Adpositions: Function Marking in Human Languages. Claude Hagège.
UK: Oxford University Press. 2010. ISBN-978-0-19-957500-8. Pp. 372.

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940** 14:3 March 2014
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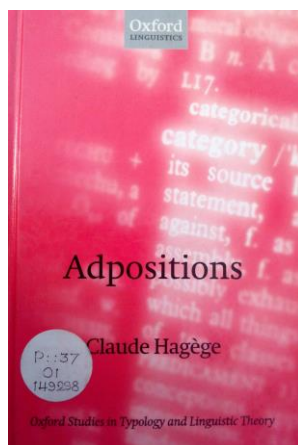
Various *Positions*

Some languages have *prepositions* (e.g. English language) while others have *postpositions* (e.g. Marathi language) and some languages have both. In few languages, there are *circumpositions,* too (e.g. Dutch language). English has prepositions and obviously they precede nominal i.e. Nouns or Noun-like element and Marathi has postpositions that follow nominal stems. And *Dutch circumpositions* remains at both sides of the complement. All these three languages belong to Indo-European language family.

Adposition/s

Adposition/s grammatical category has been much neglected in linguistic research as compared to other syntactic phenomena. Hagège rightly cites Meira in this regard as:

> *Adpositions [...] are a neglected class in typological studies: most typologies of part-of-speech systems do not even mention them, or then only casually, as, "case markers", or as "syntactic adverbializers". There have been studies on the semantics of specific adpositions ("in", "on", "over", etc.), but no considerations on the adpositional class as a whole. After all, why are there adpositions? Why do some languages have a special group of adpositions, while others do not? These questions have, the best of my knowledge, never been addressed in the literature (Meira 2004: 233).*

Confused with terms like *preverbs, direction pointers, locative stems, applicatives,* etc.

Adpositions might be confused often with terms like: *preverbs, direction pointers, locative stems, applicatives,* etc., though they can never be treated as adpostions (62-78). The problem lies between distinguishing case affixes from adpositions.

This book *Adpositions: Function Marking in Human Languages* by Claude Hagège is an attempt to bridge this gap.

The cover term '*Adposition'* is defended by Hagège as it is most adequate, least unsatisfying, and the most widespread among modern linguists; especially typologists as compared to other terms like *case, case marker, relator, flag,* and *fucteme.* These terms are

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inadequate in some way or the other. *Case* says nothing about function marker; **case marker** is less usable; *relator* includes case relators, adverbial relators and case role markers and **functeme** is also incomplete; though it is a new coinage (103-105).

Schemata of the Book

The book is arranged precisely in six sections.

In first section, Hagège defines adposition operationally follows adpositional research profile, scope, approach and argument of the book.

The second section characterizes adpositon comprehensively.

The following section 3 presents a cross-linguistic survey of the morphological diversity of adpositions and adpositional phrases.

Sections 4 and 5 proceed with syntactic and semantic perspectives of adpositions.

The last section, section 6, discusses the theoretical complexities and the result of the preset work.

The primacy of the morphology has been emphasized throughout the book. These sections precede synoptic *Contents* and follow *References* and *Indexes of Languages, Names, Subjects,* and *Notions.*

Section 1: Introduction

1. The Book is for You!

Besides typologists and professional linguists, the book will help language teachers, second/ foreign language learners, non-linguists from social sciences, sciences, and to everyone who is curious to know about languages.

2. The Scope of the Book

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The book is intended to meet the requirements which have not been adequately met in morphology, syntax and semantics on this topic yet. The book explores Adpositions from all way round to know its nature and function in the language/s. The present book studies the general characteristics, morphological features, syntactic functions, semantic and cognitive properties, not only of certain adpositions which express the core relations like agent, patient and other roles like space, time, accompaniment, instrument, but study Adpositions as a whole set (4).

2. Hagège's Approach

The author has adopted functionalist framework, i.e., Three View Point Theory more specifically. That assumes/ views that sentences produced by a speaker and interpreted by a hearer can be applied three points of views: i) morphological and syntactic, ii) semantic, referential and cognitive, and iii) information-hierarchical and pragmatic. The author uses a corpus of 434 languages from diverse language families of the world to substantiate his study crosslinguistically. He assumes adpositions as a fundamental part of speech and gives reason that only lexemes can't make link to build complete and meaningful sentences for better human communication (5-6).

Section 2: Towards a Comprehensive Characterization of Adpositions

While characterizing adposition, Hagège in this section describes what they are, what they are not and their synchronic and diachronic nature and function. He defines;

An adposition (Adp) is an unanalysable or analysable grammatical word constituting an adpositional phrase (Adp-phrase) with a term that it puts in relationship, like case affixes, with another linguistic unit, by marking the grammatical and semantic links between them (8).

Head in Adp-phrase can be a noun, adjective or a verb either in prepositional phrase or postpositional phrase. In many languages a number of Adps, most of them or all of them are derived from verbs or nouns (8). Hagège, while characterizing Adbs, differentiates Adps from some other word-types parts that are often confused with Adps. For example: i) <u>verb-phrase-internal word-types like</u> *preverbs, direction-pointers, direct/inverse morphemes, locative stems, applicatives*, etc. and ii) <u>verb-phrase-external word-types like</u> inseparable parts of complex

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words, *depredicants* (they are associated like Adps to noun phrase but do not indicate function or relate to their syntactic center), *modifiers* of the verb meaning (those which do not govern noun-phrase but modify the meaning of the verb), *chorophorics* (that stress the spatial meaning of the noun phrase), *topicalizers*, and *co-ordination marker* (62-96).

Adps and Case Affixes

Hagège takes rigorous efforts to distinguish between the most complicated terms *Adps* and *Case Affixes.* Hagège feels its functional homology has often been stressed and so he cites the statement of Zwicky (1992: 370) "Everything you can do with Adps you can do with case inflections, and vice versa" and counters this statement (Zwiky: 1992: 369) through focusing on syntactic issues rather than morphological ones (17).

Adps and case affixes are the main and most widespread case-marking strategies in the human languages. Hagège acknowledges the thin line between them, their similar syntactic functions, their semantic parallelism (space, time and other roles) and pragmatic strategies like focus marking. Yet he tries to distinguish them giving phonological, morphological, word order, syntactic, semantic, cognitive and pragmatic, and diachronic criteria. He opens with phonological criteria and he negates the same saying:

> *The examination of phonological properties does not give decisive criteria to allow us to distinguish between Adps and case affixes (24).*

Mostly, Hagège relies on morphological criteria. He differentiates prominent properties of fusional case affixes and angglutinative case affixes. Former one is fused with the stem it governs and morphologically obligatory, mostly unanalysable, takes number of categories together like; case, gender, number, and sometimes definite article. Latter expresses only case, optional where bare stem can appear on its own (25). He further maintains that case affixes mostly are simple vowels or monosyllabic morphemes unlike Adps. Secondly, from case affixes one of the members in the paradigm nominative or obsolutive has a zero mark of the same importance as other marks. Adps (a set of prepositions or postpositions) have no zero mark member. He then compares case doubling phenomenon with Adps (e.g. Russian), and also admits that the ban on Adp doubling is not universal (Hungarian). Later he defends on the basis

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of statistical frequency that Adps are not statistically dominant as case affixes (25-27). He reports about the above criteria:

> *However, since they [Adps] exist, we must look for other morphological criteria that could more radically distinguish case affixes from Adps (27).*

Hagège also rejects his own fourth morphological criterion about nominal declensions for not having systematicity in it. He offers a fifth criterion relating to the inflection problem of case affixes and Adps. There are fewer examples of Adps than case affixes violating the "inflection avoidance inside derivation". He gives a sixth criterion as Adps can be combined with various morphemes like diminutives and negations, but Hagège knows no example of similar combinations regarding case affixes even as he admits the possibility of such combinations even. The last criterion proposed by him is in relation to the respective sizes of Adps and case affixes: longer and shorter. Case affixes are more frequent than Adps regarding marking of core functions (28-29).

In word-order criterion, he reveals the movement of Adps within sentence, e.g. juxtaposition, unlike case affixes. In syntactic criteria, he guides us to distribution of Adps and case affixes with respect to core and non-core function marking. Further, agreement control is more frequent among case affixes than Adps. Later he mentions some exceptions like: Acehnese, Niuean, Tigrè languages (34). In Semantic and pragmatic criteria, case affixes are generally not omitted, he says, while Adps may be omitted. Adps have more iconic power than case affixes. He gives the example of conscious Adp building in Modern Thai. The meaning can be attested easily to Adps than to case affixes, he states. In diachronic criteria, we have finite number of case affixes. Adps are relatively more. Former are less open to evolution than Adps (29-37). He believes that in those languages which use both case affixes and Adps, case may be used to express more abstract relations than spatial relations which is the domain of Adps, but, it is found that case affixes also show spatial and other relations and Adps also may be used as indirect agent/ subjecthood. In this section, he succeeded in the characterization of adposition from many different word-types. Yet, differentiating Adps from case affixes is less unconvincing as many criteria have been negated by him for one or another reason. The length and frequency of the case affixes and Adps are undoubtedly distinctive. But don't we have more/ less frequent and

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shorter/longer words in another word category? This problem will be more obvious in postpositional languages than in prepositional ones. Research in individual languages will discover better solution in this regard. Lastly in this section, he defends aptly the term *adposition* than other terms like *case, case-marker, functeme* or *relator*.

Section 3: Crosslinguistic Survey of the Morphological Diversity of Adpositions and Adpositional Phrases

The distribution of Adps varies greatly from one language to another (108). As Hagège cites DeLancey;

> *Where Tibetan or Japanese have fewer than half-a-dozen postpositions, English has scores of prepositions – indeed no fixed number can be determined, as language is slowly but steadily adding to the set ... (DeLancey 1997:5)*

On the basis of positions of Adps there are generally three types: prepositions, postpositions and ambipositions with respect to their governed term. Out of 1033 languages, 417 are VO and have prepositions, 427 are OV and have postpositions. But there are 38 languages which have VO word order and postpositions and 10 having OV and prepositions. These four combinations are possibly seen here. A language like Chinese possesses both prepositions from verbal source and postpositions from nominal source (111-112). Postpositions are more attached to their governed term unlike prepositions which are more linked with verb. Some languages (e.g. German) have ambipositions as the Adps come at both sides of the governed term. Hagège warns;

> *Ambipositions should not be confused with homonyms, that is two different Adps which happen to have the same form and to appear, respectively, in pre- and postnominal positions (115).*

He cites Libert (2006) to explain the state of Ewe language which has preposition *'to'* which means *"through"* and postpositon *'to'* which means *"edge"* where former comes from verbal and later from putative source. They are not an ambiposition at all (115). Circumpositon is rather uncommon and here morphemes of the same Adp come at both sides.

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Later, some morphological features like Adp ellipsis and Adp migrations are given. He put forth the simple, compound and complex Adps in the section. *Simple Adps* are those that are neither compound nor derivatives, i. e., these cannot be analyzed in component parts. *Compound Adps* differ from complex Adps and also from compound cases. In many languages they are formed with adverbials and spatial or non-spatial Adps (e.g. English *'ahead of'*). Its use is widespread to form with association of nominal/ adjectival/ participial elements with one monosyllabic Adp (e.g. *because of, depending on, thanks to, with respect to*, etc.) They may contain element of negation or subordinating morpheme like French *essive* compound *'en tant que'*. Some authors do not consider compound Adps in the category of Adps. *Complex Adps* constituted by the combination of an Adp and case affix (128-130). Then, he describes the phonetic and morphological changes occurring in Adps and governing terms. Lastly, he studies the relationship between Adps and verbs and those between Adps and nouns. In most of the languages, Adps are derived from nouns and verbs through the process of grammaticalization in long periods of time (151). Adp is midway category between noun and verb; they [Adps] are best characterized as a morpholexical category. Hagège expresses a special status of Adps as:

> *The human mind has the capacity of giving names to things and to processes, hence the quasi-universal existence of nouns and verbs. But the relationship it establishes between these names has itself, at the same time, a reality. Humans have built logical systems with relational elements which are purely relational. But they have also built languages, in which there are no purely relational elements. This is what the study of Adps reveals (151).*

In the process of grammaticalization, the following changes happen (Hagège 1993: ch. 7 and Lehmann 1995): the phonological reduction, morphological reduction, formal fusion, sequential fixation, combinatory limitedness/ constrains, increased syntactic specialization, increased frequency, semantic bleaching, etc.

Section 4: Adpositions and Adpositional Phrases in a Syntactic Perspective

Adps and case affixes have many things in common, since they both mark various types of complement types, which they link with a syntactic head; whether this head has a predicative function or not. As linguists rest on the assumption that case is a general concept, case affixes and Adps do the same job. The particular ways in which Adps *per se* participate in the marking

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of these syntactic functions have not been thoroughly examined, says Hagège (191). He prefers core/ non-core distinction rather than other terms available to show relations. He observes the fact mentioned below, whereas in the previous section, he contrasted case affixes with Adps noting that members from the former have at least one member having zero mark " … and many languages there are unmarked adverbial complements" (193). The boundary between core and non-core complements is not always clear-cut. He gives crosslinguistic hierarchy of function marking for Adps as; *Periferal > DO > IO > S.*

Hagège describes three functions of Adps as adverbial complement of verbal head, adnominal complement of nominal head and predicates by themselves with or without copula. He also explains focalization of two types, intonational and clefting patterns respectively as in the following examples:

a. *they are not* **for** *you but* **against** *you*

b. *it is* **with him** *that she wants to work (255)*

Interestingly, he also discusses Adps functions as Subject and Object. For Adp-phrase as subject and object, he cites Zwiky 1952 and provides his examples for the ltater.

a. **for** *me to be happy would please them (202)*

b. *the new tenants are reclaiming* **behind the garage** *(204)*

Hagège describes some Adps having special syntactic characteristics. These complement types have in common the ability to contain predicative elements which do not behave like predicates in independent clause, for example, the two analyses of the same clause:

he slept with the window open (Pp. 222)

Figure: AP = adverbial phrase   *Figure: SC = small cause*
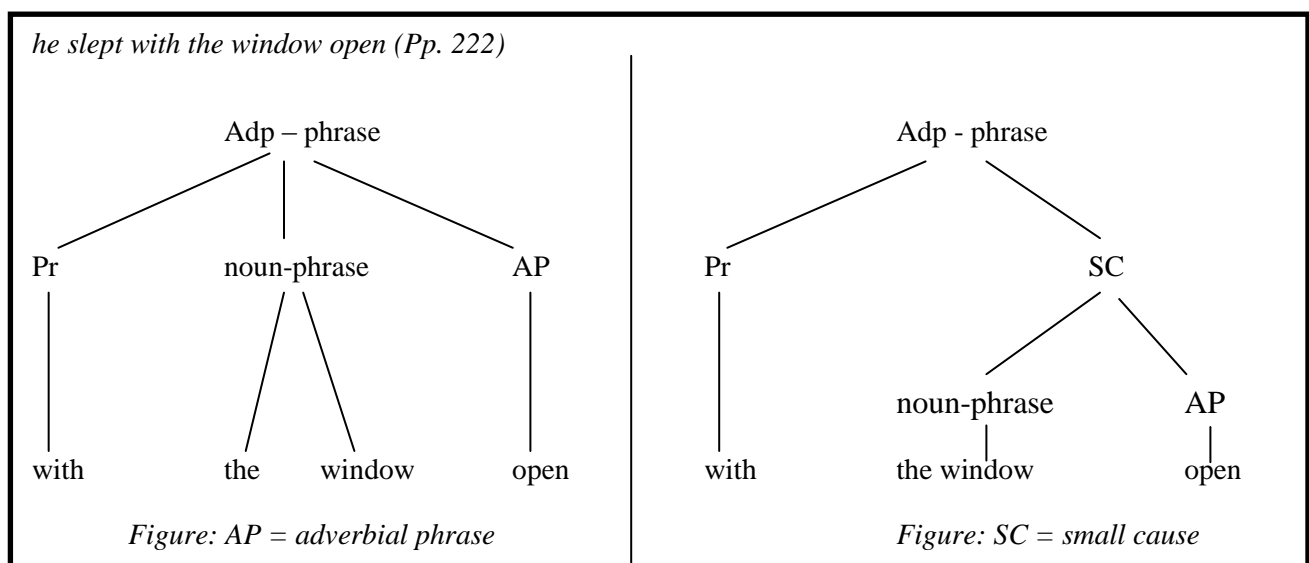
Such type of syntactic behavior is awaited more research in different languages. He also talks about weak and strong transitivity, marked and unmarked core and non-core relations and ends this section with diversity of syntactic behaviour illustrating by Englsih preposition *'on'*.

Section 5: Adpositions from Semantic Point of View

Hagège elaborates the semantic functions (listed below) and explains throughout this section, he also compares and contrasts them to clarify (261-262);

Sr. No.	Semantic domains		Semantic functions
1	**Core Meanings**		agentive, patientive, attributive, possessive
2	**Non-core Meanings**		
	A. Spatio-temporal	Static	inessive-spatial, inessive-temporal, apudessive, adessive, abessive-spatial, abessive-temporal, obsessive, suressive, suppressive, subessive, preessive-spatial, preessive-temporal, circumessive, medioessive, interessive.
		Non-static	illative, allative, terminative-spatial, terminative-temporal, ablative, obversive, surlative, superversive, sublative, prelative, postlative, circumlative, mediolative, interlative, perlative-spatial, perlative-temporal, prolative, secutive.
	B. Non-spatio-temporal		proprietive, exclusive, exceptive, comitative, instrumentive, mediative, mediative, motivative, concessive, comparative of equality (equative, assimilative), comparative of inequality, essive/ translative/ mutative, purposive, adversative, pertentive, roborative, adnumerative, additive, substitutive, hypothetical.

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This chapter studies the relationship between syntactic and semantic behaviour of Adp. It also studies the contribution of Adps and Adp-phrases to the construction and interpretation of meaning, the paradigmatic relations within the set of semantic function shown by Adps. Every language makes its own selection by the way it elaborates its adpositional system. Hagège gives four semantic domains as; core, spatial, temporal, and notional, crosslinguistically, expressed by Adps. He also tackled the problem of name-worthy cognitive contents (329).

Section 6: Conclusion and Prospects

The results of the book can be summarized as follows: Adps are studied in wide spectrum cross-linguistically. Comparison between Adps and case affixes went beyond their functional equivalence. Semantic and cognitive distinctions were introduced between place as entity and place as an inherent spatial relation. Definition and examination of complex and compound Adps have never been studied before. The phenomena of conjugated adpositions, special syntactic uses of Adp-phrases like subjects, objects, adnominal complements, and predicates were studies. Implicational hierarchies were projected. The assessment of new phenomenon like introducing new Adp or making one obsolete by public authority as in Thai and Israeli Hebrew respectively was done. The new terms like '*circumlative', 'pertentive', 'roborative'* and *'secutive'* were coined for four domains of semantic roles like core domains, and non-core domains i.e. spatial, temporal, and relational (330-331).

Adpositions could be considered as a clear-cut category as a function marker syntactically. But syntax is not sufficient criterion and morphological distinction is more important to Adps as a different category. Adps is more than a syntacticcategory; it is a morpholexical category, Hagège suggests, because Adps display extraordinary variety of forms and combinations. They cover enormous field of meanings, and they occupy a central place in language categories, though they are neither indispensable nor universal. Besides a mere grammatical tool, Adps belong to lexicon and have complex, rich and far-reaching semantic contents and cognitive implications (332).

Adps are midpoints in the process of grammaticalization. Their very nature shows the moving and unstable nature of human languages, and it's a dynamic category. The data suggests

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that this category needs more than syntactic definitions provided by theoretical models. For example, cognitive semantics defining adpositions requires morphology. Hagège emphasizes the primacy of morphosemantics regarding Adps study (333-334).

Contemplating Remarks

As the research studies on Adps in most of the languages are not refined (and many discrepancies are there), Hagège's corpus of 434 languages obviously offer important and useful data. There are fuzzy boundaries in definitions, nature and functions about adpositional issues in many individual languages. There is need, indeed, to study them thoroughly within and across languages before going to make universal principles about Adps. Hagège's efforts, no doubt, are stimulating in this regard, and the present book will be a milestone when language professionals begin to collect more data. These studies also will either confirm the claims of Hagège or reject them. Research on Adpositional phenomenon at three levels will bring in more insights:

1) Study of Adps in an individual language equally stressing its morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics.
2) Study of Adps from only prepositional or postpositional languages, and
3) Word languages across many families to discover the universal nature of Adps.

To sum up, I can definitely say that this book made me think. You will also enjoy reading it. You may utilize it while doing research on your language. You will begin to think of previous studies of your language with a different perspective. And there lies the importance of the book.

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