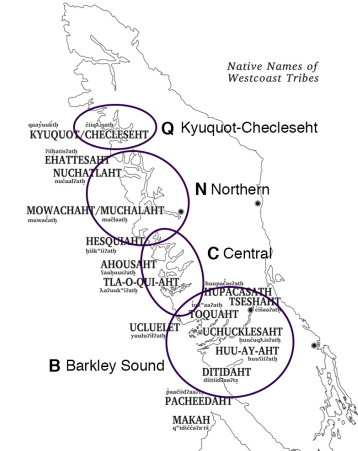


# The Development of Adpositions in Nuuchahnulth

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## 1 Introduction: Word Categories and Adpositions

Nuuchahnulth (iso 639-3 nuk) has a long history of research into its syntactic categories, due to its syntactic flexibility. I argue for an incipient category of adpositions, derived from historic verbs that are losing their status as predicates.



Historical word category analyses:

- Swadesh (1938): No word classes in the language at all
- Jacobsen (1979): Verb and noun distinctions (adjectives implied)
- Rose (1981): Verb, noun, adjective, and adverb (semantic categorization)
- Wojdak (2001): More evidence for verb and noun distinction
- Nakayama (2001): Attempts to address full class system, rejects adpositions (only verbs, nouns, adjectives)

The above map shows the Nuuchahnulth dialects across Vancouver Island. I give data from 5 speakers and all dialect regions except Kyuquot-Checlesseht (Appendix A).

My argument for a class of adpositions will show the innovation of a new lexical category and how grammaticalization functions in a language with great syntactic class flexibility. I look at two areas of the grammar where a category of adpositions is particularly likely:

- a class of verb-like words called “prepositional predicates” (§3.1)
- the word *ʔuyi* ‘at the time of’ (§3.2)

First I will give some background on syntactic predication, predicate coordination, and serial verbs (§2) in order to make sense of the data on adpositions.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Syntactic predicates in Nuuchahnulth

Verbs (1), adjectives (2), and nouns (3) can all be predicates. “Predicate” here means the syntactic unit which takes a subject and/or complements in the syntax.

- (1) *ñaacsiič̣ił̣ʔiš hałmiiḥa quuʔas.*  
*ñaacs-iʔč̣ił̣=ʔiʔš hałmiiḥa quuʔas*  
 see-IN=STRG.3SG drowning person  
 ‘He sees a drowning person.’

- (2) *qʷačalʔiš ḥaakʷaałʔi.*  
*qʷačal=ʔiʔš ḥaakʷaał=ʔiʔ*  
 beautiful=STRG.3 young.girl=ART  
 ‘The young girl is beautiful.’

- (3) *pisatuwiłma ʔaanaḥi.*  
*pisatuwił=maʔ ʔaanaḥi*  
 gym=REAL.3 only  
 ‘It’s only a gym.’

### 2.2 Linker Constructions

Predicates of any type may be coordinated with the “predicate linker” *-(q)ḥ*. This includes verbs (4), nouns (5), and adjectives (6). It does not include complementizers, which may never be a predicate (7, 8).

- (4) *ciq̣iṅkałna λiḥaaqḥ.*  
*ciq̣-(č̣)ink=!ał=naʔ λiḥ-aʔ-(q)ḥ*  
 speak-with=NOW=NEUT.IPL drive-DR-LINK  
 ‘We talked while driving.’

- (5) *ḥuucmaqḥitqačaʔaał taakṣ̌ił̣ p̣iiṣmita.*  
*ḥuucma-(q)ḥ=(m)it=qačaʔaał taakṣ̌ił̣ p̣iiṣmit-aʔ*  
 woman-LINK=PST=INFR=HABIT always gossip-DR  
 ‘There was a woman who kept gossiping.’

- (6) *ṭikʷaamitwaʔiš č̣ims ḥaaʔakqḥ.*  
*ṭikʷ-aʔ=mit=waʔiš č̣ims ḥaaʔak-(q)ḥ*  
 dig-DR=PST=HRSY.3 bear strong-LINK  
 ‘The bear was digging and strong.’

- (7) *ʔuušcukʔisit ʔani ʔunaḥʔisitqa.*  
*ʔuušcuk=ʔis=(m)it ʔani ʔunaḥ=ʔis=(m)it=qaʔ*  
 hard=DIMIN=PST COMP small=DIMIN=PST=SUB  
 ‘It’s a little hard (to do) because it’s small.’

- (8) *\*ʔuušcukʔisit ʔaniqḥ ʔunaḥʔisitqa.*  
*ʔuušcuk=ʔis=(m)it ʔani-(q)ḥ ʔunaḥ=ʔis=(m)it=qaʔ*  
 hard=DIMIN=PST COMP-LINK small=DIMIN=PST=SUB  
 Intended: ‘It’s a little hard (to do) because it’s small.’

The linker must link one predicate to another, and may not link a predicate to a non-predicate like an adverb (9).

- (9) \* $\lambda$ upkaaqs qii.  
 $\lambda$ upk-a-(q)h=s qii  
 awake-DR-LINK=STRG.ISG long.time  
 Intended: ‘I lay awake for a long time.’

### 2.3 Serial Verb Constructions

Nuuchahnulth allows verbs to be coordinated through juxtaposition without any overt coordinator. I call all such constructions serial verb constructions (SVCs). Different types of constructions have different syntactic requirements, but a few properties span multiple types:

- (i) two verbs can be coordinated in various orderings
- (ii) one VP may intervene between the other verb and its complement (10)
- (iii) cross-serial dependencies are not allowed (11, 12)

- (10)  $\lambda$ uuctiihs  $\lambda$ ihaa Queens Cove.  
 $\lambda$ uuctiih=s  $\lambda$ ih-a Queens Cove  
 go.to.DR=STRG.ISG drive-CT Queens Cove  
 ‘I am driving to Queens Cove.’
- (11)  $\lambda$ uu $\dot{h}$ wal $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$  k<sup>w</sup>aacsacum  $\lambda$ aamaasi $\lambda$  hawacsacum $\dot{h}$ i.  
 $\lambda$ u-L. $\dot{h}$ wal= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$  k<sup>w</sup>aacsacum  $\lambda$ aamaas-i $\lambda$  hawacsacum= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   
 x-use=STRG.3 chair climb-MO table=ART  
 ‘Using a chair he climbed onto the table.’
- (12) \* $\lambda$ uu $\dot{h}$ wal $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   $\lambda$ aamaasi $\lambda$  k<sup>w</sup>aacsacum hawacsacum $\dot{h}$ i.  
 $\lambda$ u-L. $\dot{h}$ wal= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   $\lambda$ aamaas-i $\lambda$  k<sup>w</sup>aacsacum hawacsacum= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   
 x-use=STRG.3 climb-MO chair table=ART  
 Intended: ‘Using a chair he climbed onto the table.’

## 3 Evidence for Adpositives

### 3.1 Prepositional Predicates

Woo (2007) defines a class of “prepositional predicates,” words with preposition-like meanings but non-obvious syntactic structure. They have a few shared properties:

- They introduce core arguments ( $\lambda$ uh for subjects,  $\lambda$ uuk<sup>w</sup>il and  $\lambda$ uhta for non-subjects) or peripheral arguments ( $\lambda$ uk<sup>w</sup>ink ‘with’,  $\lambda$ uu $\dot{h}$ wal ‘using’, etc) adjacent to a main verb.
- Except for  $\lambda$ uh, all are polymorphemic: a suffix which attaches to the first word of their direct object.
- In the citation form, they attach to the semantically empty bound root  $\lambda$ u-.
- In the proper context all may be used without the main verb.

Woo categorizes core argument prepositional predicates as  $\nu$  within the Minimalist framework, and the others as full verbs which adjoin to another verb (SVCs by my definition). Evidence from the predicate linker supports the analysis of  $\lambda$ uuk<sup>w</sup>il and  $\lambda$ uhta as belonging to a functional, non-predicative category (13–16).

- (13) hahiiint $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   $\lambda$ iihatis $\dot{h}$ ath  $\lambda$ uuk<sup>w</sup>il  $\dot{c}$ isaa $\dot{h}$ ath  $\dot{c}$ ii $\dot{c}$ stal $\dot{w}$ itas.  
 hahii=int= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   $\lambda$ iihatis $\dot{h}$ ath  $\lambda$ u-L.( $\dot{c}$ )h  $\dot{c}$ isaa $\dot{h}$ ath  $\dot{c}$ ii $\dot{c}$ stal $\dot{w}$ itas  
 ask=PST=STRG.3 Ehattisaht DO.TO Tseshaht do.tug.of.war-going.to  
 ‘The Ehattesahts invited the Tseshahts to play tug of war.’
- (14) \*hahiiint $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   $\lambda$ iihatis $\dot{h}$ ath  $\lambda$ uuk<sup>w</sup>ilh  $\dot{c}$ isaa $\dot{h}$ ath  $\dot{c}$ ii $\dot{c}$ stal $\dot{w}$ itas.  
 hahii=int= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{s}$   $\lambda$ iihatis $\dot{h}$ ath  $\lambda$ u-L.( $\dot{c}$ )h-(q)h  $\dot{c}$ isaa $\dot{h}$ ath  $\dot{c}$ ii $\dot{c}$ stal $\dot{w}$ itas  
 ask=PST=STRG.3 Ehattisaht DO.TO-LINK Tseshaht do.tug.of.war-going.to  
 Intended: ‘The Ehattesahts invited the Tseshahts to play tug of war.’
- (15)  $\lambda$ uhta Jane  $\lambda$ u $\lambda$ uk<sup>w</sup>il Alexandra  $\dot{y}$ uuk<sup>w</sup>iiqsu.  
 $\lambda$ uhta Jane  $\lambda$ u $\lambda$ uk<sup>w</sup>il Alexandra  $\dot{y}$ uuk<sup>w</sup>iiqsu  
 only.DO.TO Jane call Alexandra younger.sibling  
 ‘Only Jane can call Alexandra youngest.’
- (16) \* $\lambda$ uhtaqlh Jane  $\lambda$ u $\lambda$ uk<sup>w</sup>il Alexandra  $\dot{y}$ uuk<sup>w</sup>iiqsu.  
 $\lambda$ uhta-(q)h Jane  $\lambda$ u $\lambda$ uk<sup>w</sup>il Alexandra  $\dot{y}$ uuk<sup>w</sup>iiqsu  
 only.DO.TO-LINK Jane call Alexandra younger.sibling  
 Intended: ‘Only Jane can call Alexandra youngest.’

Woo’s analysis of the peripheral prepositional predicates as all verbs is complicated by evidence from the predicate linker. For some of these words— $\lambda$ uu $\dot{h}$ wal ‘using’ (17–18) and  $\lambda$ u-uchin ‘for, on the behalf of’ (19–20)—all speakers I worked with accepted examples both with and without linkers attached.

- (17) wikcuk<sup>w</sup>ap $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{c}$   $\lambda$ iis $\lambda$ iisa  $\lambda$ uu $\dot{h}$ wal $\dot{h}$   $\lambda$ iis $\dot{c}$ uu $\dot{y}$ ak.  
 wikcuk=!ap= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{c}$   $\lambda$ is-LR2L.a  $\lambda$ u-L. $\dot{h}$ wal $\dot{h}$   $\lambda$ iis $\dot{c}$ uu $\dot{y}$ ak  
 easy=CAUS=STRG.2SG write-RP x-using computer  
 ‘It’s easy for you to write using a computer.’
- (18) wikcuk<sup>w</sup>ap $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{c}$   $\lambda$ iis $\lambda$ iisa  $\lambda$ uu $\dot{h}$ wal $\dot{h}$   $\lambda$ iis $\dot{c}$ uu $\dot{y}$ ak.  
 wikcuk=!ap= $\dot{h}$ i $\dot{c}$   $\lambda$ is-LR2L.a  $\lambda$ u-L. $\dot{h}$ wal $\dot{h}$ -(q)h  $\lambda$ iis $\dot{c}$ uu $\dot{y}$ ak  
 easy=CAUS=STRG.2SG write-RP x-using-LINK computer  
 ‘It’s easy for you to write using a computer.’
- (19)  $\lambda$ uuchins mamuuk  $\lambda$ uuš $\dot{h}$ yumsukqs.  
 $\lambda$ u-L.chin=s mamuuk  $\lambda$ uuš- $\dot{h}$ yums=uk=qs  
 X-BENEF=STRG.ISG work some-related.or.friend=POSS=DEFN.ISG  
 ‘I’m working for my friend.’

- (20) ʔuuchinqhʔaʕs mamuuk ʔuušhýumsukqs.  
 ʔu-L.chin-(q)h=!aʕ=s mamuuk ʔuuš-hýums=uk=qs  
 BENEF-LINK=NOW=STRG.1SG work some-related.or.friend=POSS=DEFN.1SG  
 ‘I’m working for my friend.’

For *ʔuupaal* ‘with’, all speakers recognized it with the linker attached (21, 22), and one of my consultants, Fidelia Haiyupis (northern dialect) only recognized the word with the linker attached.

- (21) ʔuupaatwítasah yaqsčifinukqas kániswítas.  
 ʔu-L.paal-wítas=(m)aʕh yaqsčifin=uk=qaʕs kánis-wítas  
 X-with-going.to=REAL.1SG friend=POSS=DEFN.1SG camp-going.to  
 ‘I’m going to go camping with my friends.’
- (22) ʕiihpanačwítasah ʔuupaalh yaqsčafinqas.  
 ʕiih-L.panač-wítas=(m)aʕh ʔu-L.paal-(q)h yaqsčafin=qaʕs  
 drive-drift.around-going.to=REAL.1SG X-with-LINK friend=DEFN.1SG  
 ‘I’m going to go driving around with my friends.’

For the word *ʔukʷink*, another word meaning ‘with’, my northern and central dialect speakers recognized the linker as a possible attachment (23), while my Barkley sound consultants Bob Mundy and Marjorie Touchie rejected it (24, 25).

- (23) ʔukʷinkhints ʕiisʕiisaʔaʔt ʔucačič ʔuuuʔiʔʔath.  
 ʔu-(č)ink-(q)h=int=s ʕiisʕiisaʔaʔt ʔu-ca-čič ʔuuuʔiʔʔath  
 X-with-LINK=PST=STRG.1SG Adam X-go-PERF Ucluelet-live.at  
 ‘I’m going with Adam to Ucluelet.’
- (24) ʔukʷinkwítasah yaqsčafinʔakqas mituuni walaak.  
 ʔu-(č)ink-wítas=(m)aʕh yaq-sčafin=ʔak=qaʕs mituuni walaak  
 X-with-going.to=REAL.1SG who-be.friend=POSS=DEFN.1SG Victoria go  
 ‘I’m going to go with my friend to Victoria.’
- (25) \*ʔukʷinkhíwítasah yaqsčafinʔakqas mituuni walaak.  
 ʔu-(č)ink-(q)h-wítas=(m)aʕh yaq-sčafin=ʔak=qaʕs mituuni walaak  
 X-with-LINK-going.to=REAL.1SG who-be.friend=POSS=DEFN.1SG Victoria go  
 Intended: ‘I’m going to go with my friend to Victoria.’

*ʔuuʔatup*, another word meaning ‘for, on the behalf of’, is also a borderline case. As with *ʔukʷink*, my Barkley Sound consultants did not accept it with the linker (27, 28) while others did (26).

- (26) ʔakuudis suwa híyahí čapac ʔuuʔatuph haakʷaaʕukʔitk.  
 ʔakuudi=s suwa híyahí čapac ʔu-L.ʔatup-(q)h haakʷaaʕ=uk=ʔitk.  
 loan=STRG.1SG 2SG D3 canoe BENEF-LINK daughter=POSS=DEFN.2SG  
 ‘I’m loaning you that canoe for your daughter.’
- (27) huyaaʕah ʔuuʔatup ʕaatneʔis.  
 huyaaʕ=(m)aʕh ʔu-L.ʔatup ʕaatna=ʔis.  
 dance=REAL.1SG X-BENEF child.PL=DIM  
 ‘I dance for the children.’
- (28) \*huyaaʕah ʔuuʔatuph ʕaatneʔis.  
 huyaaʕ=(m)aʕh ʔu-L.ʔatup-(q)h ʕaatna=ʔis.  
 dance=REAL.1SG X-BENEF-LINK child.PL=DIM  
 Intended: ‘I dance for the children.’

The properties of “prepositional predicates” are summarized in Table 1.

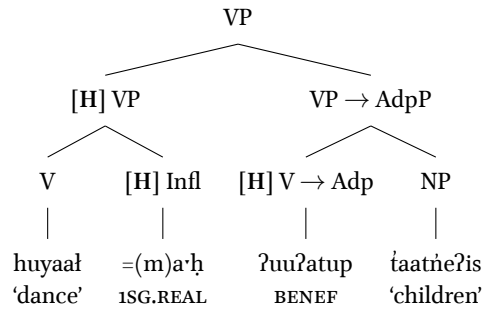
Table 1: Predicate status of adpositive-like words

word	meaning	predicate status
ʔuukʷil	obj marker	no
ʔuhta	obj marker	no
ʔuuʕwaʕ	using	yes
ʔuupaal	with	yes, relexicalized in Nʔ
ʔuuchin	benefactive	yes
ʔukʷink	with	not in Barkley Sound
ʔuuʔatup	benefactive	not in Barkley Sound

- There is considerable meaning redundancy among “prepositional predicates.”
- *ʔuukʷil* and *ʔuhta* are definitively functional and non-predicative.
- Other adposition-like words are on a cline from more to less predicate-like.
- The Barkley Sound dialect has reduced the predicativeness of words with meanings that still have a fully predicative alternate.

van Gelderen (2011) (p.187–191) cites evidence that serial verb constructions can be reanalyzed as coverbs, and speculates as to whether they can go on to become prepositions. *ʔukʷink* and *ʔuuʔatup* in the Barkley Sound dialect appear to have made this transition. The shift only requires a recategorization in the constituent structure, as schematized in (29), a tree for (26).

(29)



### 3.2 ʔuyi ‘at the time of’

ʔuyi looks polymorphemic, with the form of the empty root ʔu- at the beginning. However if it was polymorphemic at one time it has long since ceased to be analyzed this way.

- There is no contemporary \*ʔyi which attaches to other roots, as seen with the “prepositional predicates.”
- (Stonham 2005:p.346-347) cites historical forms -yi ‘time’ and -yiya ‘at a time’ which I have never seen used, but serve as potential sources for ʔuyi.

All my consultants rejected ʔuyi with a linker attached, except for the most conservative consultant, *tupaat* Julia Lucas, who gave the example (30), which was rejected by other elders. This marginality is reflected in the Nootka Texts (Sapir & Swadesh 1939, 1955), where ʔuyiqh only appears once out of 16,655 lines and approximately 746 occurrences of ʔuyi.

(30) ʔuyiqh-wiʔas ʔaʔpit tinʔaʔ huʔaca-ciʔ.

ʔuyi-(q)h-wiʔas=s                      ʔaʔ-pit      tin-ʔaʔ                      huʔa-ca-ciʔ  
at.a.time-LINK-going.to=STRG.1SG    two-times    bell.ringing-sound.of    back-go-PERF  
'I'll come back at two o'clock.'

In SVCs, one of the verbs can be separated from its object by the other verb (10). ʔuyi behaves the same way (31, 32). However, it can also appear twice: once at the beginning of the clause and then again at the end, next to its object (33, 34). This type of sentence is extremely common in fluent speech.

(31) ʔuyiʔaaqʔniš hišimʔił sučapit tinʔaʔ.

ʔuyi=ʔaaqʔ=niš                      hišimʔ-ʔił                      suča-pit      tin-ʔaʔ  
at.a.time=FUT=STRG.1PL    gather.together-indoors    five-times    bell-sound.of  
'We'll gather together at five o'clock.'

(32) ʔuyiwifasah ʔuca-ciʔ mituuni saantii.

ʔuyi-wiʔas=(m)a·h                      ʔu-ca-ciʔ    mituuni    saantii  
at.a.time-going.to=REAL.1SG    X-go-PERF    Victoria    Sunday  
'I'm going to Victoria on Sunday.'

(33) ʔuyisʔaʔ yaacuk kuʔaʔ ʔuyi.

ʔuyi=s=ʔaʔ                      yaacuk    kuʔaʔ      ʔuyi  
at.a.time=STRG.1SG=HABIT    walk      morning    at.a.time  
'I walk in the morning.'

(34) ʔuyimtinʔaala walaak May ʔuyiʔeʔ.

ʔuyi=imt=(m)in=ʔaala                      walaak    May    ʔuyi=!aʔ  
at.a.time=PST=REAL.1PL=HABIT    go      May    at.a.time=NOW  
'We would go in May.'

The only other word that doubles like this is the quotative *waa*, especially when the quote is long (35). I believe that something different is going on with *waa* (which regularly accepts the linker).

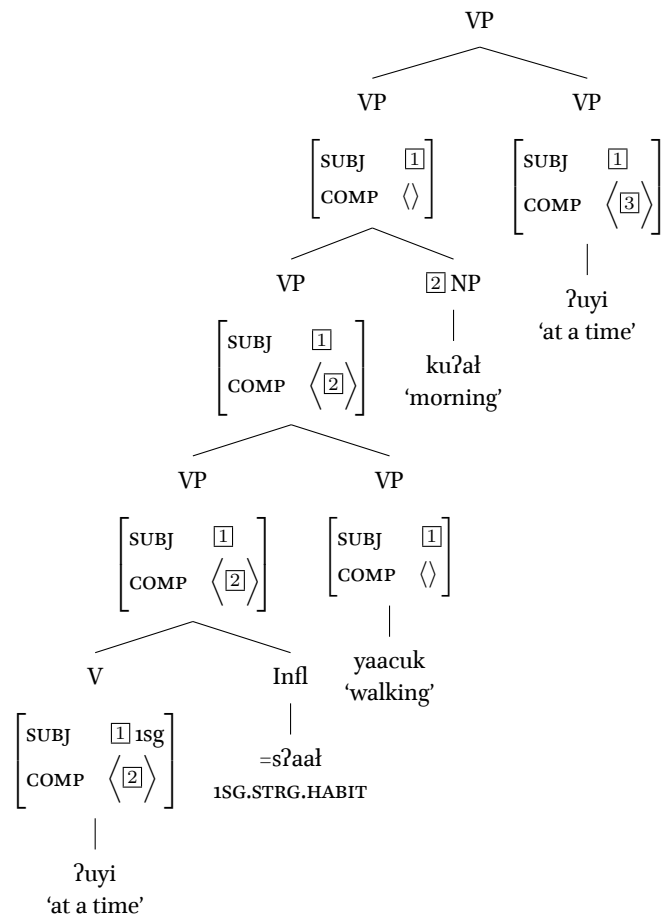
(35) waaʔaʔ nuwiiqsuʔi, ʔuʔumhiquusuu witkʔaaʔap hiyaʔi nučiiʔi, siiwaasiičiʔaqʔaʔsuuk haakʔaaʔukqs waaʔaʔ.

waa=!aʔ    nuwiiqsu=ʔi·    ʔuʔumhi=quusuu    witkʔaaʔap    hiyaʔi    nučii=ʔi·  
say=NOW    father=ART    able.to=PSSB.2PL    destroy    that    mountain=ART  
siiwaas-iičiʔ=!aqʔ=!aʔ=suuk    haakʔaaʔ=uk=qs    waa=ʔaʔ  
yours-INCEP=FUT=NOW=NEUT.2SG    young.girl=POSS=DEFN.1SG    say=NOW

'Her father said, "If you are able to destroy that mountain, my daughter will become yours," he said.'

Nuuchahnulth permits free object-dropping, so one of the two ʔuyis in sentences like (33, 34) could be analyzed as having a dropped object while the other one takes its typical complement. Such a tree would look like (36).

(36)



This analysis is unsatisfying for several reasons:

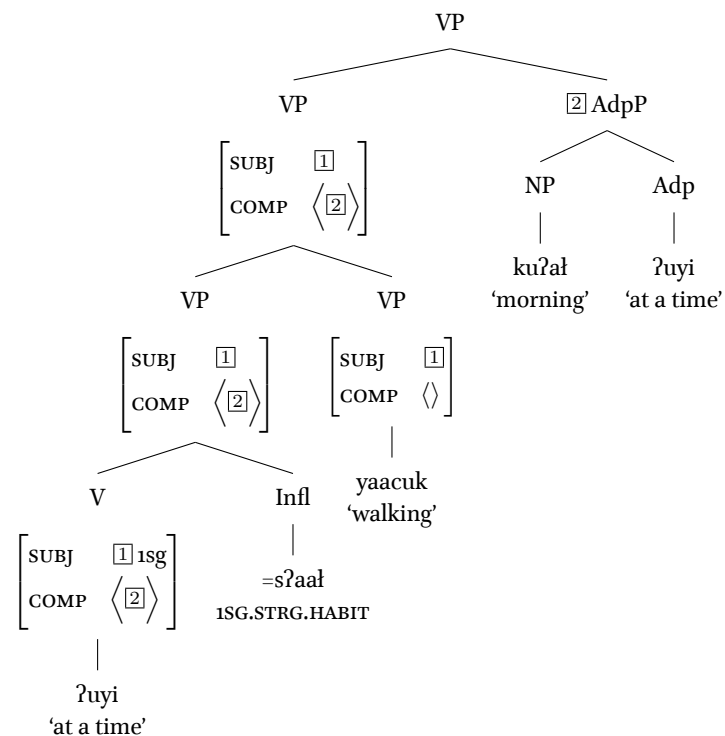
- (i) The second *ʔuyi* is not contributing anything semantically useful to the sentence and is not related to its conceptual object.
- (ii) The position of the second *ʔuyi* next to *kuʔaʔ* is completely coincidental: the SVC could easily be ordered another way.
- (iii) This account can't explain why this structure doesn't occur with other SVCs.
- (iv) It doesn't address the fact that *ʔuyi* is less predicative than other verbs, as seen from the predicate linker.

Another analysis is to propose two structures for the sentence, the one in (36), and another where the first *ʔuyi* has a dropped complement and the second one takes *kuʔaʔ*. Speakers have both structures in their mind at once. But this doesn't address problems (iii) or (iv).

The better analysis is that *ʔuyi* has disjoint lexical categorizations: as verb and as adposition. Adpositive *ʔuyi* takes a noun complement. Verbal *ʔuyi* takes a noun or an *ʔuyi*-headed

adpositional phrase. This preserves the correct constituency and semantics, and allows both *ʔuyis* to be related to their notional object (37).

(37)



## 4 Conclusion

- Some of the “prepositional predicates” and the word *ʔuyi* show evidence of category shift from verb to adposition.
- Both are driven by reanalyses of serial verb constructions.
- The reanalysis can be seen through depredicativization, in that these reanalyzed words no longer accept the predicate linker.
- One reanalysis simply depredicativizes a verb in a SVC.
- The other “doubles” the verb to force it to appear next to its argument, triggering a reanalysis of the doubled word.

These incipient adpositions may actually be unstable and part of larger grammaticalization processes in the language:

- The “prepositional predicates” are in constant flux. Woo lists some my consultants didn’t know; I found others she doesn’t mention. Nootka Texts contains more.
- *?uyi* may be on its way to second position inflection. The late Caroline Little, a literate speaker, alternated between writing it as a word and a suffix attached to the preceding element.

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## A Speaker-example correlations

Fidelia Haiyupis, Northern dialect: (1, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23).

Simon Lucas (traditional name *yuułnaak*), Northern dialect: (9)

Julia Lucas (traditional name *tupaat*), Central dialect: (2, 11, 12, 4, 5, 6, 15, 16, 26, 30, 31, 33, 35)

Bob Mundy, Barkley Sound dialect: (7, 8, 22, 32, 34)

Marjorie Touchie, Barkley Sound dialect: (3, 21)

Bob Mundy & Marjorie Touchie (joint session/joint judgment), Barkley Sound dialect: (24, 25, 27, 28)