



Valency, Argument Realization and Grammatical Relations in Baltic

Research project implemented by Vilnius University, Faculty of Philology, under measure VP1-3.1-ŠMM-07-K “Support to Research Activities of Scientists and Other Researchers” (the Global Grant Measure), Priority 3 “Strengthening of Capacities of Researchers and other Scientists” of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development

project leader Prof. Dr. Axel Holvoet

Assumptions and aims of the project

The aim of the project is to create a framework for cooperation between Lithuanian linguists and linguists from abroad with an interest in the Baltic languages in order to achieve a breakthrough in the investigation in one of the core domains of the structure of the Baltic languages, viz., the interface of syntax and semantics in the architecture of the clause, with particular emphasis on valency and argument structure and their bearing on the level of grammatical relations.

In recent years, theoretical impulses in the above-mentioned domain and related areas have reached Lithuania mainly through publications of Western European and American linguists; direct co-operation with them is rare. Unfortunately, the necessity for Lithuanian linguists to enter the global linguistic discourse is still insufficiently realised. In their home institutions young Lithuanian linguists are usually not encouraged to take up issues currently discussed in an international linguistic context, to look for new ways of approaching hitherto unsolved research problems, or to adopt new linguistic methods and apply them in their work. The aim of the present project proposal is to create an organisational framework in which young Lithuanian researchers will have the possibility closely to co-operate with colleagues from abroad through conferences, workshops, discussion, mutual evaluation of research results and texts etc.; on the other hand, linguists from abroad will have an opportunity to visit Lithuania, present their research results and get feedback from native Lithuanian speakers and get comments on their interpretation of Lithuanian language facts. In the course of the three-year project, researchers from Lithuania and abroad would bundle their efforts to gain a better understanding of the complex problems of the syntax-semantics interface in sentence architecture in the Baltic languages.

The project centres on one of the core areas of Baltic grammar: the domain of valency and argument structure, argument realisation and its alternations, and the mechanisms of linking between semantic roles and grammatical functions. The participants in the project have already carried out a sizeable amount of research in this domain. In the framework of the

project proposed here we hope to achieve a quantitative and qualitative breakthrough in the treatment of a number of mutually related problems:

- event structure and argument realisation;
- non-canonical encoding of grammatical relations;
- differential marking of grammatical relations;
- alternations in argument realization;
- special clause types in Baltic: existential, presentational and copular clauses;
- voice and other diathesis phenomena;
- argument realization between grammar and the lexicon.

Participants in the project

Axel Holvoet (project leader)

Cori Anderson (Chicago/Vilnius), Peter Arkadiev (Moscow/Vilnius), Walter Bisang (Mainz/Vilnius), Valgerður Bjarnadóttir (Stockholm/Vilnius), Greville Corbet (Surrey/Vilnius), Marta Grzybowska (Warsaw/Vilnius), Peter Harder (Copenhagen/Vilnius), Erika Jasionytė-Mikučionienė (Vilnius), Anna Kibort (Cambridge/Vilnius), James Lavine (Bucknell/Vilnius), Kristina Lenartaitė-Gotaučienė (Klaipėda/Vilnius), Andrej Malchukov (Mainz/Vilnius), Rolandas Mikulskas (Vilnius), Nicole Nau (Poznań/Vilnius), Jurgis Pakerys (Vilnius), Natalia Perkova (Stockholm/Vilnius), Vladimir Plungian (Moscow/Vilnius), Auksė Razanovaitė (Vilnius), Agnieszka Rembiałkowska (Warsaw/Vilnius), Benita Riaubienė (Vilnius), Ilja Seržant (Konstanz/Vilnius), Birutė Spraunienė (Vilnius), Björn Wiemer (Konstanz/Vilnius), Natalia Zaika (St Petersburg/Vilnius).

Implementation

The project provides for a common research effort in which scholars from Lithuania and abroad prepare articles and monographs and engage in theoretical discussions conducted not only during workshops and conferences (six events of this type are scheduled) but also through a continuous exchange of ideas between individual scholars consisting in preliminary versions of articles and monographs (or their chapters) circulating among the project participants, being commented upon and thus serving as a basis for dialogue and interaction.

Interim results

To date three work meetings have taken place: two workshops, held in Vilnius in January 2013 and January 2014 respectively, and one conference, the *Academia Grammaticorum Salensis Decima*, held in Salos (Rokiškis District, Lithuania) in the summer of 2013. Three further meetings will be held, one in Vilnius and two at Salos.

The first year of individual and collective work in the framework of the project has already yielded palpable results in the form of a collection of articles entitled *Grammatical Relations*

and *Their Non-Canonical Encoding in Baltic*, scheduled for publication by John Benjamins Publishing Co in April 2014. Work on the second volume of articles is now in progress.

Final results

The outcome of the project will be a series of five books, comprising three collections of articles and two monographs. The name of the series, which will be published by John Benjamins Publishing Co, is *Valency, Argument Realization and Grammatical Relations in Baltic* (VARGReB).

The working titles of the books are:

Grammatical Relations and Their Non-Canonical Encoding in Baltic, collection of articles edited by Axel Holvoet & Nicole Nau, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2014
<https://benjamins.com/#catalog/books/vargreb.1/main>

Argument Structure and Voice in Baltic, collection of articles edited by Axel Holvoet & Nicole Nau, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2015

Descriptive and Theoretical Problems of Valency in Baltic, collection of articles edited by Axel Holvoet & Peter Arkadiev, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2016

Kristina Lenartaitė-Gotaučienė, *Argument Alternations in Lithuanian*, monograph, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2016

Rolandas Mikulskas, *Copular Constructions in Lithuanian*, monograph, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2016