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This chapter presents the forms that are used to express various relational meanings of the kind coded in adpositions (see Hagège 2010 for a recent typological overview). Tafi has two classes of adpositions, like other Kwa languages, prepositions and postpositions. There are two bona fide prepositions, a locative preposition nf ‘LOC’ and a comitative preposition m ‘COM’. In addition to these, there are a number of verb forms that are in the process of grammaticalising into prepositions. These are ká ‘reach, arrive’ developing into an ‘ALLative’, ká ‘give, cause, let, make’ developing into a ‘DATive’ preposition, gá ‘pass through’ developing into a ‘PERLative’ preposition and ddn ‘come from’ has fully grammaticalised into an ‘ABLative’ preposition. Such forms in the Kwa languages have lead to debates about whether they are verbs or verbids (Ansre 1966). A grammaticalisation perspective provides an adequate account (see e.g. Heine et. al. 1991). I assume that they are grammaticalising. The forms and the arguments for grammaticalisation are discussed in §5.1.

The second class of adpositions is the postpositions. These are even more controversial. Some, e.g. Aboh (2005, 2010) argue that they are postnominal elements and not postpositions as they do not behave like typical postpositions, e.g. they do not assign case. Osam et al. (2011) argue with respect to Akan that some of the elements that have been labelled postpositions in Akan should rather be treated as “relator nouns” as they have not been fully grammaticalised yet. They do concede that postposition is the final stage in the grammaticalisation of various spatial and body part nominals. Following Ameka (2003), Ameka and Essegbey (2006), Lefebvre and Brousseau (2002) among others, I assume that the forms that name parts and regions attached to parts of objects and are structurally bound to their dependent nominals are postpositions. They are typically grammaticalised spatial and body part nominals (see Heine 1997, Heine et al. 1991 for the mechanisms involved). Postpositions in Tafi are discussed in §5.2.

5.1 Prepositions

As noted in the introduction, Tafi has two bona fide prepositions which are nf ‘LOC’ and m ‘COM’ (see also §7.4.7). Other prepositions have verbal sources and are undergoing grammaticalisation. The preposition ddn ‘from’ has completely grammaticalised and no longer occurs as a verb.

5.1.1 The locative preposition nf

The preposition nf ‘LOC’ is a general locative preposition which marks ground phrases in locative constructions. It introduces locative adjuncts, i.e. a place where an event takes place as in (1) – (4). It can also introduce temporal adjuncts (5). The
locative preposition \textit{nn} can take as its complement an NP, as illustrated in (1) and (2), or a postpositional phrase as in (3) – (5).

1. Banůvñ́ áŋɛ ‘ɛ́dɔ́ nɩ́ suku.
\begin{verbatim}
ba-nóvñ́ ní bá-ŋa kl-d5 [nī sukú]
\end{verbatim}
CM.PL-child DEF SM-eat CM-thing LOC school
‘The children ate at school.’

2. Báátó ’emukó ní Baagbó.
\begin{verbatim}
bá-á-tó kí-mukó [nī Baagbó]
\end{verbatim}
3PL-PRSPROG-cook CM-red.rice.porridge LOC Baagbó
‘They are cooking red rice porridge in Tafi.’

3. Ányǔnűvén ābubó n’íégbúnéédé.
\begin{verbatim}
á-nyǔnűvén ní á-bubó [nī ke-gbu nī ke.de]
\end{verbatim}
CM-boy DEF SM-bend LOC CM-chair DEF back
‘The boy squats behind the chair.’ (TRPS 64)

4. … kílć áv’édékpú ní kidzon’ótá.
\begin{verbatim}
kílć yi á-vi e-dé-kpú [nī ki-dzo nī bu.tó]
\end{verbatim}
then 3SG.IND SM-go SM-ITIVE-hide LOC CM-road DEF edge
‘… then he went and hid beside the road.’ (Sáhwí)

5. Bútsú ’ikù ní wolé gugšénu ní ‘kágbaním.
\begin{verbatim}
bú-tsú kí-kù [nī wolé gugšé nī kuim] kpł
\end{verbatim}
1PL-dig CM-yam LOC month last DEF inside put.into
\begin{verbatim}
ka-gbá ní kuim
\end{verbatim}
CM-barn DEF inside
‘We harvest the yam in the last month of the year (i.e. December) and put it into the barn.’ (Yam cultivation)

The locative preposition \textit{nī} and its complement can be preposed to the clause and marked by the topic marker \textit{nī} ‘TOP’ as scene-setting topics.

6. Ní kezínǐ ní, Ám’edzí bladzyō
\begin{verbatim}
[nī ke-dzi nī kuim nī ] Ámā e-dzí bladzyō
\end{verbatim}
LOC CM-market DEF inside TOP Ámá e-dzí bladzyō
‘In the market, Ama bought plantain.’

\begin{verbatim}
[nī sukú nī ] Agoe á-tsá-nī Mensah
\end{verbatim}
LOC school TOP Agoe SM-meet-COM Mensah
‘At the school, Agoe met Mensah.’
5.1.2 The comitative preposition **nt**

The comitative preposition **nt** ‘COM’ is used to introduce participants in different roles such as instrument (8) and comitative (9). When its complement is an abstract NP denoting emotion as in (10), or human propensity, e.g. strength, the phrase is interpreted as doing something with the abstract propensity and hence as doing something in a certain manner. It can thus head manner phrases (10). The comitative preposition **nt** also has an additive function – it is used to link NPs. These NPs linked by **nt** ‘COM’ are co- or joint participants as shown in (11). However, when **nt** ‘COM’ is used to link pronouns it is the independent forms that are used as illustrated in (12), (see §3.6.1). The sentence in (13) is ungrammatical because **nt** ‘COM’ is used in that example to link pronominal clitics (see §3.6.1).

8. owns ’own in the farm.
   ṣ-bo-só bu-ya nt kum [nt ká-pá]
   2SG-FUT-weed CM-farm DEF inside COM CM-hoe
   ‘You will weed the farm with a hoe.’

9. Advvi sukú nt y’úplúkpá.
   a-di-vi sukú [nt yi bu-plukpá]
   3SG-NEG2-go school COM 3SG.IND CM.PL-book
   ‘He did not go to school with his books.’

10. Agoe áshɩ̃̄ ávɩ Igɛ̃ nɩ samɩ.
    Agoe Agoe Agoe Agoe    áá áá))))shi shi shi shiɩ̃̄ɩ̃̄ɩ̃̄ɩ̃̄            á á áá))))vv vvɩɩɩɩ        Ig Ig Ig Igɛ̃ɛ̃ ɛ̃ɛ̃
    Agoe SM)leave SM)go Accra COM joy
    ‘Agoe left for Accra with joy (joyfully).’

11. Ésí nɩ y’eyíálɩ́ń éplú bawin pétéé.
    [Ésí nɩ yf e-yi-al( nt ] bé-plú ba-wi
    Ésí COM 3SG.IND CM-child-PL DEF SM-wash CM.PL-dress
    nt pétéé
    DEF all
    ‘Esi and her children washed all the clothes.’

12. Wọ nt yi, nɔbá.
    [wọ nɩ yi] nɔ-bá
    2SG.IND COM 3SG.IND 2PL-come
    ‘You and s/he came.’

13. *Ç nt á nɔbá
    [ç nɩ á ] nɔ-bá
    2SG COM 3SG 2PL-come
    ‘You and s/he came.’
The preposition \( \text{ni} \) ‘COM’ becomes \( \text{no} \) when its complement is not adjacent to it, but occurs elsewhere in the clause:
- as a fronted constituent for purposes of information packaging – topic/focus, i.e. when the preposition is stranded and
- in a \( \text{yik}\) ‘take’ SVC where the NP with the instrument role occurs as object of V1 – \( \text{yik}\) ‘take’ (see Chapter 10 on SVCs).

   \( \text{ká} \text{pá} \text{Kòkù a-só kf-dí ní nà} \)
   CM-hoe Kòkù SM-weed CM-thing DEF COM
   ‘It is with a hoe Kòkù did the weeding.’ (Lit.: ‘A hoe Kòkù weeded with.’)

15. Kòkù áyíkò kápà ásò edà ní nà.
   \( \text{Kòkù á-yíkò ká-pá á-só kf-dí ní nà} \)
   Kòkù SM-take CM-hoe SM-weed CM-thing DEF COM
   ‘Kòkù used a hoe to weed.’ OR ‘Kòkù used a hoe to do the weeding.’

5.1.3 Other prepositions

Certain verbs in Tafi are in the process of grammaticalising into prepositions. They include \( \text{dén} \) ‘come from’; \( \text{kú} \) ‘reach, arrive’, \( \text{kk} \) ‘give, cause, let, make’ and \( \text{gan} \) ‘pass through’. These verbs are used as ablative, allative, dative and perlative prepositions respectively. When used as prepositions, they do not take agreement markers, i.e. subjects are not marked on them and they have a reduced possibility of co-occurring with preverb markers. These are all signs of grammaticalisation in progress.

5.1.3.1 The preposition \( \text{dén} \) ‘from’

The preposition \( \text{dén} \) ‘from’ can be used to express extent. Thus when its complement is a temporal noun, it translates as ‘since’ as in (18). When the head of its complement is the postposition \( \text{shú} \) ‘surface’ it translates as ‘about’, that is the \( \text{dén} \) prepositional phrase with a \( \text{shú} \) postpositional phrase complement indicates the topic of a speaking event or speech act as in (17). It appears that \( \text{dén} \) consists of the verb \( \text{dé} \) ‘come from’ and the associative verb extension -\( \text{no} \) ‘ASSOC’. Speakers also use the alternate form \( \text{dén} \). Both forms are used interchangeably without any discernible semantic difference. Even though \( \text{dén} \) ‘from’ has a verb source it doesn’t seem to be used as a verb anymore. It has fully grammaticalised into a preposition. The following are examples:

16. Bázhí átíplíkí \( \text{dén} \) ekúsíń kíkí.
   \( \text{bá-zhí tá-tí-plíkí [dén e-kúsí ní s.kí]} \)
   3PL-need CM-RED-help from CM-chief DEF place
   ‘They need help from the chief.’
17. Ébísī ebúí dénǐ áxwǐ nǐ shú.
É-bísī e-búí [dénǐ á-xwǐ nǐ shú]
3SG-ask CM.PL-word from CM.PL-work DEF surface
‘He asked questions about the work.’

bé-nyi Mawutɔ [dénǐ ku-nůvébe] ké
3PL-know Mawutɔ from CM-child.period INT
‘They know Mawutor since (her) childhood.’

19. … dén’ɔtsɔ̃́ɔ̃̄ nɩ́ riɖiiɖi ɔ́dɔ́nɩ̄ ‘ibe nɔ̂ n’íbe lɔ́ba yɩkɩ sɩkáń
[dénī dénīdénī ɔɔ ɔɔts ts ts tsɔ̃́ɔ̃̄ɔ̃́ɔ̃̄ɔ̃́ɔ̃̄ɔ̃́ɔ̃̄]
from now TOP continuously 2SG-ITIVE-reach CM-time wh.ever
nǐ ki-be ge lɔ́ba-yuку siká nǐ
DEF CM-time REL 1PL.DEP-VENT-receive money DEF
‘… from now until whenever we receive the money’

As example (19) shows, a dénǐ ‘from’ prepositional phrase, like a locative prepositional phrase, can be topicalised. In that case, it is fronted and marked by the topic marker nî ‘TOP’. Also, the complement of dénǐ can either be a (temporal) nominal, as in (19), or a postpositional phrase as in examples (16) and (17).

5.1.3.2 The preposition kú ‘to, towards’

When kú is used as a verb, it means ‘reach, arrive’ and it takes subject pronominal prefixes or subject markers as illustrated in (20) where it occurs as V2 in an SVC. In its function as a preposition, it translates as ‘to’ or ‘towards’. It is used to indicate direction to or toward a place. As a preposition, the subject is not cross-referenced on it as shown in (21). The sentence in (21) is a monoverbal clause with a prepositional adjunct phrase.

20. Anʊ́vɔ̄ń éwu ekú kitrekpúnɩ́ábhā.
   a-nʊ́vɔ́ nî é-wu e-kú ki-trekpú nî kábhá
   CM-child DEF SM-climb SM-reach CM-anthill DEF top
   ‘The child climbed onto an anthill.’ (FS)

21. Anʊ́vɔ́n awɔ́lɩ̄ kú kením̄.
a-nʊ́vɔ́ nî á-wɔ́lɩ̄ kú ke-nî kum
   CM-child DEF SM-fall ALL CM-river inside
   ‘The child fell into a river.’ (FS)

Because of its allative semantics, a kú prepositional phrase does not seem to be able to be fronted for topic.
22.  *Kú kenínɩ́m̄ ní anóvší áwší.
   kú ke-ní ní kum ní a-nóvší ní á-wší
   ALL CM-river DEF inside TOP CM-child DEF SM-fall
   ‘Into the river the child fell.’

5.1.3.3 The preposition kó ‘for’

When kó has a prepositional function, it is used to mark dative objects in monoverbal clauses and it does not take an agreement marker as in (23) and (24). However, when kó functions as a verb meaning ‘give, cause, let, make’, it can occur as the main verb in a monoverbal clause or as the second verb in an SVC. In this verbal function, the subject is cross-referenced on it, as in (25).

23.  … so ní ní badug ʾédn̈̊ná kó gbaxálf.
   so ní ní ba-di-gó kí-ď̊n̈̊ná ní kó gbaxálf
   so TOP TOP 3PL-NEG2-leave CM-food DEF DAT striped.mouse
   ‘… for that reason, they did not leave any food for striped mouse.’
   (Gbaxálf)

24.  Kú ko létsi kó l̃áší.
   kú ko le-tsí kó b̃ó ã́í
   death just 3PL.DEP-tell DAT 1PL TOP
   ‘It was only the death that was announced to us.’  (Butsiugū)

In (23) and (24), the complement of the dative preposition kó is a benefactive and an addressee respectively.

25.  Ádásó ʾédš akšé.
   a-da-s̃ kí-ď̊š á-kš ỹ
   3SG-ITIVE-weed CM-thing SM-give 3SG
   ‘S/he went to weed for her (on her farm).’

A kó prepositional phrase does not occur clause initially functioning as a topic. However, when kó is used as a verb, its complement can be fronted for focus as shown in (26).

   a-nóvší ní Ámã e-ď̊zí ba-wí ní a-kš
   CM-child DEF Ámã SM-buy CM.PL-dress DEF SM-give
   ‘It was the child Ama bought the dress for.’

As the Dative is the non-local relation, the complement of the kó preposition tends to be an NP as opposed to a postpositional phrase as is the case with the local relation prepositions like the ablative and allative.
5.1.3.4 The preposition *ganɔ* ‘through’

*Ganɔ* is a verb which means ‘keep, walk with, pass through’. It is used as an operator verb in habitual aspect constructions (see § 7.3.10). It is grammaticalising into a perative preposition, i.e. ‘through’. *Ganɔ* has two alternating forms – *ganɔ/gan*. *Ganɔ* appears to be made up of the verb *ga* ‘walk’ and the associative verb extension *nɔ* ‘COM’. The following sentences in (27) and (28) illustrate the use of *ganɔ* as a verb and as the perative preposition respectively.

27. Ágbání ányí̀ áganɔ áyákpàní̀n.

ááágbán ááány ny ny ny nyɩ́ɩ́ ɩ́ɩ́ n n nnɩ́ɩ́ ɩ́ɩ́
3SG-lead CM-man DEF SM-pass.through CM-bush DEF inside
‘S/he led the man through the bush.’

28. Ágbání ányí̀ ganɔ áyákpàní̀n.

ááágbán ááány ny [ganɔ á-yaŋká ni kum]
3SG-lead CM-man DEF through CM-bush DEF inside
‘S/he led the man through the bush.’

Unlike *kú* ‘ALL’, and *kɔ* ‘DAT’ phrases, *ganɔ* phrases can be fronted for topic as illustrated in (29).

29. Gano kilí́líní shú ní, ábashí obó́.

[kanɔ kí-lí-lí (shú)] ni á-boa-shí o-bóò
through AM-DIST surface TOP 3SG-FUT-leave CM-today
‘As a result of that, s/he will leave today.’

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the prepositional forms, their functions and verbal sources where relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Verbal Source</th>
<th>Source Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ní</td>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>‘LOC’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>COMITATIVE</td>
<td>‘COM’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dɛ̀nɛ̀</td>
<td>ABLATIVE</td>
<td>‘from’</td>
<td>dɛ̀ + nɔ</td>
<td>‘come.from + ‘COM’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kɔ</td>
<td>DATIVE</td>
<td>‘for’</td>
<td>kɔ</td>
<td>‘give’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kú</td>
<td>ALLATIVE</td>
<td>to, towards</td>
<td>kú</td>
<td>‘reach, arrive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ganɔ</td>
<td>PERLATIVE</td>
<td>through</td>
<td>ga + nɔ</td>
<td>‘walk’ + ‘COM’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2 Postpositions

Tafi has a closed set of about a dozen or so members of the postposition class which are used to denote the parts and regions of objects. Some of these are spatial nominals or body-part nouns which are at different stages in the process of grammaticalisation. Table 5.2 lists the postpositions in Tafi.

Table 5.2: Postpositions in Tafi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postposition</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Putative Noun Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kábhd̄</td>
<td>‘top’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kum</td>
<td>‘inside’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kesí</td>
<td>‘under, beneath’</td>
<td>ke-sí ‘bottom, down part’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kede</td>
<td>‘back, behind’</td>
<td>ke-de ‘back’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>otúgba</td>
<td>‘in front of’</td>
<td>o-túgba ‘front’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obba</td>
<td>‘beside, near’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oto</td>
<td>‘outside’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skó</td>
<td>‘chez’, place’</td>
<td>o-kó ‘place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bundí</td>
<td>‘opening, endpoint, tip, mouth’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kishí</td>
<td>‘between, among’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kibe</td>
<td>‘side, direction’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kemú</td>
<td>‘entrance’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shú</td>
<td>‘surface’</td>
<td>i-shú ‘body’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butó</td>
<td>‘edge’</td>
<td>bu-tó ‘ear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kíd̄wá</td>
<td>‘beside’, ‘at the side of’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adém</td>
<td>‘apex, peak’</td>
<td>a-da ‘top of head’ + kum ‘inside’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the postpositions have developed from nominals, they share some form properties with them, especially in relation to class prefixes. The majority of them have retained their class markers. The postposition shú has lost it completely as shown in (30). Like nouns, those postpositions with CV prefixes have their C-initial segments deleted in speech as in (31). Moreover, for those that have a ka/ke-prefix, the i/i insertion rule after the deletion of an initial k applies as in (32) (see §2.5.3). The postposition kum ‘inside’ has different realisations at different stages of grammaticalisation as in (33) and (34). It seems to have lost its prefix in the varieties of Agorme and Abuifé (Ofu). Thus, as shown in (34), the form of the postposition is mú which may have resulted from the deletion of the final vowel of mú. In (33) however, the initial consonant and final vowel of kum have been elided yielding mú. Furthermore, the prefix vowel o coalesces with the final vowel of the preceding word and the resulting vowel is e (see §2.5.5 for further details).
   ká-ná  Baa-gbó  kɔnú  ní  a-h  ní
   CM-manner  CM.PL.-Táfí  custom  DEF  SM-be.at  LOC
   a-dɔ́  gbì-gbánš  shú
   CM-woman  RED-marry  surface
   ‘That is how marriage (of a woman) rites are performed in Tafi.’

31. Anóvɔ́ń ébélí fɛ́srɩ̄ń 'ʊ́tɔ́.
   a-nóvɔ́  ní  é-bé-li̇  fɛ́srɩ̄ń  ní  bu.tó
   CM-child  DEF  SM-VENT-be.positioned  window  DEF  edge
   ‘The child went and stood by the window.’ (FS)

32. Eku sí téékópó y’áaŋa l‘ubáhá.
   e-kusí  te-đikópó  yí  á-a-ŋa  bíš  kábhá
   CM-chief  AM-one  3SG.IND  SM-PSTPROG-eat  1PL.IND  top
   ‘One king was ruling over all of us.’

33. Ányúń áshį́ ávi ‘upén̄.
   á-nyí  ní  á-shį́  á-vi  bu-pá  kumu
   CM-man  DEF  SM-lea ve SM-go  CM-house  inside
   ‘The man left and went home.’

34. Ányúń áshį́ ávi ‘opáñ̄.
   á-nyí  ní  á-shį́  á-vi  bu-pá  kumu
   CM-man  DEF  SM-leave  SM-go  CM-house  inside
   ‘The man left and went home.’

Postpositional phrases have the same external properties as NPs. In fact, the grammatical context for the development of the spatial or body part nominals into postpositions is the possessive phrase where the spatial nominal heads it as a possessee. Thus, postpositional phrases function as subjects (36), objects (37) and prepositional objects (39) just like NPs.

35. Sukúm˘nɩ́ ásyra  gi  yîmli  létu  ányúnónvéẹ  ní  átsy ra.
   sukú  ní  kumu  gi  yí  kumu  lé-tu
   school  DEF  inside  REL  3SG.IND  inside  3PL.DEP-beat
   á-nyúnónvéẹ  ní  ní  átsy ra
   CM-boy  DEF  TOP  SM-collapse
   ‘The school in which the boy was beaten collapsed.’

   kpló  ní  kábbá  á-dó  ki-bó
   table  DEF  top  CM-contact  CM-dirt
   ‘The top of the table is dirty.’
37. Akú éturu kplɔ̃nɩ́ábhā.

Akú́ é-tsuru kplɔ̃́ ní kábhā́
Akú́ SM-wipe table DEF top
‘Aku cleaned the top of the table.’

38. Adɩgba ’uvunɩ́m̄.

a-di-gba bá-vʊ́ ní kʊ́m̄
3SG-NEG2-sweep CM-house DEF inside
‘S/he did not sweep the room.’

39. Báŋɛ́ ’ɛdɔ nɩ́ y’ʊ́pɛ́m̄.

bá-ŋa ʁi-dʒ̄ ní yá bu-pá kʊ́m̄
3PL-eat CM-thing LOC 3SG.IND CM-house inside
‘They ate in his house.’

40. Búvʊ́m̄ y’ágbā́.

bú-vʊ́ ní kʊ́m̄ yá á-gbā́
CM-house DEF inside 3SG.IND SM-sweep
‘The room he swept.’

The sentences below exemplify body-part nouns (41, 42) and spatial nouns (43) - (44) respectively.

41. Wó íshúím ɩmɩ́tã́.

wó ʁi-shú kʊ́m̄ ʁi-mtã́
2SG CM-body inside SM-be.not.good
‘You are sick.’ Lit: Your body inside is not good.

42. Anʊ́vɔ̄ń ’ʊ́tɔ́ nɩ́ yékē.

a-nʊ́vʊ́ng ní bu-tʒ̄ ní yékḗ
CM-child DEF CM-ear DEF swell
‘The child’s ear is swollen.’

43. Gt latr̄s̄ ˈtʃ̄ik̄p̄i ni ’ɪfʊ̆ŋ p̄ kes̄í n̄á ...

gt la-tr̄s̄ ki-tʃ̄ik̄p̄i n̄í ki-fʊ̆ n̄í p̄
REL 3PL.DEP-put.on CM-pot DEF CM-fire DEF CONN
ke-ṣ́í n̄í á̆
CM-bottom DEF CFM
‘When they put the pot on the fire and the down part...’ (Kásãlã)

44. Ónúɡɩ kihuǐ duya kede lí yí.

ónú ɡu ki-huǐ duya ke-de ʁi-yí́
COND CM-trap spring CM-back 3SG.DEP-show.up
‘When a trap springs, it moves backwards.’ (Proverbs #9)
Although postpositions denote spatial parts and regions of objects, they can be omitted under certain conditions. For instance, when the Ground where the Figure is located is inherently locative such as *kesukpá ‘land, ground’ as illustrated in (45) or when the search domain is inferable from the verb, i.e., the information carried by the postposition is specified by the verb and so it becomes redundant. Thus, there is no mention of the search domain in sentence (43) above (see Chapter 6, § 6.6 for further details).

45.  ki-shíí líl íl’éésúkpá
    ki-shíí ní f-líí ke-sukpá
    CM-stick DEF SM-be.positioned CM-ground
    ‘The stick is on the ground.’

Postpositions have evolved from nouns, and they are formally distinct from them. Postpositions cannot be pronominalised, nouns can be. They always occur bound to their dependent NPs as in (46). (47) is ungrammatical because the postposition shú has been extracted from its position, i.e., after its dependent NP. However, body part nouns, for example, can occur external to their possessors as illustrated in (48).

46.  Fótoń étsirí kidri ní shú.
    fóto ní é-tsirí ki-dri ní shú
    picture DEF SM-be.on CM-wall DEF surface
    ‘The picture is on the wall.’

47.  *shú fotoń étsirí kidriń.
    shú foto ní é-tsirí ki-dri ní
    surface picture DEF SM-be.on CM-wall DEF
    ‘The picture is on the wall.’ (TRPS 44)

48.  Ishú íítãńí.
    i-shú f-f-táí ní
    CM-body SM-PRS PROG-ache 1SG
    ‘My body is aching.’ (Lit.: ‘Body is aching me.’)

From a cross-linguistic point of view, Tafi thus belongs to the group of languages that have two classes of adpositions.