive clitic (28b)-(29b).

(28a) Eftase prin apo emena
arrived-3s before apo me/full pronoun-acc
'S/he arrived before me'

(28b) *Eftase prin mou
arrived-3s before me-cl-gen

(29a) Eftase meta apo emena
arrived-3s after apo me/full pronoun-acc

'S/he arrived after me'

(29b) *Eftase meta mou
arrived-3s after me-cl-gen

Both *prin* 'before' and *meta* 'after' are followed by the *light* P *apo* only. This contrasts with the locative *dipla* 'besides', for instance, which can be followed either by *apo* or *se* (30a), and shows the clitic option (30b).

(30a) Stekete dipla apo/se ton Niko
stand-3s besides apo/se the-Nick-acc
'S/he is standing besides Nick'

(30b) Stekete dipla tou
stand-3s besides he-cl-gen

It is unlikely, however, that the clitic option is available only for those substantive Ps that have the option of being construed with *se*, since *makria* 'far' below is only construed with *apo* (31a), but manifests the clitic option (31b).

(31a) Pige ke kathise makria apo/*se ton Niko
went-3s and sat-3s far apo/*se the-Nick-acc
'S/he went and sat far from Nick'

(31b) Pige ke kathise makria tou
went-3s and sat-3s far he-cl-gen
'S/he went and sat far from him'

It does seem therefore that the crucial factor for the genitive clitic to appear with a substantive P is that the P is a locative substantive.

4.3.1 Locatives in complex P structures

When locative Ps are followed by a PP introduced by a *light* P, their structure can be considered as in (32), without anything more interesting to say for the moment.

(32) [YP ... [FP [F [XP konda [FP s' [DP ti Maria]]]]]]
near se the-Mary-acc

It should nevertheless be pointed out that the structures in (27a) and (32) that we have attributed to locative Ps are reminiscent of the structures in (26a) and (26b) that Alexiadou (2003) has proposed for the two types of possession, alienable and inalienable respectively.

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SECTION II

SEMANTICS – PRAGMATICS – DISCOURSE