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Typological changes in the evolution of Indo-European syntax?*

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1. Introduction

The syntactic development of the Indo-European languages is a grossly neglected research field in both historical syntax and Indo-European Studies. One of the reasons, at least, lies in the more speculative nature of such research, as it involves reconstruction of syntactic structures for earlier, partly unattested, periods of this language family. Such an enterprise is not equally well accepted by all scholars within historical and Indo-European linguistics (cf., for instance, the debate between Lightfoot 2002a–b and Campbell & Harris 2002, and the discussion in Ferraresi & Goldbach 2008). The controversiality of the issue, however, makes it all the more captivating and *From Case to Adposition: The Development of Configurational Syntax in Indo-European Languages* by John Hewson and Vit Bubenik is a welcome contribution to the growing field of research within historical syntax and diachronic typology.

In *From Case to Adposition* the authors set out to account for the development from non-configurational to configurational syntax in the Indo-European languages, as well as the accompanying linguistic changes of such a typological shift. Their arguments are not necessarily complicated when treated separately, but certainly multifaceted, producing results with far-ranging implications for Indo-European reconstruction.

The book is divided into 16 chapters, followed by a bibliographical section and three indices: an author index, a language index and a general index. The first two chapters are introductory, the former on the typological evolution of Indo-European and the latter on the syntax of prepositional phrases. The next thirteen

* On the occasion of *From Case to Adposition: The Development of Configurational Syntax in Indo-European Languages*, by John Hewson and Vit Bubenik (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2006). We are indebted to Vit Bubenik, John Hewson, and the IECASP-project members, Þórhallur Eythórsson and Ilja A. Seržant, for comments and discussions.

chapters deal with case and adpositions in Ancient Greek, Hittite, Indo-Aryan, Iranian, Armenian, Slavic, Baltic, Celtic, Romance, Germanic, Albanian, and Tocharian respectively. The penultimate chapter deals with the reconstruction of particles and adpositions in Proto-Indo-European, while the last chapter summarizes the conclusions of the book.

We start by summarizing the main ideas presented in *From Case to Adposition* in §2 below, before we give a chapter-by-chapter overview of the content of the book in §3. §4 is devoted to a discussion of configurationality (4.1), transitive vs. intransitive syntax, i.e. the status of Proto-Indo-European as a language of the active type (4.2), adverbial particles, prepositions and postpositions (4.3), case syncretism (4.4), the development of an article in Slavic (4.5), and finally some etymological and phonological issues (4.6–4.7). In §5 we finalize this review article with our overall conclusions.

2. Synopsis

The hypothesis that there has been a change from non-configurational syntax to configurational syntax entails that the word order of Proto-Indo-European must have been free. The term *non-configurational* is used here to refer to a type of syntax in Indo-European before the formation of the seven- or eight-case declension system reconstructed for Late Proto-Indo-European and found in Indo-Iranian. The configurational system continued to develop and evolve in most of the Indo-European branches, later developing into a fixed word order, most usually svo, with some morphological marking of in/definiteness, usually with articles, and adpositional phrases and their fixed constituent orders.

An earlier part of this change was the shift from adverbial particles, for which there is limited direct evidence, to postpositions more typical for sov syntax, to preverbs via the procliticization of the former particle onto the verb. This is witnessed especially clearly in Anatolian and Greek. The postpositions that once governed an object became directional preverbs, with the object maintaining its case marking. Later this link between the preverb and the oblique noun was eroded, and an adposition, in most Indo-European languages a preposition, appeared, governing this oblique noun.

The authors suggest a differentiation between the lexeme and its referent. In this framework, the referent of a substantive has the subject role, while the lexeme has an adverbial role. Four levels of predication, sanctioned by dependency grammar, are suggested: (i) The sentential level, (ii) the primary syntactic level, (iii) the secondary syntactic level, and (iv) the sub-syntactic level. The first level captures the general division between a subject and its predicate in a sentence. The second

level represents the phrasal categories of the first level, i.e. the noun phrase and the verb phrase. The third level is the adverbial level that extends the second level, i.e. by specifying which elements function as modifications of other elements. The fourth level contains subsyntactic information about the internal structure of words and phrases. For Indo-European languages, the nominative and accusative cases are taken to mark the core grammatical relations, while the dative and genitive are considered as adjectival elements. The ablative, instrumental, locative, and other cases, like the secondary cases in Tocharian, etc., are analyzed as adverbial modifiers. The authors also demonstrate how the adverbial cases can reasonably be regarded as grammaticalizations of earlier adverbial particles, lending indirect evidence to their secondary nature.

3. Overview

The first chapter presents the working hypothesis of this monograph, namely that there has been a change from non-configurational syntax, and hence a free word order, to configurational syntax, with phrase-level categories, in the history of the Indo-European languages. At the earliest stage, the relation between a noun and its modifier was not configurationally determined by a fixed word order but was signaled through agreement of number, gender and case, often with a considerable freedom in word order. The development of adpositions from preverbs with an adverbial function thus signals a major typological shift, as it introduces configurational syntax at the phrase level, which in turn led to the emergence of configurational syntax at other sentence levels, making case marking redundant. This is linked to case syncretism in most all Indo-European languages and the near total loss of cases in Modern Romance, some Celtic and Germanic languages, Bulgarian, Farsi, etc.

In Chapter 2 this development is further elaborated upon, with the grammatical structure of the new prepositional phrase being in the foreground. It is here that the proposed *lexeme* and *referent* functions of a substantive, discussed in §2 above, are put forward. It is argued that phrase-level categories originate in the Indo-European languages in single words which could function as “phrases” through the information denoted by case and agreement markers. It is presupposed for the Indo-European languages that nominative and accusative are the core cases for subjects and objects, that dative and genitive are adjectival, as they modify substantives, and that all other morphological cases are adverbial, as they modify adjectival, adverbial, and verbal relations. The semantic classification of adpositions with opposing pairs for various time- and location-deictic fields is then introduced with a list for Modern English, where *at* is opposed to *of* for +orientation, *to* is opposed to *from* for +movement, *before* is opposed to *after* for +time limit, etc.

The development of configurational syntax in Ancient Greek is laid out in Chapters 1 and 3, focusing on a change in the status of adverbial particles, from adverbs to adpositions, and the semantic fusion of prepositions and case markers. Originally, in Homeric Greek, adverbial particles could modify verbs and nouns and they could either occur adjacent to their modified elements or be syntactically separate from them. Gradually these adverbial particles become more and more pre- or postposed to nouns, suggesting a greater fixed syntactic and semantic relation between the two. Their postpositional function, see (1) below, is used fairly widely in Homer but rarely ever found in later literature.

- (1) ekheúato pónton épi
 spread.MID.3SG sea.ACC on
 “was spread over the deep” (p. 56) Iliad 7.63

An example of Homeric uses of a preverb together with a verb governing an object is shown in (2):

- (2) ántrou eks-élase pioná mēla
 cave.GEN out-drive.AOR.3SG rich.ACC flocks.ACC
 “he drove his fat flocks from the cave” (p. 58) Odys. 9.312

In Classical Greek fully developed prepositional phrases and noun phrases have evolved, referred to here as “the beginnings of configuration” (p. 59), with different sets of prepositions occurring with different cases on their objects, and with the meaning of the case not necessarily coinciding with the meaning of the prepositions. Through the loss of the dative case, the case system of Modern Greek is reduced even further, strengthening the status of the preposition as the head of the prepositional phrase.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the Anatolian languages, which, being the oldest attested Indo-European branch, is of particular importance to the earlier stages of the proposed typological development. Having become extinct at a relatively antique point, the Anatolian languages only partially experienced the discussed typological evolution. They also preserved a basic *sov* syntax more or less during their entire existence. Most of the attention is on the etymologies of deictic adverbs and examples are given to demonstrate how these often evolved into postpositions governing a noun, and later, into preverbs modifying the orientation of verbs. These adverbs and postpositions can often be shown to contain the case markings relevant for nouns, with some adverbial-particle roots forming static-dynamic oppositional pairs grounded in different case forms, e.g. *andan* “be inside” vs. *anda* “into”.

Chapter 5 concerns the Indo-Aryan languages and Chapter 6 the closely related Iranian languages. The full timeline from Sanskrit and Avestan through Prakrit

and Middle Iranian to Hindi, Farsi, and Pashto is covered. Given the length of attestation, as well as the geographic dispersion of the languages and longstanding contacts with non-Indo-European peoples, this branch demonstrates the greatest typological change. The discussion of Sanskrit begins with a look at complex case syncretism, following an overview of the binary oppositions of local adverbs and adpositions in Vedic. Then the Indo-European etymologies of the given forms are discussed, with particular emphasis on specific innovations and absences, followed by the syntactic analysis of the evolution of the functions of adverbs and adpositions themselves. In Middle Indo-Aryan languages, postpositions began to supplant the adverbial cases, while in Modern Indo-Aryan, one typically finds only a direct/oblique case opposition, with a somewhat fuller inflection for pronouns in Hindi, the postposition having emerged fully triumphant. This development is put forward as a three-layer development, with layer II granting primary postpositions in place of adverbial cases and layer III introducing secondary postpositions that appear in a subordinate position to those of layer II in order to denote more nuanced semantic roles and deictic relations (p. 126). Interestingly, the state of layer II is cited as a cause of the “relatively free phrasal syntax of Middle-Indo-Aryan” (p. 129), which seems to be paralleled by modern Slavic, although this parallel is not discussed here.

Iranian follows a similar pattern, although it had a very early propensity for *svo* and prepositional phrases. All Iranian languages from Avestan to Pashto contain both prepositions and postpositions to varying degrees. Examples are presented from the highly postpositional Northwestern Iranian language, Talysh, where the grammaticalization of common nouns such as “head”, “side”, and “place” into postpositions appears obvious. This is attributed in part to its surrounding *Sprachbund*, exemplified by agglutinating *ov* Turkic languages.

Chapter 7 covers Classical and Modern Armenian. Despite Armenian’s absolutely central geographic location, it has undergone extremely complicated sound changes in its mountain-locked geographical position, allowing for periods of relative isolation from other Indo-European languages. Armenian certainly offers better examples of case syncretism than Indo-Iranian, as the genitive and dative in Classical Armenian show one common form except for certain pronominal inflections. In Modern Eastern Armenian, which is absent from this chapter, the nominative and accusative formed a common morphological case. The quantity of local adverbs and prepositions in Classical Armenian has also been reduced, rendering greater importance to the cases they governed in given constructions. An example of this is found in the allative–locative vs. ablative pairs each containing the preposition *i* but with different fossilized case inflections, e.g. *i vero-y* “above” vs. *i vero-wst* “from above” (p. 171). Modern West Armenian shows a still greater use of agglutination in the case system, with pronouns being the conservative exceptions, as in

the Indic languages. Modern West Armenian has turned a greater number of Classical Armenian prepositions into postpositions, likely under Turkish influence.

Chapter 8 covers Slavic, from Old Slavic to examples of the main geographic branches, i.e. Russian (East), Serbo-Croat (South), and Czech (West), including the development from Old Slavic case marking, adverbs and prepositions to the modern daughter languages. A comprehensive list of allative–locative–ablative positions among Slavic local nouns and adverbs is presented, showing that their forms demonstrate that Slavic local adverbs have a very convoluted case history, unlike for instance Anatolian, which is far more straightforward. A corresponding list of Slovak compound prepositions, in contrast, shows perfect agglutination. Czech and Russian local adverbs usually retain historical case forms, although they are generally less opaque than Slavic. South Slavic languages are the least conservative when it comes to nominal morphology, with Serbian having reduced the case forms to 3–5 and Bulgarian to 1–2, depending on declension type. A central point in this chapter relates to the corresponding development of a postpositional definite article in Bulgarian alongside the elimination of almost all case morphology.

Chapter 9 deals with the closely related, relatively conservative, Baltic languages. It sets out with a description of the case systems in Old Prussian, Lithuanian and Latvian, proceeding to the prepositional system in Baltic. This is followed by a section on the syntax of prepositions in Baltic and how they have developed into preverbs with aspectual nuances, which is similar to some Slavic developments. One of the issues discussed here is the fact that some instrumental objects in Latvian and Lithuanian (and Slavic) with verbs meaning “trade”, “slam”, and “throw”, for instance, correspond to direct objects in Modern English and datives in Old Norse. This is argued to be a remnant of an earlier active syntax.

Irish and Welsh are examined in Chapter 10 on Celtic. The chapter contains an overview of the case system in Irish and Welsh, the inflection of the definite article in Irish, prepositions, both inflected and non-inflected, and developments into the modern languages. In Old Celtic the instrumental, ablative, and locative had merged with the dative, yielding a four-case system similar to Germanic. This case system survived into modern literary Irish, although it is absent from the current spoken dialects of Irish, where the system has been further reduced into a one-case system, with the nominative being used in all the earlier oblique functions. This development is also found in Welsh.

Chapter 11 covers Latin to Modern Romance, focusing on the better-known ancient Italic languages. It is argued that the Latin accusative had adverbial uses when it replaced the supposed ancient allative. The core relations of the Latin prepositional system is presented, including the peripheral and compound prepositions and the functions of the few adverbial postpositions. Syntactic functions of prepositions in Modern French are specially emphasized, for instance the linking

genitive preposition *de* which in certain constructions becomes *sur* when it is combined with an active verb, a sort of a stative–dynamic opposition. The authors conclude that, aside from Romanian, “this language family is the Indo-European group that has progressed the furthest in making the grammar of the noun configurational rather than morphological” (p. 273).

Chapter 12 deals with the development from Ancient to Modern Germanic in which only four morphological cases are found, i.e. nominative, accusative, dative and genitive, and a remnant of instrumental case. The Indo-European ablative, locative, and instrumental have merged with the dative case. Substantial space is devoted to discussing transitive and intransitive syntax, where it seems that transitive syntax is defined as an accusative-type of syntax where the subject is in the nominative case and the object in the accusative case, while intransitive syntax are all the deviations from this canonical case pattern. The so-called oblique subjects in Icelandic and German are defined as topics and dative objects in Icelandic are not assigned the status of direct objects but are regarded as adverbial modifiers. It is argued that in the intransitive syntax of Proto-Indo-European, subjects are defined by morphological properties, like nominative case and agreement, and objects by being in the accusative case.

Chapter 13 focuses on Albanian, limiting itself to Modern Albanian data. This reduces its content to mere comparative observations, though very interesting in themselves, of the semantic and syntactic behavior of Modern Albanian prepositions as opposed to their cognates in certain other Indo-European branches. Diachronically, the Modern Albanian data contrast with data from Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit. The Albanian case system consists of five cases: nominative, accusative, dative, genitive and ablative. A peculiarity of the propositional syntax in Albanian is that several prepositions govern the nominative case. This is a consequence of a development of conjunctions into prepositions in Albanian, and some parallels can be found in Modern Greek, with which Albanian has been in heavy contact.

Tocharian A and B are the subjects of Chapter 14. Tocharian has the most innovative case system of all the Indo-European languages. The accusative is continued etymologically in Tocharian by a general oblique case, while of the other primary cases, the dative has disappeared. The adverbial cases are formed in an agglutinative manner on the oblique stem. The three canonical adverbial cases have been continued, albeit with different forms, while three Tocharian-specific non-canonical adverbial cases have developed: the perlativ, denoting motion through something, comitative, and allative. Of these the perlativ and instrumental are oft-encountered, as they are capable of expressing passive agency. These Tocharian-specific agglutinative adverbial cases can be etymologically linked to adpositions and grammaticalized verbal roots in other Indo-European languages. Therefore, it is asserted that Tocharian A went “full circle from the fusional case of

Proto-Indo-European through the postpositional case of Proto-Tocharian to the ‘quasi-fusional’ case of our literary documents” (p. 333).

Chapter 15 is an overview of the same adverbial particles, cases, and adpositions, analyzed for the language branches in the earlier chapters, applied to common, conservative Proto-Indo-European reconstructions. It proposes an intriguing list of adverbial postpositions for Proto-Indo-European, ranging from the ablative to the locative, $*-d^{he}/*-d^{hi}$, to the allative, $*-de$, and a set of adverbial postpositions. A first attempt to reconstruct Indo-European adverbial particles and adpositions, often found in preverbs, classified in pairs according to semantic field is presented, and is followed by a dissection of the compositional etymologies of these adpositions. Then the authors return to deictic particles, like $*h_1e-$, which develops into a discussion of apparently locative-case uses in adpositions, of which they reconstruct thirteen for the proto-language.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 16, contains sections where the theoretical framework is recapitulated, typological parallels are argued for, the diachrony of the development is summarized and laid out, and the methodological approach justified. It is argued that the development of configurational syntax was a consequence of the ambiguity of nominal case marking, which emerges from the use of adverbial particles as adpositions. It is also argued that isolating languages tend to display prepositions, agglutinating languages tend to display postpositions, and inflecting languages like Proto-Indo-European are caught somewhere in the middle. The various historical trajectories in the development of adpositions, fusional cases, and analytical cases are synopsized. Essentially the directional transformation begins with a trajectory adverb evolving into an adposition(al phrase), then evolving into either a pre- or postposition, then typically into a prepositional or a postpositional phrase. However, in languages with areal influences towards agglutination, a trajectory postposition tends to become a fusional, or synthetic, case. A phrasal, or analytic case, like the Modern English genitive, has emerged in several Indo-European languages from different, often pronominal, elements. Their rise often causes case redundancy of other functions and ultimate syncretism. The following maintenance of fusional cases in many Indo-European branches, and concomitant reanalysis of function, is laid out.

4. Discussion

4.1 Configurationality

A major question that arises is what exactly the authors mean by the terms “configurational” and “non-configurational” at a micro level, as these terms are based

on syntactic properties of constituents, which in turn are based on semantic relations within the same constituents. Usually, the term “non-configurational” refers to lack of phrase structure or constituency. It has been argued for modern languages by scholars like Croft (2001, 2006) that phrase structure is based on the semantic relation found between the elements which constitute the phrase. This means, in essence, that the syntactic characteristics of phrases result from the fact that the relevant elements belong together semantically. This semantic relation is manifested syntactically by adjacency in word order in the modern languages, and the same semantic relation is of course also found for discontinuous phrases. The lack of adjacency within discontinuous phrases, however, is based on different information structure properties than is found with continuous phrases (Siewierska 1984). Lack of adjacency does therefore not necessarily entail lack of configurationality.

It has also been argued by Rögnvaldsson (1995) that there is both a VP and an NP, for instance, in Old Norse-Icelandic. Rögnvaldsson demonstrates that several syntactic processes are sensitive to noun phrase and verb phrase structure in Old Norse-Icelandic, suggesting a hierarchical structure in the sentence. Hence, it seems possible to assume that the ancient IE languages had noun phrases that were defined semantically, exhibiting a syntactic representation that is different from the syntactic representation of the modern languages. Given that, the early Indo-European data presented by the authors may be analyzed as discontinuous phrases, and they would thus not support the authors’ hypothesis that the early Indo-European languages must have been non-configurational, but only that Proto-Indo-European differed from its daughter languages with regard to the relation between information structure and sentence structure.

4.2 Transitive vs. intransitive syntax

The issue of transitive vs. intransitive syntax is discussed at length in Chapter 12. It should be pointed out here that the assumption that oblique subjects are topics and that non-accusative objects are adverbial modifiers is problematic. Starting with the non-accusative object of the verb *kasta* “throw”, for instance, in Icelandic, this dative object clearly behaves syntactically like an accusative object. That is, it can be promoted to subject in passives and it undergoes object shift, both of which are syntactic characteristics of objects in Icelandic (cf. Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson 1985 on passive and Collins & Thráinsson 1996 on object shift):

- (3) a. Ég set **boltann** á völlinn. Active
 I.NOM put ball-the.ACC on field-the
 “I’ll put the ball on the field”.

- b. Ég kasta **boltanum** á völinn. Active
 I.NOM throw ball-the.DAT on field-the
 “I’ll throw the ball on the field”.
- (4) a. **Boltinn** var settur á völinn. Passive
 ball-the.NOM was put on field-the
 “The ball was put on the field”.
- b. **Boltanum** var kastað á völinn. Passive
 ball-the.DAT was thrown on field-the
 “The ball was thrown on the field”.
- (5) a. Ég set (ekki) boltann (**ekki**) á völinn. Object Shift
 I.NOM put (not) ball-the.ACC (not) on field-the
 “I won’t put the ball on the field”.
- b. Ég kasta (ekki) boltanum (**ekki**) á völinn. Object Shift
 I.NOM throw (not) ball-the.DAT (not) on field-the
 “I won’t throw the ball on the field”.

The examples in (4) and (5) show that the dative object of *kasta* “throw” behaves no differently from the accusative object of *setja* “put” with regard to the ability to be promoted to (an oblique) subject in passives and the ability to undergo object shift. Object shift is the property of objects to be able to occur in front of sentence adverbials like *ekki* “not” in (5) above. In contrast, consider the modifying adverbial of *kosta* “cost” in (6a) below which can neither be passivized (6b) nor can it undergo object shift (6c):

- (6) a. Svona akstur kostar lífið. Active
 such driving.NOM costs life-the.ACC
 “Such driving can cost one’s life”.
- b. *Lífið var kostað (af svona akstri). Passive
 life-the.NOM/ACC was cost by such driving.DAT
- c. Svona akstur kostar (ekki) lífið (*ekki) Object Shift
 such driving.NOM costs (not) life-the.ACC (not)

These examples clearly show that so-called “dative complements”, allegedly instrumentals originally, behave syntactically as objects, while accusative modifiers behave differently, contra the assumption in the book that dative and genitive are adjectival cases and nominative and accusative are the cases for core arguments (Chapter 1–2). It is, moreover, not clear from the discussion in §9.1.3 on instrumental complements, termed “Remnants of an earlier active syntax”, what instrumental complements have to do with “active syntax”.

It is also assumed (p.277) that a 3rd-person subject pronoun, corresponding to ‘it’, has been omitted with the so-called impersonal predicates, i.e. in structures like the following:

- (7) a. *Mir ist kalt.* German
 b. *Mér er kalt.* Icelandic
 me.DAT is.3P.SG cold
 “I’m freezing”.

On such an assumption, this 3rd-person subject pronoun would be systematically omitted in all occurrences of these argument structure constructions in all the early and ancient Indo-European languages. However, there are no signs of a deleted subject, no signs of ellipsis, and no signs of an ‘it’ ever being an elliptic part of the argument structure. In that sense, these structures are different from clear cases of ellipsis or pro-drop, as elliptical or dropped arguments can be retrieved in certain contexts. It seems not only counterintuitive, but also against scientific method, to postulate an argument as a part of the argument structure if it is never there. As such, this analysis is not motivated by the data.

It is true, of course, that many languages, including German, developed an ‘it’ with predicates of this type. This, however, is a relatively recent development, not necessarily entailing a subject gap, nor that this new ‘it’ must be a syntactic subject (see Smith 2002 on various other functions of *es*, and Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005 for a discussion on *es* preceding ordinary nominative subjects in German, a fact which shows that *es* “it” does not require a subject gap).

There are, furthermore, data which suggest that *mir* in *mir ist kalt* is a syntactic subject in German, and not an object, as argued by Hewson and Bubenik. First of all, if *mir* were an object and an *es* “it” a subject, this *es* should have the ability to be left unexpressed in control infinitives, while the object *mir* should be overtly expressed:

- (8) **Es ist nicht gut ___ mir kalt zu sein.*
 it is not good PRO.ES me.DAT cold to be.INF
 Intended meaning: “It is not good to freeze”.

As the example in (8) shows, this, however, is ungrammatical in German. Compare, now, how weather *es* “it” behaves in control constructions (cf. Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005, Barðdal & Eythórsson 2009):

- (9) ... und als wir schon so gut wie fertig waren, verzogen sich die
 and when we already so good as done were dispersed REFL the
 dunklen wolken ___ ohne zu regnen.
 dark clouds PRO.ES without to rain.INF

“... and when we were already almost done, the dark clouds dispersed, without it raining”. (<http://hiddenmask.twoday.net/month?date=200707>)

The example in (9) shows that a weather *es* “it” can be left unexpressed, like ordinary nominative subjects, in contrast to the example in (8) where both a postulated *es* of *Mir ist kalt* and a proper *es* of *Es ist mir kalt*, cannot be left unexpressed. This shows further that the postulated third person “it” does not behave as predicted by Hewson and Bubenik’s analysis. Second, the example in (8) also shows that *mir* does not behave as an object, as it may not be overtly expressed. This is the exact converse of ordinary object behavior in control constructions, where it is obligatory to overtly express the object.

There are also examples of dative subject-like obliques in German which show that they can control reduction of syntactic subjects in second conjuncts (Eythórs-son & Barðdal 2005, Barðdal 2006) and can indeed be left unexpressed in control constructions. Consider the following example from Barðdal (2002:96) here given in its full discourse context:

- (10) Shermer deutete auf die Rohre in einem Brause-Raum im Mauthausen Lager hin, das Touristen als eine Hinrichtungs-“Gaskammer” vorgeführt wird. Indem er behauptete, daß durch diese Rohre Dampf geleitet wurde, um den Raum zu heizen, warf er die Frage auf: “Was kann es anderes (anderes als Tötungsabsichten) bedeuten? Warum würden Sie ein Brausebad wärmen wollen?” Nun, wie wäre es damit, um vielleicht jemanden, der sich duschen wollte, davor zu bewahren, ___ **kalt zu werden** oder weil derjenige, der die Installationen anbrachte, sich nicht um Ästhetik kümmerte und die Rohre sichtbar ließ oder unzählige andere vernünftige Gründe.

“Shermer pointed at the pipe in a shower room in the Mauthausen camp, which is presented to tourists as an execution ‘gas chamber’. Claiming that steam was lead through this pipe in order to heat up the room, he raised the question: ‘What else can it mean (than an intention to kill)? Why would you want to warm up a shower cabin?’ Well, how about maybe in order to prevent somebody who would like to take a shower from freezing, or because the person who fitted the installation did not care about aesthetics and let the pipeline be visible, or countless other sensible reasons”.

(<http://www.zundelsite.org/german/artikel/RevDeb.html>)

In example (10), which is an attested German example, the dative of *kalt sein* “freeze” is left unexpressed on identity with the subject of the main clause, *jemanden* “somebody”. According to linguistic consensus, the most conclusive subject behavior of syntactic subjects is precisely their ability to be left unexpressed in control constructions. Examples like this are also found in Icelandic:

- (11) ... kvartaði Stefán undan því að ___ vera kalt á rassinum ...
 complained Stefán from it to be PRO.DAT cold on ass
 "... Stefán complained about freezing on his ass ..."

(<http://lisaorakel.bloggland.is/vefbok/2006/3/>)

There is thus an abundance of evidence in Icelandic and German that not only is there no omitted 'it' subject in structures like *mér er kalt/mir ist kalt*, there is also clear-cut evidence speaking for the subject behavior of the dative *mér/mir* in these languages.

In contrast to Hewson and Bubenik's own analysis that there is an omitted 'it' subject in *mér er kalt/mir ist kalt*, they also argue, on p.280, that it is the 3rd-person marker *-t* on the verb form *ist* "is" that is the grammatical subject of *mir ist kalt*. This raises the question of how the authors would analyze strings where a nominal clause functions as a subject, like in the following examples:

- (12) a. *Að fara á Þingvöll* er góð skemmtun.
 to go on Þingvöllur is good fun
 "Going to Þingvöllur is good entertainment".
 b. *Að hætta í vinnu* er erfitt.
 to quit in job is difficult
 "Quitting a job is difficult".

It seems evident that on Hewson and Bubenik's analysis the infinitival clauses *Að fara á Þingvöll* and *Að hætta í vinnu* cannot be subjects here, as there is no agreement between these clauses and the verb form, which shows up in 3rd-person singular. There is clearly no 3rd-person singular in these infinitives, which is expected given the 3rd-person singular agreement form, taking their analysis literally.

Corbett, however, points out that 3rd-person singular forms are often exploited in languages when the subject is not the typical nominative argument (1991:204):

The range of non-prototypical controllers varies from language to language ... It may include clauses, infinitive phrases, nominalizations, interjections and other quoted phrases, noun phrases in particular cases (for example, subject noun phrases in an oblique case), dummy elements and certain null elements.

Hence, lack of nominative agreement is not, in and of itself, an argument against the subject status of oblique subjects, as 3rd-person singular agreement is still agreement, it is just agreement with a non-prototypical subject.

Generally for oblique subjects, it is argued in the book that they are topics, which in turn is meant to explain their location in first position in the sentence. There are several problems associated with this assumption and with the general argumentation. Consider first the following examples which show that an oblique

subject in Icelandic is not necessarily a topic, yet it still occurs in first position (cf. Barðdal & Eythórsson 2003, Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005, Barðdal 2006):

- (13) **Einhverjum** á eftir að verða kalt í þessu veðri.
 somebody.DAT will after to be cold in this weather
 “Some people will certainly freeze in this weather”.

Moreover, the oblique subject also inverts with the verb when something else is a topic (14a), exactly as a nominative subject does (14b):

- (14) a. Í þessu veðri á einhverjum eftir að verða kalt.
 in this weather will somebody.DAT after to become cold
 “In this weather somebody will definitely freeze”.
 b. Í þessu veðri á einhver eftir að verða kvefaður.
 in this weather will somebody.NOM after to become cold
 “In this weather somebody will definitely catch a cold”.

This is different from objects which do not invert with the verb when something else is in first position:

- (15) a. Þessa bók hafði ég keypt í gær.
 this.ACC bok.ACC had I.NOM bought in yesterday
 “This book I had bought yesterday”.
 b. *Í gær hafði þessa bók ég keypt.
 in yesterday had this.ACC book.ACC I.NOM bought
 c. Í gær hafði ég keypt þessa bók.
 in yesterday had I.NOM bought this.ACC bók.ACC
 “Yesterday I had bought this book”.

In (15a) the object *þessa bók* “this book” is located in first position. This object cannot invert with the verb when *Í gær* “yesterday” occupies the same position, as evident from (15b), but must instead follow the main verb as in (15c).

These examples show that (a) oblique subjects are not located in first position because they are topics and (b) they behave syntactically in the same way as nominative subjects, hence the label *subject*. In contrast to what Hewson and Bubenik argue, the topicality of oblique subjects does not explain that these arguments behave syntactically as subjects, as they also behave like subjects when they are non-topical, and, again in contrast to Hewson and Bubenik, topicality does not impinge on the other subject tests listed on p. 289, as they claim. They are thus wrong when they state that the topic “affects the syntax of co-ordination and subordination” (p. 288), hence suggesting, based on the data from Allen (1995) that conjunction reduction is sensitive to topicality in Old English. Allen is very clear in her discussion that topicality is not a criterion for subject reduction in conjoined clauses (1995: 113):

This high frequency [of subject reduction] is immediately explained if we assume that the experiencer is assigned to the role of subject in both these constructions. On the other hand ... such a high frequency of deletion could not be explained simply as a result of the topicality of the Experiencer.

Hence, we conclude that the authors' notion of subject forces a non-subject analysis on subject-like non-nominative arguments and forces the authors to postulate either null subjects in sentences like *mér er kalt* in Icelandic or to assume that the subject is found in the verbal morphology. Such analyses miss generalizations that there are non-nominative subject-like arguments which show all the syntactic and distributional properties of nominative subjects and that there are nominative object-like arguments which show all the syntactic and distributional properties of non-nominative objects (cf. Rögnvaldsson 1996, Barðdal 2000). This does not necessarily mean that the authors' notion of subject, based on morphological criteria, is not viable. It may be, but only at the cost of two major syntactic generalizations.

4.3 Adverbial particles, prepositions and postpositions

On p. 83, the authors state: "Adverbs of space and manner formed from pronominal roots by case endings are found in the earliest layer of all IE languages". Typologically, a deictic adverbial meaning usually precedes any pronominal use for the same morpheme, as most pronoun formants reflect a deictic relation. This is certainly true for * h_1e- , and perhaps also for * $to-$ and * $so-$. It is unclear why Greek $(h)\omega-\delta\epsilon$ was included here as an ablative reflex of * h_1e- , the rough breathing mark serving as a cue of its production from * $so-$ (by form, it could derive from * $wo-$ as well, but not * $Ho-$); the same could be said of $(h)\eta$. Aside from the plausible suggestion of Hittite *andan* "inside" resulting from a reanalysis of the morpheme boundaries of Proto-Indo-European * $h_1e-n-dom$ "at home" and also the common positing of adpositional correspondences to a suggested allative * $-de/o$ (p. 87), it would also be in order to consider the very wide distribution of similar locative, allative, and ablative cases beginning with a dental stop across the Eurasian language area (Turkic, Uralic, Kartvelian, Sumerian, Hurrian, Etruscan, and Urartean). Longstanding ancient language contacts may explain why these particles are difficult, or at least controversial, to reconstruct for Proto-Indo-European, and why the full row of locational "cases" proposed with the original meanings preserved are most numerous in the Central dialectal area (Greek, Indo-Iranian, Slavic), and weak on the periphery (Italic, Celtic, Tocharian).

Some interesting comments are found in Chapter 10 on the use of prepositions for verbal aspect in Welsh, i.e. *yn* "in" for progressive and *wedi* "after" for perfect, in a manner that is preverbal but not prothetic in the orthography, indicating a

fairly recent innovation. This is deemed to be as in Irish (p. 243), but the comparison is not apparent in the data presented.

In Chapter 15 (p. 337) Hewson and Bubenik give a list of locational postpositions ranging from ablative to locative to allative, all on voiced dental stops *-D-, but with aspiration in the locative (*-d^he/-d^hi), but not in the allative (*-de) or the ablative (*-ed). This incongruity is unexplained and raises more questions like whether this is the result of systemic evolution within the Proto-Indo-European period or whether it is perhaps at least partly due to non-Indo-European influences. Put more simply, these may very well be ancient Indo-European particles, but it is not so obvious that one can reconstruct these forms and meanings for the Late Proto-Indo-European period. Nonetheless, the proposal of a row of adverbial postpositions, or what might even say agglutinating cases for the proto-language, is quite progressive.

In Chapter 16 it is argued that isolating languages tend to display prepositions, agglutinating languages display postpositions, and inflecting languages like Proto-Indo-European are caught somewhere in between. Is there typological or statistical support for this? Are these assumptions made simply on the authors' best known examples, i.e. Chinese and Vietnamese, on the one hand, and Altaic, Uralic, Korean, Japanese, Caucasian, etc., on the other? This claim is used as a basis for why neither prepositions nor postpositions were dominant in Vedic and Homeric Greek; yet, there is no strong establishment of cause and effect.

4.4 Case syncretism

Although it is an entirely orthodox practice in Indo-European studies, it is not always helpful to assume that the proto-language had the highest number of cases found in any branch and explain all deviations as examples of case syncretism (cf. Fairbanks 1977). For example, the common assumption, also made by the authors, that *-b^hi was a Proto-Indo-European instrumental plural case marker, whereas the singular was an entirely different morpheme, *-h₁, is almost nowhere directly supported, and in such an innovative work as this, need not be adopted. *-b^hi serves as instrumental singular in Armenian, with some sort of ablative or even locative meaning in Mycenaean and Homeric Greek, as dative plural in Italic and Celtic, it still only appears in dative plural in Avestan, and even in Sanskrit, it demands an extra suffix in the instrumental, dative, and ablative plural (p. 103). If one is working with the assumption of an evolution of Proto-Indo-European from an isolating stage, which is hardly radical yet rarely employed by Indo-Europeanists, it is only reasonable to assume an oblique, vaguely instrumental role to *b^hi, yielding adpositions directly in Germanic, and serving as a stem to many Proto-Indo-European indeclinables, without assigning it a *specific inflectional* role in the Proto-Indo-European declension system.

Another example of such a “syncretism” referred to here is that of the accusative of direction and the ablative of spatial removal with intransitive verbs (the given example being “to be born”, p. 103). However, these NPs are arguments of the relevant verbs and are therefore not interceding adpositions. Again, this is not necessarily a syncretism of the accusative and ablative taking on greater roles, but more likely an Indo-European archaism.

It is also argued that the Latin accusative had adverbial uses when it replaced the supposed ancient allative. The evidence for this is weak, even if one assumes that there was an agglutinative allative case (p. 247). If nominal cases, or at least their predecessor morphemes, were at some point defined by semantic, and not grammatical, roles, the accusative might have been best defined as taking a complement goal. A parallel to this is found in isolating languages like Mandarin and Vietnamese where motion verbs may take direct allative objects without an interceding preposition. It is therefore difficult to say whether an allative case alone covered all allative functions, especially given the authors’ division of cases into ‘nominal’ and ‘adverbial’ classes.

Chapter 16 begins with the statement: “The historical emergence of configurational syntax ... was a direct result of the use of the adverbial particles of the protolanguage as adpositions ... to clarify the ambiguities of nominal case” (p. 357). This statement suggests that the authors assume that the formation of the full late Proto-Indo-European case system predates the grammaticalization of adverbial particles. That is, Hewson and Bubenik claim that case syncretism was motivated by the new adpositions taking the function of the adverbial cases, locative, ablative and instrumental. There is no strong evidence for this assertion and no reason to assume that the adverbial cases were not parallel formations to adpositions, as they can easily be seen as encliticized postpositions with origins in these deictic “adverbial” particles.

4.5 The development of an article in Slavic

One of the authors’ more central points in Chapter 8 relates to the development of a postpositive definite article in Bulgarian, alongside the elimination of most all case morphology. Some archaic dialects preserve some case morphology within the postpositive article, rather like Romanian within the Romance languages, although Standard Bulgarian does not. The typological development of the article remains unclear, sometimes being attributed to contact with Daco-Romanian, sometimes to Altaic languages, while otherwise some point to Northern Russian dialects with a similar development (p. 199). A major omission here, however, is that there was a similar article in Old Slavic that attached itself to adjectives, yielding a definite/indefinite distinction, and giving rise to the differences in the

adjectival and nominal declension systems in Modern Russian. The addition of this postposed article, itself declined, onto the regular substantive inflection of an adjective marked definiteness. The Slavic suffix comes from *-I-* (*-i-* < PIE **-h₁i/e-*), while the Bulgarian is *To* (*to* < PIE **to-*).

4.6 Etymological issues

The authors compare the prepositional case marking of the accusative with *z-* in Classical Armenian, normally meaning “about”, with Modern Hebrew *ʔæt* (p. 176). The authors’ perplexity about its Indo-European etymology is made stronger by their exclusion of possible cognates, e.g., Slavic *za+ACC* “for”, or *za+INST* “behind” also a common preverb of perfective and inceptive aspect, which is eliminated from consideration for semantic reasons (p. 161). Its exclusion appears to be in haste, as one would think that “behind” or “for”, its lexical meanings in Slavic, offer reasonably good semantic links to an accusative preposition (a complement-goal). The same is true for its additional Armenian uses that the authors cite; *z-* + *NOUN-ABL* for “regarding, concerning”, *z-* + *NOUN-INST* translating as “around”, or, best of all, *zkni* meaning precisely “after, behind” (<**z-kink^h_{LOC}* “footstep”). Pokorny (1959) relates them both to **g’ho-* “hinter, nach, wegen”.

It is an exaggeration to state (p. 182) that *čv* in Old Slavic took over the function of **h₂e-u*, “away from, off”, rather than *oy* (*u*), or at least this demands greater explanation. It is also controversial to assert that the Slavic instrumental, historically **-mi* or *-mb*, is of pronominal origin (p. 179), as many Indo-Europeanists wish to link it to Proto-Indo-European **-b^{hi}*.

4.7 Phonological issues

The assertion that the Slavic predecessor of the Russian “hard sign”, the back-reduced vowel (*jerǔ*), denoted a fully high-central, rounded vowel is unknown to us. In Slavic grammars it is described as being close to a short /u/ (approximately [ʊ]), symmetrically paralleling the “soft sign”, front-reduced (*jerǔ*), which was assumedly a short /i/ ([ɪ]). This is another example of the need for better documentation of uncommon knowledge or claims.

5. Conclusion

It would be just to defend the authors against the potential that their argument, while not extraordinarily complex in principle, could fill several books and dissertations dedicated to its documentation in the individual Indo-European branches. Considering the space allotted to them, the authors have provided a decent survey

of evidence for the basic point of the evolution of adverbial particles into post-positions, preverbs, and finally prepositions. The tables are, moreover, for all the languages covered, very innovative and helpful.

Contrary to a criticism already aimed at the work (Erschler 2007), we maintain that the value of the evidence is uneven from branch to branch for obvious reasons of the uneven rate of syntactic evolution. Erschler alleges that Hewson and Bubenik are primarily concerned with proving that the adpositional phrase exerted influence on the creation of the VP and NP and that their hypothesis is only strongly supported by Homeric Greek. While the full spectrum of assumed diachronic changes is best evidenced in the long recorded history of the Greek language, Anatolian does provide considerable evidence for the earlier stages of this process, while the authors document most of the process in Indo-Iranian as well, and the latter changes for the younger branches, where they claim that it is in attestation. As far as we can see, the evidence for this reconstruction is no different from the reconstruction of laryngeals, which in Indo-European branches color the vowels. Therefore the unevenness of the evidence should not be seen as a major hindrance to the cause of reconstructing Indo-European syntax any more than the differing speeds of phonological evolution of Classical Armenian and Sanskrit, i.e. two neighboring dialects, should call into doubt the well-established reconstruction of the Proto-Indo-European phonetic inventory.

Hewson and Bubenik cite the hypothesis of an active–inactive grammatical relation-marking pattern for an early stage of Indo-European as likely. In fact, they go beyond stated support for this position with the misleading formulation, “it is now generally recognized that early Proto-Indo-European was an active language”, citing Klimov (1977), Gamkrelidze & Ivanov (1995), Lehmann (2002, and earlier work). This hypothesis continues to encounter fierce opposition from some quarters (cf. Krasukhin 1990), where it would undoubtedly be referred to it as a minority opinion, although arguably it has plenty of support from those researchers who express any interest at all in diachronic typology. A more correct assessment of the situation would be to say that no single model has yet emerged with a high amount of credibility (cf. Drinka 1999 and the references there). Whatever its actual level of support is, the active status of Proto-Indo-European is not “generally recognized”, even though the authors of this article have independently advocated this hypothesis (cf. Smitherman 2006, Barðdal & Eythórsson 2009). Still, even as it is certainly clear to many readers that the proposed ideas would complement the active type hypothesis, the authors make no serious attempt to explain the link beyond a relatively minor point. It would have been more advantageous to the authors’ persuasive purposes to avoid any reference to active typology, if they did not have the space to link it convincingly to their argument.

In conclusion, *From Case to Adposition* contains a central argument that is very intriguing and several smaller arguments that could be better supported by the evidence. The book could have been better edited and some minor inconsistencies and odd statements eliminated. The book could also use additional references on some points. However, beyond these shortcomings, this monograph will prove to be very important to diachronic typology for the direction in which it calls historical linguists to look for reconstructing syntax and earlier layers of proto-languages. In short, even though some of the specific proposals need to be revised, better developed or supported, some of the ideas and methodology are certainly ingenious.

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