

The rise of dative in the Baltic periphrastic permissive constructions

1. Original dative marking of the permittee (< recipient) is used in permissive constructions based on the development 'give' > 'allow, let' (Lithuanian *duoti*, Latvian *dot*, Old Prussian *dāt*), cf. 'give' in (1a) and 'allow' in (1b):

(1) Lithuanian (constructed)

- a. *Tėv-as dav-ė vaik-ui peiliuk-q pažais-ti*
father-NOM.SG give-PST.3 child-DAT.SG pocket.knife-ACC.SG play-INF
'Farther gave a pocketknife for the child to play with'
- b. *Tėv-as dav-ė vaik-ui dar truputį pažais-ti*
father-NOM.SG allow-PST.3 child-DAT.SG still a.little play-INF
'Farther allowed the child to play a little bit more'

2. In other constructions, the dative of the permittee is new, it competes with the accusative and eventually may replace it. The rise of the dative marking can be modeled in three stages and is related to the development of manipulative construction.

Stage I

- Non-manipulative transitive predicate ('release')
- Patient is marked by ACC
- Adjunct INF-clause of goal/purpose can be added ('release them' + 'to go')

Stage II

- Predicate is interpreted as a manipulative verb ('release to go' > 'allow to go')
- Human patient is interpreted as a manipulee¹
 - DAT is introduced alongside ACC
 - DAT correlates with non-implicative/attempted manipulation, i.e. success is not implied and the manipulee retains more control (Givón 2001b: 66–68)
- Adjunct INF-clause > Complement INF-clause

Stage III

- DAT is generalized (to mark non-human participants of the construction as well)
- ACC becomes marginal or is no longer used

3. Lithuanian *leisti* 'release' > 'allow, let'

Stage I

(2) Lithuanian (constructed)

- a. *Tėv-as leidži-a al-ų į qsot-į*
father-NOM.SG release-PRS.3 beer-ACC.SG to pitcher-ACC.SG
'Farther releases (i.e. pours) beer into the pitcher'
- b. *Mam-a leidži-a vaik-q į lauk-q (ei-ti)*
mother-NOM.SG release-PRS.3 child-ACC.SG to outside-ACC.SG go-INF
'(lit.) Mother releases the child (to go) outside'

¹ For the definition of manipulation verbs and manipulees, see Givón 2001a: 151–153.

Stage II

- DAT (3b) is used alongside ACC (3a):

(3) Old Lithuanian

- a. *Leis-ke-t* ***Bernel-us*** *manęspi* *ei-ti*
let-IMP-2PL child-ACC.PL 1.SG.ALL go-INF
'Let the children come to me' (Mažvydas, *Forma Chrikstima*, 1559, 96; LKŽe)
- b. *Da-láif-ki-i* ***waikėl-amus*** *yr* *nė* *dráuf-kí-i*
PRV-let-IMP-2PL child-DAT.PL and NEG forbid-IMP-2PL
iu *manėp* *ei-t*
3.GEN.PL 1.SG.ALL go-INF
'Permit the children and do not forbid them to come to me' (Daukša, *Kathechismas*, 1595, 5,1-3; COLT)²

Stage III

- ACC is almost completely ousted from the constructions with INF-clauses in modern Lithuanian, but still possible, cf. (4) (GEN of negation < ACC). Constructions like (2b) without the INF-clauses are quite frequent.

(4) Lithuanian

[vaikin-as] *ne-leidži-a* ***manęs*** *ei-ti* *į* *gėli-ų*
boyfriend-NOM.SG NEG-let-PRS.3 1.GEN.SG go-INF to flower-GEN.PL
skyri-ų
department-ACC.SG
'[boyfriend] does not allow me to go to the floral department' (forum post, May 26, 2008, diacritics added)³

4. Latvian *laist* 'release' > 'allow, let'

Stage I

- *laist ūden-i* (ACC) 'release (pour) water', *laist bērnu* (ACC) *ārā (iet)* '(lit.) release the child (to go) outside', etc.

Stage II

- Marginal use of *laist* as 'let' in modern Latvian
- ACC (5a) is default, but DAT (5b) is also possible (Pakerys 2016: 453):

(5) Latvian

- a. [...] *laiž* ***četrgadīg-u*** ***mazul-i*** *rāp-tie-s*
let.PRS.3 4.year.old-ACC.SG.M kid-ACC.SG climb-INF-RFL
tur *augšā*
there up
'[They] let 4-year-old kid climb up there' (LVK2013)
- b. *Viņ-a* *laiž* ***viņ-am*** *ves-t* *viņ-u*
3-NOM.SG.F let.PRS.3 3-DAT.SG.M take-INF 3-ACC.SG.F
pa *krog-iem*
round.to pub-DAT.PL
'She lets him take her round to the pubs' (Cedriņš, *Pasaka par vakariem*, 1986, California⁴)

² Note that ACC (> GEN of negation *ju*) is used in the construction of manipulative *drausti* 'forbid' alongside DAT of *leisti* 'let'.

³ <http://www.supermama.lt/forumas/index.php?showtopic=425139&st=360>.

⁴ http://jaunagaita.net/jg168/JG168_Cedrins.htm (August 1988).

5. Latvian *ļaut* ‘release’ > ‘allow, let’

Stage I

- Not attested (?)
- Cf. idiomatic *ļaut vaļu* ‘give freedom of action’, where ‘give’ reflects earlier use of *ļaut* as ‘release’.
- For the reconstruction of meaning from the Indo-European perspective, see IEW 682 (‘nachlassen’), LIV² 399 (‘nachlassen, (zu)lassen’), cf. also Lithuanian *liauti(s)* ‘stop’, Old Prussian *aulāut* ‘die’.

Stage II

- ACC (6a) is used alongside DAT (6b):

(6) Old Latvian

- a. [...] *meintiņ-as*⁵ ***puīsch-us*** *ne* *ļauj* *apģehrb-tee-s*
girl-NOM.PL boy-ACC.PL NEG let.PRS.3 dress-INF-RFL

‘[...] the girls are not allowing the boys to get dressed’

(Fürecker, *Lettisches und Teutsches Wörterbuch*, 1650, ms. 1 77,19;

ACC also in ms. 2 129,5; COLV)

- b. [...] *in ne* *ļahw-a* ***t-eem*** ***Ļaud-im***
and NEG allow-PST.3 DEM-DAT.PL people-DAT.PL

Grehk-u *darih-t*

sin-ACC.SG do-INF

‘and [he] did not let the people commit a sin’

(Mancelius (ed. by Adolphi), *Das Haus=, Zucht= vnd Lehrbuch Jesus*

Syrachs, 1685, 71B, 23-24; COLV)

Stage III

- ACC is ousted in modern Latvian and only DAT is available, cf. (7):

(7) Latvian

Likten-is ***viņ-ām*** *ļauj* *iepazī-t* *dzīv-es*
fate-NOM.SG 3-DAT.PL.F let.PRS.3 get.to.know-INF life-GEN.SG

ciešan-as

suffering-ACC.PL

‘Fate allows them to come to know the sufferings of life’ (LVK2013)

6. What about Latvian *likt* ‘put’ > ‘order’, ‘make’ + DAT?

- Only DAT marking of the second participant of *likt* ‘make’/‘order, tell’ is available in modern Latvian, cf. (8):

(8) Latvian (constructed)

Māt-e *liek* ***bērn-am*** *strādā-t*
mother-NOM.SG make.PRS.3 child-DAT.SG work-INF

‘Mother makes the child work/tells the child to work’

- DAT marking is fully consistent with non-implicative nature of ‘tell, order’, but one expects ACC in the case of ‘make’ (implicative manipulation) and it is attested in the earlier stages of Latvian, cf. (9):

⁵ = *meintiņ-as*.

(9) Old Latvian

<i>wiņšch</i>	<i>leek</i>	<i>śaw-u</i>	<i>Śaul-i</i>	<i>uslehk-t</i> [...]
3.NOM.SG.M	make.PRS.3	RPO-ACC.SG.F	sun-ACC.SG	rise-INF
<i>un</i>	<i>leek</i>	<i>Leet-u</i>	<i>lih-t</i> [...]	
and	make.PRS.3	rain -ACC.SG	rain-INF	

'He causes his sun to rise [...] and causes the rain to rain'
(Glück, *Tas Jauns Testaments*, 1685, Matthew 5:45; COLV)

- Does it mean that DAT was introduced in the cases when *likt*-construction was interpreted as non-implicative (cf. 'order, tell' and some rare cases of 'let')? Did DAT manage to gradually oust the ACC in the implicative uses of the construction? More data are needed.

7. Conclusions

1. Baltic permissive periphrastic constructions have developed from non-manipulative predicates of the *release*-type used with adjunct infinitive clauses. When these predicates were interpreted as non-implicative manipulation verbs, human patients started receiving the dative marking. In the case of Latvian *laist*, the dative did not gain ground, but it has to be noted that this construction is only marginally used as permissive. In other constructions (Latvian *ļaut*, Lithuanian *leisti*), the dative gradually ousted the accusative and became the default marking of the permittee.
2. The introduction of dative as a manipulee marker may also help explain the history of morphosyntax of other manipulative non-implicative constructions in the Baltic ('order', 'forbid', etc.)

Abbreviations

1 – 1st person, 2 – 2nd person, 3 – 3rd person, ACC – accusative, ALL – allative, DAT – dative, DEM – demonstrative, F – feminine, GEN – genitive, IMP – imperative, INF – infinitive, M – masculine, NEG – negation, NOM – nominative, PL – plural, PRS – present, PRV – preverb, PST – past, RFL – reflexive, RPO – reflexive possessive pronoun, SG – singular

References and sources

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