

SUBSTANTIVAL AND POSTPOSITIONAL LABUI
IN THE MODERN (WRITTEN) LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE

Summary

This article deals with the word *labui* (Lith. ‘for the sake, good, benefit (of)’), which in modern (written) Lithuanian is used as a substantive form and a postposition. Reference is made to the material sampled in the *Corpus of the Modern Lithuanian Language* compiled by the Centre for Computer-assisted Linguistics of Vytautas Magnus University.

The study has revealed that while the meaning dative meaning of the noun *labas* is transparent (*tarnauti visuotiniam labui* (Lith. ‘to serve the common good’); *kartu veikia bendram visų labui* (Lith. ‘working together for the good of all’)) in some instances, in others it tends to be somewhat more obscure (*siunčia man mano labui* (Lith. ‘sending (smth.) to me, for my benefit’)). A similar situation has been observed with constructions of the postposition *labui*: in addition to the clear-cut cases (*būtinai bendro gėrio labui* (Lith. ‘necessary for the common good’)), there are those where *labui* can be construed both as an abstract substantive form, and a postposition (*visa tai dariau tavo labui* (Lith. ‘I did it all for your benefit’)).

Relying on the transparent and recognising the less obvious (transitional) cases, the usage of the substantive and postpositional *labui* is grounded on a system of hierarchies, where the appointed member is represented by a clear substantive or postpositional *labui*.

Analysis of the usage of *labui* (*substantive* resp. *postpositional*) has showed that it correlates with a hierarchy of grammatical functions: *object* > *supplement (circumstance)*: *dativus sympatheticus* > *dativus commodi* > *other circumstances* (purposes, cause) > *dativus ethicus*. This mirrors the hierarchical differences of syntactic subordination (*complement* > *modifier*) as well.

The hierarchical correlation of *person* > *abstract thing* and the substantive *labui* > postposition *labui* shows when *labui* acts as the object: the dative of the substantive *labas* typically controls the genitive of a noun that denotes persons (or the substitute pronoun) (*būtinai visuomenės labui* (Lith. ‘necessary for the good of the public’)), the postposition *labui*, the genitive of abstract nouns (*būtinai bendro gėrio labui* (Lith. ‘necessary for the sake of the common good’)); *galį naudoti bendros gerovės labui* (Lith. ‘using power for the sake

of common wellbeing’)). Even though there are more variations between the substantive and the postpositional *labui*, a similar correlation exists when *labui* is a circumstance: the substantive *labui* is typically used with the dative of a noun (or pronoun) that denotes persons (*gyvenimą pašvęsti šeimos labui* (Lith. ‘dedicate one’s life for the good of the family’); *sukūrė savo ir tautos labui* (Lith. ‘created (smth.) for the benefit of himself and his nation’)), while the subordinate of the dative of the postposition *labui* is usually expressed with an abstract noun (or pronoun in its stead) (*kviečiami jų pačių šviesesnės ateities labui* (Lith. ‘are being invited for the sake of their own bright future’); *grožio labui septynžiedžius renka* (Lith. ‘collecting seven-leaves for the sake of beauty’)), but thanks to syntactical condensation, the genitive can also stand to signify living things (*atidavė mirčiai žmonių labui* (Lith. ‘gave up to die for the sake of the people’)) as well.

The dative of the substantive *labas* that acts as an object mirrors the function of the beneficiary or finitivus; there are cases when it correlates with the patient or the contentive. The dative of the substantive *labas* that acts as a circumstance usually denotes the beneficiary, and sometimes, the method. Genitive constructions involving the postpositional *labui* that act as the object denote the finitivus or beneficiary, and those that act as a circumstance typically designate the purpose.

Constructions of the postposition *labui* are synonymous with the dative and/or the constructions of the preposition *dėl* (*būtinai bendro gėrio labui* (plg. *bendram gėriui*) (Lith. ‘necessary for the sake of common good’; cf. ‘for common good’); *aukoti tikslų labui* (plg. *tikslams, dėl tikslų* (Lith. ‘donate for the sake of purposes’; cf. ‘for purposes’); *darbuojasi reikalo labui* (plg. *dėl reikalo*) (Lith. ‘working for the sake of the cause’; cf. ‘for the cause’). The substantive *labui* paired with the genitive of a noun denoting persons or a pronoun differs from the dative of the beneficiary: *labui* explicates the attribute of benefit, of doing good for a person (*būtinai visuomenės labui* (plg. *visuomenei*) (Lith. ‘necessary for the good of the public’; cf. ‘for the public’); *sukūrė kitų tautų labui* (plg. *kitoms tautoms*) (Lith. ‘created (smth.) for the good of other nations’; cf. ‘for other nations’).

The construction of the postposition *labui* involving a genitive has fewer meanings, is more transparent, and penetrates the expression of the dative of the object (the valence structure of the predicate – the nucleus of the sentence), pushing the dative of purpose acting as a circumstance, and altering constructions of the purpose preposition *dėl* due to their multifunctional nature.

LORETA VAIČIULYTĖ-SEMĖNIENĖ

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LORETA VAIČIULYTĖ-SEMĖNIENĖ

Lietuvių kalbos institutas

Petro Vileišio g. 5, LT-10308 Vilnius

loreta.semeniene@lki.lt