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## A FEW OBSERVATIONS ON THE STRUCTURE AND SEMANTICS OF PREDICATE NOMINAL CONSTRUCTIONS

### (A GENERATIVE APPROACH TO LINK-VERBS)

The present article is concerned with semantic and syntactic properties of the so-called. copula constructions. As evidence is drawn from Lithuanian and English, this article presents by itself a typological study of Lithuanian and English mycro syntactic systems.

### Deep Structure of Predicate Nominal Constructions

In acordance with the standard theory of generative grammar language is viewed as consisting of two layers, viz. deep structure and surface structure. By deep structure generativists generally mean the semantic structure of language, while by surface structure — the linguistic realization of the former. The deep structure is related to the surface structure by certain grammatical transformations.

It is interesting as well as important to note linguists' reaction to the new approach to transformational grammar resulting from the introduction by Chomsky of the term **deep structure**. Some linguists — Robert Hall, for instance, bitterly criticized the newly coined term suggesting that deep structure turns out to be simply the meaning of utterances. The controversy over the nature of 'deep structure' seems to have arisen partially as a result of misunderstanding Chomsky, viz. of identifying Chomsky's sentences with deep structures. The suggestion that deep structure is no more than a paraphrase based on meaning is inaccurate. To disprove it, A. Hill[1] gives the following example — **Two and two make four**. It would appear that the underlying structure (i. e. deep structure), when expressed in linguistic terms, is **Two makes four + Two makes four**. It will be clear, however, that the above structures do not contain the same information as the presented sentence. In fact **Two and two make four** derives from **Two makes complement** and **Two makes complement**. Last but not least, deep structure is an abstract structure, i.e. a structure without a phonological component. To put it otherwise, deep structure is a set of relationships as existing between the verb and the NP's.

The deep structure of a sentence is a structure consisting of a verb and one or more noun phrases, each associated with the verb in a particular case-relationship. In generative grammar, then, the sentence consists of proposition (deep structure) and modality constituent (negation, tense, mood, aspect). But if deep structure is to be conceived as an abstract structure where only syntactic and semantic

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[1] A. Hill, The Hypothesis of Deep Structure, Studia Linguistica XXIV: 1, p. 4.

relationships between the categories (subject, predicate, object) are reflected, the existence of such constructions as **Berniukas yra linksmas** and **Berniukui linksma** is difficult to account for. In view of this, categories such as subject, predicate and object should be introduced into deep structure with the feature "determined" — "non-determined". E. g.:

A. Berniukas linksmas ← X (non-determined) linksmina berniuką

B. Berniukui linksma ← X (determined) linksmina berniuką

It is only by recognizing this that we shall be able to adequately describe the relationship between the constructions. Being derived from different deep structures, they belong to different paradigms.

As already seen, the deep structure of the sentence is invariably verbal. This however, does not suggest that all verbs are deep-structure verbs. Thus, for instance, BŪTI : BE as well as other copulas can hardly be treated as deep-structure verbs:

A. Petraitis yra mokytojas: Petraitis is a teacher ← Petraitis moko vaikus: Petraitis teaches children

B. Šis vaikinas yra Petraitis : This young man is Petraitis ← X vadina šį vaikiną Petraičiu : X calls this young man Petraitis

C. Jonas yra neįdomus : John is uninteresting ← Jonas nedomina X : John does not interest X

D. Smitas yra Londone: Smith is in London ← Smitas nuvyko į Londoną : Smith has gone to London

All this suggests that BŪTI : BE is not a constituent of deep structure; it is generated by the grammar for realization of certain deep constructions[2]. Consequently, BŪTI : BE cannot be ascribed the status of deep-case verb[3]. In view of this, structures containing BŪTI : BE should be viewed as structures of secondary or incomplete predication. The same is true of other link-verbs:

TAPTI : BECOME

Jis tapo prezidentu : He became president ← X išrinko jį prezidentu : X elected him president

Berniukai tampa vyrais: Boys become men ← Berniukai auga x Berniukai išauga į vyrus : Boys grow x Boys grow into men

DĖTIS : FEIGN

Jis dėjosi bepročiu : He feigned himself mad ← Jis elgėsi kaip beprotis : He behaved as a madman

LIKTI : TURN INTO

Daugiau žinok, mažiau kalbėk, nes greitai senas liksi ← Daugiau žinok, mažiau kalbėk, nes greitai susensi

The water has turned cold ← Frost has made the water cold

In accordance with derivational structure link-verb constructions subdivide into essive (**Mes — žmonės : We are people; Šuo yra naminis gyvulys : The dog is a domestic animal**), translative (**Jonas yra mokytojas : John is a teacher**) and locative (**Smitas yra Londone : Smith is in London**). By essive link-verb construc-

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[2] See John Lyons, Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics, Cambridge, 1969, p. 322.

[3] Cf. Charles J. Fillmore, The Case for Case, Universals in Linguistic Theory, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968, p. 84.

tions we mean constructions where a link-verb functions as a mere classifier, i. e. constructions which do not imply the agent's transition into another state. Thus, when we say **Šuo yra žinduolis** : **The dog is a mammal** we do not only say what the agent is at present; in fact our statement refers to the agent's permanent state. Man generally arrives at such statements by observing nature around him. The deep structure of **Šuo yra žinduolis** : **The dog is a mammal** may be **The dog feeds its young with milk from the breast**. The link-verb in similar constructions is the most general in meaning and may be described as a 'dummy' verb. At present we have only one such verb — BŪTI : BE. Translative constructions express the agent's passing into a specified state or condition. So, for example, **Jis yra mokytojas** : He **is a teacher** implies that the agent's present status as a teacher results from some activity in the past. Here we can speak of 'resultant' state. Consider one more example — **Jis yra direktorius** : **He is a director.** The present state of the agent results from somebody's activity in the past: **X appointed him director.** The same analysis holds good for **Vaikui negera** : **The child is sick.** Locative constructions may also pertain to one's transition into a definite state: **Smitas yra Londone** : **Smith is in London** — **Smitas nuvyko į Londoną** : **Smith has gone to London.** But: **Didysis Benas yra Londone** : **Big Ben is in London.**

## Surface Structure of Predicate Nominal Constructions

BŪTI : BE is generally considered the most typical representative of all copalas. Indeed, it has a property that is missing in other copulas. If other copulas ure semi-notional or notional verbs, BŪTI : BE is treated by linguists as a 'dummy' word. This is true in the main. Semantically, it may be regarded as the most general, or, to put it differently, unmarked. The other copulas can be said to derive from a modified version of BŪTI : BE. Thus, TAPTI : BECOME derives from BŪTI : BE+MODUS BEGIN (GROW); PASILIKTI : REMAIN derives from BŪTI : BE+MODUS CONTINUE; DĖTIS : PRETEND derives from BŪTI : BE+MODUS APPEAR, etc. This suggests that BŪTI : BE may be considered as invariant to all constructions containing link-verbs. The recognition of this fact leads us to another conclusion, viz. link-verb constructions belong to the same paradigm[4].

Yet, to say that BŪTI : BE is invariably unmarked would be untrue to fact. The point is that BŪTI : BE as a lexeme is endowed with two meanings. Thus, when in a syntactical unit the copula occurs in the 'expanded', or 'progressive' form, as in 'You are being naughty', 'John was being very funny', BE expresses behaving, acting, speaking without, however, requiring the addition of -ly to the adjective; in the sentences 'Why don't you be reasonable?', 'If you want to be a successful actor...', BE means something like 'take steps to become'[5]. The same is true of Lithuanian: **Berniukas nori būti lakūnu.** Therefore, it seems best to treat BŪTI :

[4] See Г. А. Золотова, Синтаксическое поле предложения (к понятию парадигматических отношений в синтаксисе предложения), Синтагматика, парадигматика и их взаимоотношения на уровне синтаксиса (материалы научной конференции), Рига, 1970, р. 189—193; On paradigmatic and syntagmatic similarity see Hansjakob Seiler, Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Similarity, Lingua 18 (1967), p. 35—79.

[5] See F. Th. Visser, An Historical Syntax of the Englisch Language, I, Leiden, 1970, p. 190.

BE as a lexeme which has two functions. Thus, in essive constructions BŪTI : BE is generally used without the idea of passing into another state, while in translative and locative constructions BŪTI : BE occurs in the sense 'to become' or 'to change one's position in space'. Yet, when occurring in its finite form, particularly in the present tense indicative, BŪTI : BE is devoid of the above meaning. This is natural, since BŪTI : BE expresses the final result of an anticipating action (e.g. **Jonas yra inžinierius : John is an engineer**←**Jonas tapo inžinieriumi : John has become an engineer**). In view of this, it becomes clear why BŪTI, when used in the present tense indicative, is often omitted in Lithuanian sentences (e. g. **Jonas — geras draugas; Jonas — inžinierius**). It is only in sentences, marked temporally, modally or aspectually that BŪTI is obligatory. In English, apart from a few fossilized phrases (**Happy the man who...! Fine old oak this! Who so reckless...?**), BE is obligatory.

As regards noun categories capable of filling in the position, Lithuanian and English show greater similarities than differences: principally the same categories are found in predicatives:

A. Human

    Jonas yra studentas : John is a student

    Šis berniukas yra amerikietis : He is an American

B. Non-human

    a) **animate.** Arklys yra naminis gyvulys : The horse is a domestic animal

    b) **inanimate.** Šis daiktas yra stalas : This is a table

    c) **material.** Šis žiedas yra aukso : The ring is gold

    d) **abstract proper.** Šis uždavinys yra didelės svarbos : The task is of great importance

Differences are inconsiderable and mainly concern minor subclasses. Thus, for instance, in English we find few agent nouns derived from place-nouns, i. e. the **Londoner**-type nouns[6]. As a result, the position for the subclass of nouns remains not filled in in English. As Lithuanian imposes no restrictions on the derivation of such nouns, predicate nominal constructions in Lithuanian are more varied structurally: **Mūsų profesorius yra vilnietis, kaunietis, šiaulietis**, etc.

Another difference concerns the use of nationality nouns with subjects expressed by nouns: unlike Lithuanian, English seems to avoid the use of nationality nouns as predicatives, when the subject is expressed by a noun: **He is an American; The boy is American**, not generally: **The boy is an American**[7].

Lithuanian and English show considerable differences as regards the use of material nouns as predicatives. As is known, nouns used preposedly are less specific as determiners than nouns used postposedly. In other words, preposed nouns lose much of their substantive character and resemble adjectives. It might be expected that such nouns, when occurring with no noun following (i. e. predicatively) should automatically revert to their nominal status, as in **The American boy** → **He is an American**. Yet, this is only true of countable nouns, i. e. nouns which are in

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[6] See Г. И. Ахманова, И. А. Данчинова, Атрибутивные отношения в топонимической системе англоязычных стран, Вопросы языкознания, 1970.

[7] Dwight Bolinger, Adjectives in English: Attribution and Predication, Lingua 18 (1967, p. 33.

a position to show their class dependence formally. A different situation is observed in constructions whose predicative is an uncountable noun. E. g.: **The ring is gold**. As uncountable nouns have no article or a plural morpheme, the type of construction is structurally ambigous: it can be interpreted both as **The ring is made of gold** and **The ring is a piece of gold**[8]. To avoid the ambiguity, English speakers introduce the noun through a preposition: **The ring is of gold**. The presence of a preposition unmistakably shows the word to be a noun. In Lithuanian, similar constructions are not ambiguous. This is to be expected, as the material adjective in Lithuanian is a morphologically marked category: **Šis žiedas yra gryno aukso – Šis žiedas yra grynas auksas – Šis žiedas yra auksinis**.

The notable feature about predicate nouns is that they are generally indefinite. The occurrence of definite nouns demands special interpretation, or stands in need of some expansion: **John is the philosopher; John is this philosopher; He is a philosopher, who studies metaphysics**[9].

To conclude our discussion of nouns as predicatives, one more point should be discussed, viz. the convertability of predicate nominal constructions. In examining constructions such as a) **The dog is an animal**; b) **Men are mammals**; c) **This horse is a mare**; d) **John is an engineer** we cannot but notice a certain hierarchy in the system of nouns: some nouns play a role in the definition of other nouns. As more specific nouns are defined through more general ones, such constructions are not convertable. To render them convertable, we must make the nouns across the copula congruent semantically. E. g.: **Men are thinking mammals→Thinking mammals are men**.

Apart from nouns, the position of a predicative can be filled in by adjectives. We find two types of adjective here, viz. temporal and non-temporal (static):

Berniukui sveika (temporal); Berniukas yra sveikas (non-temporal)

The boy is well (temporal); The boy is healthy (non-temporal)

Unlike Lithuanian, English has few morphologically marked temporal adjectives: **a house afire; arms akimbo; The people were alive; They were agog**[10]. In Lithuanian, morphologically marked predicative adjectives present a relatively productive class of words. These are made up of the so-called 'neuter adjectives'.

Unmarked temporal adjectives and static adjectives are indistinguishable formally. Practically, any static adjective may be used as a temporal one and vice versa:

A. X yra juokingas : X is funny (static)

B. X yra juokingas šiandien : X looks funny today (temporal)

C. X yra alkanas : X is hungry (temporal)

D. X yra alkanas : X is hungry (static)

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[8] See A. Hill, Introduction to Linguistic Structures, New York, 1958, p. 175.

[9] See Emmon Bach, Nouns and Noun Phrases, Universals in Linguistic Theory, Texas, 1968, p. 103.

[10] For a semantic interpretation of predicative adjectives in English, see А. Драздаускас, Выражение „Временного состояния" как разновидность непроцессного именного сказуемого, Kalbotyra XXII (3), 1971, p. 7–17.

Besides descriptive adjectives, in Lithuanian the position of a predicative can be taken by relative adjectives: **Ši lova yra medinė; Šis laikrodis yra auksinis**.

In English, denominal adjectives are not used so. Some such adjectives, when used figuratively, may appear as predicatives: **His manners were extremely wooden** (A. S. Hornby).

On the other hand, English outdoes Lithuanian in the use of adjectives derived from nationality nouns. Cf.: **The boy is American** (adjective); **Berniukas yra amerikietis** (noun).

In Lithuanian such adjectives are generally used with non-personal subjects: **Ši gelumbė yra angliška**.

Predicative adjectives may be used singly or in construction with other words, i. e. with preposed and postposed determiners. Typical preposed determiners in Lithuanian and English are adverbs of degree or their equivalents and postposed determiners are characteristically nouns or pronouns. Some such determiners are obligatory, others are optional: **Šis žmogus yra kupinas ryžto: The man is full of determination** (obligatory); **Jo elgesys vertas pagyrimo: His behaviour is worthy of praise** (obligatory); **Šalis yra turtinga naftos: The country is rich in oil** (optional); **Jis yra naudingas šaliai: He is useful to the country** (optional).

Another peculiarity of predicate nominal constructions concerns the morphological expression of the complement. In Lithuanian, the complement of the constructions may be in the genitive, the instrumental or in the nominative, while in English it is either in the genitive or in the common case. Yet, when analysing predicate nominal constructions in Lithuanian, one is struck by the inconsistency concerning the morphology of a predicate nominal: in constructions containing the same lexemes we find both instrumental and nominative predicatives.

Jis bus karalius : Jis bus karalium 'He will be king'

As both constructions are current in Modern Lithuanian, the question arises: what is their status, i. e. are they variants of the same deep structure or are they different constructions? In traditional linguistics the difference between the two constructions is explained as follows: the first construction refers to the agent's permanent state, while the second — to the agent's temporary state. In other words, the first construction speaks of one's permanent or real status, while the second speaks of one's temporary or imaginary status. In English, the first construction may be rendered by 'He will be king', while the second — by 'He will act as king'. It will be noted that the structural difference between semantically different constructions is disappearing in Modern Lithuanian. The so-called instrumental of state is being ousted by the nominative[11]. The spread (or the use) of nominative predicative constructions has caused some linguists to think that the so-called instrumental of state is a later development and came to be used on the analogy with the instrumental of transition[12]. We think that constructions of the so-called instrumental of temporary state are prior to those

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[11] See A. Rasimavičius, Tarinio vardininkas ir tarinio įnagininkas, Mūsų kalba 6, Vilnius, 1971, p. 13—19.

[12] Ibid., p. 15.

of the nominative of temporary state, i. e. the latter derive from the former. Cf.: **Jis buvo eiguliu** (instrumental of temporary state) ← **Jis dirbo eiguliu** ← **Jis tapo eiguliu** ← **X paskyrė jį eiguliu**; **Tik ketvirtį valandos esame žmonėmis** (instrumental of transition) ← **Mes tampame žmonėmis**←**X paverčia mus žmonėmis.**

If we regard constructions on the right as the source of those on the left, then the question of the instrumental of temporary state is answered: BŪTI in such constructions is a mere substitute of the corresponding instrumental verbs. From this it follows that the so-called instrumental of state and the instrumental of transition are not separatecategories, as it is generally assumed in traditional grammar, but they both are transformationally related, the instrumental of temporary state being derived from the instrumental of transition. This inevitably leads us to anothe conclusion: patterns with instrumental predicatives must be primary, while those with nominative predicatives — secondary. This process may be still observed in present-day Lithuanian. Thus, for instance, TAPTI, which is predominantly a governing verb, is gradually losing its status. The same holds for LIKTI, DĖTIS, IŠLIKTI, JAUSTIS and others:

A. Ši pilis tapo istoriniu paminklu
   Ši pilis tapo istorinis paminklas
B. Neprausk veido, jaučiui geriant, melagiu liksi
   Ir liko šie kalnai pliki ir kelmuoti
C. Jis dėjosi žvaliu ir budriu
   Jis dėjosi žvalus ir budrus
D. Ar galima išlikti sausam po atviru dangumi lyjant lietui?
   Iki galo liksiu atviras
E. Jis jautėsi tiesiog dydvyriu
   Jis jautėsi tiesiog didvyris

The desemantization of the verb can be accounted for by its meaning and, above all, by the syntactic status of the predicative noun. As the position is characteristically occupied by adjectives, the predicative noun finds itself in a delicate situation: on the one hand, it strives to show its nounal properties, on the other hand, it gravitates towards the subject and, consequently, undergoes adjectivization. Yet, the position of the noun is not conducive to the preservation of its primary functions, it is more favourable to the secondary functions of the noun. Little by little the noun loses touch with the verb and finally breaks away. As a result, we witness a situation we find in Adj. + Noun constructions: the predicative noun, which was formerly independent of the subject, begins to look for support to the subject. With the loss by the verb of its governing status the predicative noun comes to function as an adjective[13]. Consider Charles J. Fillmore's example **John is quite an idiot**[14], where the noun has accepted the type of modification usually associated with adjectives.

As regards English, the process which can be described as syntactic break is over for most link-verbs.

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[13] See Helena Križkova, Именное сказуемое и структура предложения в современных славянских языках, Philologia Pragensia 1, 1971, p. 15—49.
[14] Charles J. Fillmore, op. cit., p. 84.

## L. VALEIKA

### KONSTRUKCIJŲ SU VARDAŽODINIU TARINIU STRUKTŪRINIAI - SEMANTINIAI BRUOŽAI (JUNGTIES VEIKSMAŽODŽIŲ GENERATYVINIS TRAKTAVIMAS)

*Reziumė*

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos konstrukcijos su vardažodiniu tariniu lietuvių ir anglų kalbose. Minėtosios konstrukcijos laikomos antrinėmis, t. y. atitinkamų vidinių (giliųjų) struktūrų transformomis. Atsižvelgiant į jų derivacinę istoriją, konstrukcijos su vardažodiniu tariniu skirstomos į esyvines (**Šuo yra naminis gyvulys**), translatyvines (**Jonas yra studentas**) ir lokatyvines (**Marytė yra Vilniuje**). Lietuvių kalboje šios konstrukcijos dažnai skiriasi ir savo morfologine išraiška: esyvinių konstrukcijų vardinė tarinio dalis yra išreikšta vardininku, translatyvinių — įnagininku ir vardininku, lokatyvinių — vietininku. Daroma išvada, kad translatyvinės konstrukcijos su vardine tarinio dalimi, išreikšta įnagininku, yra pirminės, o translatyvinės su vardine tarinio dalimi, išreikšta vardininku, antrinės.