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Directive / Locative alternation hierarchy in Lithuanian and neighbouring languages

The paper is devoted to locative and directive NP/PPs alternation (1) hierarchy with particular attention to Lithuanian and neighbouring languages.

(1) *padėjo į kampą* (DIR) / *kampe* (LOC) 's/he put it in the corner', cf. [Valiulytė 1989].

The table below represents the distribution of locative and directive NPs/PPs with different semantic classes of verbs.¹

	go	enter, penetrate	dive	write down (in)	put, lay, seat, hang	get stuck (in)	get together	lock up	sow, plant	drown smth.	sink	bury smb.
Estonian	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
Latvian	d/l	l	l	l	d>l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l
Lithuanian	d	d	d>l	d/l	d>l	d>l	d/l	l>d	d/l	l	l>d	l
Russian	d	d	d	d/l	d/l	l>d	l>d	d/l	d/l	l>d	l>d	l>d
Byelorussian	d	d	d	d>l	d>l	l	l>d	l	l	l>d	l	l
Polish	d	d	d/l	d/l	l>d	l	l	l	l	l	l	l

The first observation to be made is that some of the languages allow for alternation in several groups of verbs (Lithuanian, Russian, etc.), while other ones do not allow for alternation or it is limited to a small group of verbs (Latvian and Estonian in the North of the area under consideration, though Estonian opts for directive constructions, while Latvian basically uses locative constructions). As we can see, the distribution does not depend on genetic factors, Baltic languages behaving in different ways in this respect. Geographically, locativity with alternating verbs increases from North-East to South-West, Latvian being an exception.

The tendency towards directive or locative NP/PP with several groups of verbs can be interpreted as a hierarchy where the leftward members tend to be more directive and the rightward ones more locative. Basing the analysis on the languages available, it is possible to draw out a directional hierarchy: verbs of directed motion (LOC) => verbs of entering (LOC) => verbs of writing / verbs of putting (LOC) => verbs of sticking / verbs of getting together (LOC) => verbs of planting (LOC) => verbs of drowning and sinking / verbs of burying (LOC) => state verbs (LOC).

¹ Data for Estonian were obtained from Polina Oskolskaya, for Latvian from [RNC] parallel corpus and [LILA], for Lithuanian from [LKT] and [Valiulyte 1989], for Russian from [RNC], from Byelorussian from [RNC] parallel corpus, [BNC] and Anzhalika Dubasava, for Polish from [RNC] parallel corpus and Anzhalika Dubasava.

References

Valiulytė, Elena. 1989. Vietininko ir prielinksnio *į* su galininku sinoniminė vartoseną // Lietuvių kalbotyros klausimai. T. 26, 179–200.

Sources

BNC – Byelorussian National Corpus (<http://bnkorporus.info>)
LILA – LILA parallel Corpus (<http://tekstynas.vdu.lt/page.xhtml?id=parallelLILA>)
LKT – Lietuvių kalbos tekstynas (<http://tekstynas.vdu.lt/tekstynas>)
RNC – RussianNationalCorpus (<http://www.ruscorpora.ru>)

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