

Decliticization and Deaffixation in Saame:  
Abessive taga\*

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1. Introduction

Agglutination is an extremely common diachronic process in the languages of the world. As one of the oldest and best-known theories of the genesis of affixes, it has been used widely as a method of reconstructing constituent order, as in Givón's (1971) now well-known slogan "Today's morphology is yesterday's syntax." According to the agglutination hypothesis, affixes are historically former words that have lost their independence and have cliticized onto a neighbor, only later to fuse into the host as an affix, as in (1).

(1) WORD > CLITIC > AFFIX

There have been recent attempts to constrain and even refute this methodology, e.g. by Anderson (1980) and Comrie (1980) among others. In general, though, linguists have accepted the agglutinative cycle of words, even if only as a general tendency.

There are only a few instances of the opposite direction of change in the literature on agglutination (e.g. Jeffers and Zwicky 1980, Janda 1981), in which an affix has become a clitic or a clitic has become a word:

(2) AFFIX > CLITIC > WORD

I adopt some relevant terminology from Jeffers and Zwicky (1980). The reanalysis of a word as a clitic is called cliticization and the reanalysis of a clitic as a word decliticization. The reanalysis of a clitic as an affix is affixation and that of an affix as a clitic is deaffixation:

(3) Cliticization: WORD > CLITIC  
Decliticization: CLITIC > WORD  
Affixation: CLITIC > AFFIX  
Deaffixation: AFFIX > CLITIC

In Saame (Lappish) deaffixation and decliticization are possible developments. The abessive morpheme is traditionally viewed as a case ending, but I will argue that it is in fact a clitic in most varieties of N. Saame and Kildin Saame, and a full word in the Enontekiö variety of N. Saame (section 2). Afterwards I will demonstrate that the abessive originates historically as an affix (section 3 and 4).

2. Evidence for Synchronic Loose Status

The motivation for the clitic postposition status of abessive taga (--- haga) comes from its syntactic properties. It exhibits the

syntax and morphology of regular postpositions in that it governs the genitive on the preceding noun phrase, it permits "conjunction reduction", it attaches outside possessive enclitics, and it disallows adjective-noun concord. A typical case suffix, in contrast, attaches to a stem rather than a fully formed genitive noun phrase, does not permit "conjunction reduction", attaches inside possessive enclitics, and allows adjective concord wherever appropriate.

The paradigm in (4) shows the morphotactics of a noun. Notice that case morphemes precede possessive morphemes. This is entirely expected since the case endings are generally<sup>1</sup> true suffixes and the possessives are enclitics (Collinder 1949: 7, 1957: 193-94) -- clitics always attach externally to affixes when the two cooccur (cf. Zwicky 1977).

- (4) POSSESSIVE PARADIGM for ak'ko 'grandmother'  
plus possessive -m 'my' (from Itkonen 1960:46-49)

	SINGULAR
NOMINATIVE	ak'ku-m
GENITIVE	ak'ku-m
ACCUSATIVE	ak'ku-m
ILLATIVE	ak'ku-sâ-m
LOCATIVE	akko-stâ-m
ESSIVE	ak'ko-nâ-m
COMITATIVE	akko-inâ-m
	PLURAL
NOMINATIVE	akko-idâ-m
GENITIVE	akko-idâ-m
ACCUSATIVE	akko-idâ-m
ILLATIVE	akko-idâ-sa-m
LOCATIVE	akko-i-nâ-m
ESSIVE	akko-nâ-m
COMITATIVE	akko-idâ-m-guim

- (5) MORPHOTACTICS of the Locative Plural

akko-(idâ) -sa -m 'to my grandmother'  
STEM-(NUMBER)-CASE-POSS

In those dialects and languages that permit possessive plus abessive at all, the abessive noun phrase has the opposite ordering, with possessives preceding the abessive morpheme:

- (6) MORPHOTACTICS of the Abessive (Ter dialect of Kildin Saame as reported by Szabó 1984: 168)

alaga-n-ta 'without my son'  
son-1SG-ABES

Either (6) displays an endoclititic possessive -n or -- as I argue here -- the abessive is not a true suffix.

Although adjective-noun concord is very limited in Saame, it does appear in certain demonstrative and interrogative pronouns, in cardinal numbers and in the adjectives *buorre* 'good' and *báhá* 'bad'. True case suffixes exhibit agreement, e.g. in (7), but postpositions do not. The abessive patterns with the postpositions in this regard, as in (8) below.

- (7) AGREEMENT -- Locative Plural (Korhonen 1981:345)

būrii-n māni-i-n 'to the good children'

- (8) NO AGREEMENT in Abessive (Sammallahti 1983: 174)

čiežaid gāpmagii-haga 'without seven shoes'

\*čiežai-haga gāpmagii-haga

No case suffix permits "conjunction reduction" (to use transformational terminology), yet the abessive allows it, even prefers it. Compare the conjoined noun phrases in (9) and (10), where (a) represents the full versions and (b) the reduced versions. Conjunction reduction is also preferred for postpositional phrases, as in (11), where relevant postpositional phrases are bracketed for ease of exposition. Again the syntactic behavior of the abessive parallels that of the postpositions.

- (9) SUFFIX --- Comitative Singular (Sammallahti 1983:56)

a. Ahčiiin ja Issahiin  
father-COM and Issat-COM  
'with father and with Issat'

b. \*Ahči-- ja Issáhiin  
father(GEN) and Issat-COM  
'with father and Issat'

- (10) ABESSIVE (Bartens 1984)

a. airoj-taga ja borjas-taga  
oar-PL-ABES and sail-ABES  
'without oars and without a sail'

b. airoj ja borjas-taga  
oar-PL and sail-ABES  
'without oars and a sail'

- (11) POSTPOSITIONS (Bartens 1978: 17,77)

a. ja ruohta [alemus varidi nala] ja [kaisait nala],  
and runs highest mountains up and summits up

kos lae kalosaebbo.  
where is cooler

'and runs up the highest mountains and up the  
summits where it is cooler.'

- b. ja ruhtet [cuoikait ja bahka sivas] ala vare  
and run mosquitos and heat reason high mountain

luokait.  
along

'and (they) run because of the mosquitos and heat  
along the high mountain'

Finally, in all of the above examples the abessive governs the genitive on the preceding noun phrase. This is typical of regular postpositions in the language. By comparison, true case suffixes either have concord between appropriate modifier and head noun, or else require a (default) attributive form for the modifier.

In summary, the abessive behaves synchronically like a postposition and thus should not be considered a case suffix. The only property distinguishing -taga and other postpositions is its attachment to the preceding noun. The nature of this attachment is not clear to me at this point -- there is no word-internal phonological evidence to prove that the abessive attaches phonologically. Therefore it does not deserve to be called a clitic. Instead, it appears that -taga is simply a stressless postposition, which cannot accept stress under any circumstances (Sammallahti 1983). I conclude that abessive -taga is synchronically a semi-clitic postposition.<sup>2</sup>

In the Enontekiö dialect of Northern Saame, the abessive has complete phonological independence and is not even a semi-clitic (much less clitic) postposition:

- (12) Western Enontekiö: mun báhcen haga 'I remain without'  
Eastern Enontekiö: mun báhcen taga 'I remain without'  
I go without

In these parallel examples, haga and taga appear as adverbs and do not require a host for cliticization or prosodic learning.

### 3. Comparative Evidence for Former Affix Status

To return to the historical side of the topic, it could be argued that Saame retains what was in Proto-Finno-Ugric a full word, which in all other Finno-Ugric languages underwent cliticization with subsequent affixation. This is certainly a plausible parallel development, considering that most Finno-Ugric languages are agglutinative by nature. But comparative evidence uncovers certain idiosyncrasies in nearly all the sister languages, demonstrating that the abessive morpheme should be reconstructed as an affix in the parent language.

Most of the Finno-Permic languages have cognate abessive case endings (13); the Ugric branch exhibits a somewhat different cognate set. The proto-form from which these Finno-Permic abessive are derived is caritive \*-pta plus lative \*-k.

(13) ABESSIVE CASE ENDINGS (Bartens 1984)

Southern Saame	-pta, -t'ta
Northern Saame	-t'ta, -taga
Finnish	-tta', -ttä'
Mordva	ø
Mari	-tè, -dè
Udmurt	-tek
Komi	-təg

Northern Saame taga displays a pleonastic lative \*-k/-n (Korhonen 1981, Bartens 1984):

- (14) taga < \*pta+k+(e)k/n (Caritive \*pta + Lative \*-k +  
Pleonastic Lative \*-k/-n)

This caritive element appears also in an adjectival suffix -- in the Finno-Permic languages it is formed with a -ma suffix (15a); in the Ugric languages it has an \*-l suffix (15b).<sup>3</sup>

(15) ADJECTIVAL CARITIVES (Bartens 1984)

- a. N. Saame -tabme  
Finnish -ton, -ttoma-  
Mordva -vtomo, -vteme; -ftama, -ftəma, -ftəmə  
Mari -təm, -dəm  
Udmurt -tem  
Komi -təm
- b. Hanti (-tam, -tem, borrowed from Komi)  
Mansi -tal, -täl  
Hungarian -talan, -tlan, -telen, -tlen

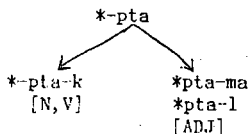
It is thus unlikely that \*-pta was an independent word which cliticized in all of the sister languages except for a few varieties of Saame. And additional evidence shows that cliticization would have had to take place at an early stage in the development of the Finno-Permic languages. Most of these languages exhibit relic verbal abessives in which the nominal abessive (\*-pta+k) is attached to the verbal base, as in (16) below. Since case affixes do not generally attach to verb stems, or else require an intervening nominalizing suffix, the relic forms are unpredictable and, again, not a likely parallel development. Therefore the bound nature of the \*-pta morpheme is due to genetic inheritance from the Finno-Ugric parent language.

(16) VERBAL ABESSIVE (Bartens 1984)

N. Saame	(taebme)
Finnish	-tta', -ttä'
Mordva	ø
Mari	-de
Udmurt	-tek
Komi	-təg
Hanti	-ləx, -lɪək, -lɪəx

The comparative method dictates that we reconstruct a (derivational) suffix *\*-pta* which in conjunct with lative *\*-k* formed an abessive case ending and which in combination with derivational suffix *\*-ma* (or *\*-l* for Ugric) formed a caritive adjectival suffix. Thus I posit the following development:

(17) LATE PROTO-FINNO-UGRIC



The methodology requires that the source for Northern Saame be a suffix and that deaffixation and decliticization be innovations in Northern and Kildin Saame.

4. Language-Internal Evidence for Former Affixal Status

Language-internal evidence also indicates that the independence of *taga* is an innovation. In most dialects of Northern Saame there is another abessive allomorph, namely *-t'ta* (Collinder 1957: 190, Sammallahti 1983: 167-68), which does not have the word-like characteristics of *taga*. The *-t'ta* allomorph occurs with trisyllabic stems, as in (18).

- (18) *gabmäsá-t'ta* 'without a (reindeer) skin'  
(Collinder 1957: 190)

The *taga* allomorph occurs with stems having an even number of syllables:

- (19) *dolá-tâgâ* 'without fire' (Collinder 1957: 190)

Although the two are in complementary distribution, the *taga* allomorph is now spreading at the expense of the *-t'ta* allomorph. This is allowed because of stem allomorphy in the paradigm, whereby stem allomorphs can alternate according to number of syllables, as in (20).

- (20) *gabmäsá-t'ta* -- *gabmäs-tâgâ* 'without a (reindeer skin)'  
(Collinder 1957: 19)

5. Summary

The scheme that I offer here requires that a former affix sequence *\*-pta-k(-k/-n)*, which formed that abessive, have acquired a certain amount of phonological independence in several varieties of Saame and later (in Enontekiö) complete independence; these developments are illustrated in (21):

- (21) *-pta-k-ek/n* > *-ptakek/-ptaken* >> *-taga* > *taga/haga*  
AFFIXES                      AFFIX                      CLITIC    WORD

Northern Saame has a semi-clitic abessive -taga which used to be a true affix. In the Enontekiö subdialect it has come to stand as an independent word. I have explained that these two taga morphemes have come about through, first, deaffixation and, then, decliticization. The Saame data discussed here constitute a good example of the opposite of agglutination: bound forms can acquire phonological independence to become independent words. I conclude that "today's syntax can be yesterday's morphology."<sup>4</sup>

#### Notes

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1. The morphotactics of comitative plural guim reveal that it, too, is a clitic postposition rather than a true suffix. See Nevis (1986ms).

2. A semi-clitic is a prosodic leaner, and does not interact phonologically with the host. A veritable clitic has clear phonological interaction with the host. See Nevis (1985a,b) for a discussion of the relevant terminology with respect to Finnish and Estonian.

3. In the discussion at the LSA meeting, Robert Austerlitz suggested that the -ma suffix has the same etymology as the deverbal suffix -ma of Finnish. This would mean that the \*pta + k combination (i.e. derivational plus inflectional suffix) merged into a case ending, while \*pta + ma (two derivational suffixes) fused into a single adjectival suffix. If \*pta was a derivational suffix, then the relic verbal abessive forms are no longer a mystery. Although inflectional affixes are generally selective in stem selection, i.e. limited to a single word class, derivational affixes can sometimes be promiscuous in stem selection, relying on semantic rather than syntactic information

4. This is Janda's paraphrase of Givon's paraphrase cited above in the first paragraph. However, neither Janda's data nor my own prove that deaffixation and decliticization have any effect on constituent order.

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