Infinitival Object Purpose Clauses in Baltic, Polish and Russian

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Intro. In my talk I investigate infinitival object purpose clause constructions with coreferent matrix and dependent patients in Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian (further called OPCs). I focus on patterns with the word order of *verb > infinitive > object* and matrix verbs 'bring', 'take' and 'give' (cf. research on similar constructions with a different set of matrix predicates in Baltic (Holvoet 2015) and Russian (Stoinova 2016, 2022)). Previously I suggested an analysis for Russian OPCs with the object being in the embedded clause (Fedorov 2025), and this research sets out to approximate whether a similar analysis is adequate for the other three languages, along with finding other differences in syntactic behaviour. The data for this research was gathered via online elicitation of native speakers and from web-corpora (RNC, ltTenTen, lvTenTen, NKJP).

Data. In regards to biclausality and syntactic control, all four languages behave in the same way. Tests for mono-/biclausality (e.g. adverbial modification, coordination, independence of aspect for both verbs) confirm biclausality in all four languages, and control of the infinitival subject follows a consistent pattern across languages:

• matrix GIVE entails recipient control (e.g. Latv. *Māte iedeva savam dēlam lasīt grāmatu* 'Mother gave her son a book to read')

• matrix TAKE entails agent control (e.g. Lith. *Paėmiau paskaityti knygą* '[I] took a book to read'); adding a beneficiary shifts control to recipient (e.g. Ru. *Pet'a vz'al Vane popit' vody* 'Peter took some water for John to drink').

• matrix BRING entails non-obligatory (arbitrary or recipient) control with monotransitive infinitives (e.g. Latv. *Mēs atnesām salabot datoru* 'We brought a computer to repair') and subject control with ditransitive infinitives (e.g. Pol. *Joasia przyniosła pokazać gościowi swoje rysunki* 'Joasia brought her drawings to show to her guests').

This correlation is explained by appealing to the lexical semantics of these predicates — the person commiting an action over the object is the one having the object in their sphere of control (Newman 1998).

Another parameter of cross-linguistic variation is further development of OPCs. In Russian, infinitival OPCs with the verb *dat'* 'give' have developed grammatical uses, expressing a meaning of permission (*On ne **dal** ej dojest' kašu* 'He didn't let her finish eating the porridge'). Neither of the Baltic languages saw such developments. Polish, however, grammaticalized not only OPCs with *dać* 'give' (resulting in a permissive construction as well), but also OPCs with *wziąć* 'take', to express inchoative meaning:

(1) [Czasem to tam nawet dłużej przystaną i]
      wezmą   szukać wrzosu   abo   chwycą   wargami
      take.npst.3pl   search.inf   heather.acc.sg   or   grab.npst.3pl   lip.ins.pl
      '[Sometimes they stop there for even longer and] start looking for heather or grab it with their lips.' (Polish, NKJP)

The grammaticalization leaves *prynieść* 'bring' as the only matrix verb for OPCs in Polish, and in general they are extremely rare, with speakers preferring nominalizations with prepositions (e.g. *Mama przyniosła synowi książkę **do przeczytania*** 'Mom brought her son a book to read').

Baltic languages also give some insights into how the infinitival OPCs differ from closely related purposive constructions. Latvian exhibits a infinitival relative construction, which can be used in similar contexts to OPCs. Juxtaposing the two constructions in one sentence shows that OPC is more temporally integrated with the main event, expressing immediate purpose:

(2) ^{OK}Es   atnesu   nodot   Marijai gramatu, ko   recenzēt
    I.nom   bring.pst.1sg   hand_over.inf   Mary.dat   book.acc.sg   what.acc   review.inf
    'I brought a book that needs to be reviewed to hand it over to Mary [sequence of events: bringing > handing over > reviewing]' (Latvian, elicitation data)

In Lithuanian, other purposive construction have case alteration of the direct object changes from accusative to genitive in Motion-cum-purpose constructions and to dative in purpose clauses (Arkadiev 2014). However, none of these case alterations apply to infinitival OPCs, separating them into a distinct class of purposive constructions:

(3) Paėmiau   paskaityti   ^{OK}knygą/*knygos/*knygai
    take.pst.1sg   read.inf   book.acc.sg/*gen.sg/*dat.sg
    'I took a book to read' (Lithuanian, elicitation data)

Finally, OPCs in the four languages differ in terms of object position, which I determine using two syntactic tests: coordination (object is embedded if the *infinitive > object* sequence can be further coordinated with another infinitive phrase, akin to Ru. *Pet'a prin'os* [*podpisat' bumagi* InfP] *i* [*postavit' na nih pečat'* InfP] 'Peter brought the papers to sign and to put a stamp on them') and passivization (object is in the matrix position if its passivization is possible). For Russian, both tests support an embedded object analysis. In Baltic languages, the tests give conflicting results — Latvian speakers generated coordinated usages of OPCs, which suggests an embedded object, while passivization, which is found in the corpus and also accepted by the speakers, implies a matrix object:

(4)<...> (piebegtaas   zurkas   ir   atnestas   parādīt)
    escape.ptcp.nom.pl   rat.nom.pl   be.prs.3   bring.ppp.nom.pl   show.inf
    'The rats that have escaped are brought to be shown (lit. are brought to show)' (Latvian, lvTenTen)

In Lithuanian, a similar picture emerges, but coordinated usages were less accepted, and case alterations in other purposive constructions not being present in OPCs possibly favours a matrix object analysis. As for Polish, the data on OPCs is too scarce, as mentioned above, but grammaticalization of 'give'/'take' + Inf into permissive and inchoative markers respectively hints at the possibility of the object being in the embedded position, since the matrix verb not having an overt nominal complement facilitates its auxiliariation.

Conclusions. The research revealed important differences in behaviour between OPCs in Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian languages. While the constructions behave similarly in terms of biclausality and infinitival control, the position of object shows variation even on such a small, genetically and areally related sample. In general, OPCs constitute a

separate class of constructions; they are distinct from both other adverbial purposive constructions and adnominal infinitival clauses, and capable of developing new grammatical functions. These findings contribute to the general typology of purpose clauses, to the description of the organization of purposive constructions in the constructional network, as well as to the theory of control, favouring a semantic explanation of this phenomenon.

Literature

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