On the syntax and semantics of adpositional local phrases in Latvian

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The paper deals with the system of adpositional phrases covering the domain of spatial relations in Latvian. The main problems discussed in it are: the semantic structure of the system of spatial relations denoted by Latvian adpositional phrases (Latvian is described as having a quaternary system of spatial relations, including permissive meaning as a distinct term in addition to locative, lative and ablative meaning); the functioning of prepositional, postpositional and circumpositional phrases within the adpositional system; the government of postpositional and circumpositional phrases and its syntactic and semantic determinants; and the areal links which might connect the Latvian adpositional system with the Finnic one.

1. Types of local phrases in Latvian

Latvian has a heterogeneous system of adpositional local phrases. In addition to prepositions, it has numerous examples of local phrases which appear to be postpositional or circumpositional:

(1) Māja ir aiz ezerā.
(2) Stāvējam durvju priekšā un gudrojām [...] (A. Eglītīs)
(3) Par vilkācī [...] cilveks [...] pārveršas, izližams pa saknes, sickstas apakšu, pa nažu starpu, caur melnu kreklu... (T. Zeiērts)

This state of affairs is not recognised by Latvian grammatical terminology. The term “postposition” is reserved for dēl, labād and (in some of its uses) pēc (none of these has a local meaning, so that they will be left out of consideration here). Postposition-like markers of location such as apkārē in mājai apkārē ‘around the house’ are referred to as “semi-prepositions” (pus-prievārdi, Bergman e.a., eds., 1959:701, 722-3; “semi-adpositions” would...
perhaps be more accurate, as they may be either prenominal or postnominal). Circumpositions are not mentioned at all. From the viewpoint of the classification of the parts of speech nothing is to be said against this presentation of the facts, as a form like *priekšā* in (2) is nothing but a case form of *priekšā* ‘front’, which is a normal noun. Moreover, serious objections may be raised against the treatment of *priekšā* as a postposition. In those cases where one would expect a combination of *priekšā* with a personal (or reflexive) pronoun, the latter is replaced by the locative of the corresponding possessive pronoun wherever a possessive pronoun is available; we thus have *manā priekšā* and not *manis priekšā*, as we would expect if *priekšā* were consistently treated as an adposition\(^1\).

Purely semantic considerations are not always decisive either. *Priekšā* may mean ‘front part’ or ‘the space in front of something’. In the first meaning we may regard it as a referential noun, in the second meaning it is more likely to function just as a marker of location. The difference is illustrated by (4) and (5):

(4) *Gar stacijas priekšs pastaigājās daži jauni cilvēki.* (J. Veselis)
(5) *Viga gaida tikai to brīdi, kad [...] patrieks vīpus no skolas priekšas.* (A. Jakubāns)

In (4) *priekšs* should probably be taken to be referential (‘the front part of the station hall’). This impression is created by the use of the preposition *gar* ‘along’. When a second preposition is added to an adpositional phrase already marking location, it is usually to denote quite fundamental and simple kinds of relations, such as that of goal (cf. English *in the room* and *into the room* or source (cf. Polish *przed domem* and *przed drzwi*). The relation denoted by *gar* is too complex and too specific to be integrated in the meaning structure of an adpositional phrase as a second element in addition to its main component, which is location with regard to the object denoted by the noun to which the adposition is added (this would be *stacija* if we insisted on treating *gar ... priekšs* as a compound adposition).

In (5), on the other hand, *priekšā* is probably not referential, but marks location with regard to the object (the school building), and it may be considered part of a compound adposition marking both relative location and source, a meaning complex often represented by compound prepositions (cf. Polish *przed drzwi* and English *from under the table*).

Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that it will always be possible to distinguish the referential uses of such nouns as *priekšā*, *apakšā* etc. from those where they function as parts of adpositional phrases. Thus neither formal nor semantic criteria will allow to set apart such markers of location as the ones illustrated in (2) and (3) as a distinct category. The case of the “semi-prepositions” is slightly different: if an adverb is observed to govern a certain case form in a regular way, then this renders it, in a way, similar to a preposition; for a noun, on the contrary, it is quite normal to be accompanied by a possessive genitive, as *priekšā* and *apakšā* in (2) and (3) are.

If one would be tempted to interpret *priekšā* in (2) as a postposition, then it is because *durrju priekšā* is opposed to an anonymous prepositional phrase *aiz durms*, and because there is no alternative case form or adpositional phrase to cover the meaning ‘in front of something’. As in the present paper I will not be concerned with the theory of the parts of speech, but rather with the status of this and similar expressions within the system of case forms and adpositional phrases covering the field of spatial relations, especially from the viewpoint of typology and areal linguistics, I will simply call *priekšā* in (2) a postposition and *pa ... apakšā* in (3) a circumposition.

At this point a few terminological stipulations are needed. A local phrase involves a *reference object*, i.e. the object serving as a point of reference for location (Jackendoff 1983:163). What the local phrases directly refers to is the *reference domain*, i.e. a part of space defined with regard to the reference object (called *reference place* by Jackendoff 1983:163; the term *domain* is borrowed in this sense from Weinsberg 1973:23-27). A (static) locative phrase describes an object as being in the reference domain, lative and ablative phrases describe an object as entering and leaving the reference domain respectively\(^2\).

### 2. Types of government

The adpositions illustrated in (2) and (3) are based on nouns with a spatial meaning, denoting various possible reference domains. The following nouns occur in this function: *apakšā* ‘the space under, beneath something’.

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\(^1\)A similar syntactic behaviour is characteristic of Lithuanian expressions with *tarpe*, the only counterpart. Lithuanian seems to have for the noun-based postpositions of Latvian: we have *savo tarpe* (with the possessive form of the reflexive pronoun), *tame tarpe*.

\(^2\)The terms are somewhat awkward, especially *ablative*, as this term often refers to one of the "external" local cases of some languages, opposed to the "internal" elative case. However, I cannot think of a better alternative.
3. Semantic types of local phrases

3.1. Locative and lative phrases

Locative and lative phrases are usually not formally distinguished in Latvian. The illative, attested in Old Latvian, has been replaced by the locative (Livonian influence has been suspected here, cf. Serebrennikov 1959). As a result of this syncretism, the same case forms occur in sēdēt istabā and ieiēt istabā. Thereby the means of formally distinguishing locative and lative postpositional phrases was also lost, as the postposition is based on a locative case form in both cases. It should be noted that uz (with the accusative), corresponding to English to and German nach, stands apart from the basic system of spatial relations represented by regular oppositions of locative, lative and ablative expressions, as it can never refer to an object’s entering the reference domain (one cannot say *ieiet uz istabu).

Within the system of adpositional phrases there are no formal distinctions directly associated with the distinction of locative and lative meaning. There are, however, some distinctions which are connected with it in a remote and indirect way, inasmuch as lative phrases, which more frequently represent obligatory arguments of predication than static locative phrases do, often enter a closer relationship with the verb, which may be reflected in extraction of the noun from the adpositional phrase and, correspondingly, in the use of the dative instead of the genitive; I will return to this point further on.

3.2. Ablative phrases

Apart from prepositional phrases with no, which (as a result of the loss of iz ‘out of’ in most dialects as well as in the standard language) provides ablative counterparts to locative phrases containing both the locative case and the preposition uz (with the genitive) ‘on’, all ablative phrases consist of combinations of no with nouns denoting the various reference domains, e.g. no gālā apakšās ‘from under the table’. The use of such circumpositional phrases to express ablative meaning is of course somehow connected with the lack of compound prepositions (comparable to Polish spod stołu, Lith. iš po stalo) in Latvian, but it is hard to establish the direction of the causal relation between these facts. Lithuanian provides no reliable evidence here, because its compound prepositions may be instances of Slavonic influence.

3.3. Perlative phrases

Most languages distinguish three possible relations of the located object to the reference domain: static (locative), lative and ablative. In addition to
these some languages, to which Latvian belongs, distinguish a fourth one: the perative relation. Perative expressions denote motion through the reference domain, the reference domain being traversed in such a way that the located object enters it at the initial point of its path and leaves it at the final point. Typical examples are pa saknes apakšu and pa nažu starpu in (3).

The perative relation often involves a change in location with regard to the reference object, but this is usually not treated as a relevant feature. In many languages locative phrases do not formally distinguish perative meaning from pure static location. An exception seems to be constituted by Fennic, which sometimes treats the perative relation in the same way as the ablative one, v. infra.

The meaning of the compound expressions with pa is not strictly perative; it may also involve the idea of a chaotic motion or dispersion over a certain surface or space (which is in agreement with the original meaning of the preposition pa). In this meaning, perative local phrases may secondarily acquire a static locative character. This is an instance of "the construction of a place concept from a reference path" (Jackendoff 1983:167); the local phrase basically denotes a path, but the located object may be "asserted to occupy the entire path at a single point in time" (Jackendoff 1983:173). This can be seen in (10):

(10) Viņa nopirka saulessargu, kur bālganā zīdā ziedēja sarkanā magones un tulpes, bet tām pa vidu zīlas neaizmirstules. (P. Rozītis).

The question must of course be posed on what grounds the compound expressions with pa should be taken to represent one of the fundamental relations of the located object to the reference domain distinctly marked in every series of adpositional phrases associated with a particular reference domain, while this status was denied to the phrase with gar in (4). I think the reason is threefold.

First, the use of adpositional phrases with pa is frequent and regular, whereas expressions as the one illustrated in (4) occur sporadically. A second

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3 Another IE language formally distinguishing perative meaning in a consistent way is Romanian, described by Weisberg (1973); in Romanian as well as in Latvian perative meaning is marked by a preposition, but in Romanian this preposition is added to the preposition marking the reference domain.

4 This is also characteristic of the instrumental in Both Slavonic and Lithuanian, cf. Fraenkel (1928:191-2). Weisberg (1973:106) notes the same for Romanian perative phrases with pa.

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reason, already invoked in the discussion of (4) and (5), is that the nouns appearing in perative phrases with pa do not, as a rule, seem to be referential. Finally, perative meaning can be defined by means of rather elementary notions which are also involved in the definition of the locative, lative and ablative relations, whereas the definition of compound expressions with gar would have to be more complex. The four relations just mentioned could be defined in the following way:

(a) LOCATIVE: the object is in the reference domain;
(b) LATIVE: the object starts being in the reference domain;
(c) ABLATIVE: the object ceases to be in the reference domain;
(d) PERATIVE: the object starts being in the reference domain and subsequently ceases to be in it.

4. The syntactic properties of postpositional phrases

The syntactic status of local phrases may be of two different kinds. They may be optional modifiers of the predicate, or they may represent arguments of predication. Lative local phrases usually represent obligatory arguments with motion predicates (such as 'go', 'put' etc.), whereas static locatives are often optional modifiers. This statement is not universally valid, but it explains some of the morphosyntactic properties of local phrases in Latvian. As lative phrases usually represent arguments of motion predicates, they tend to enter a closer syntactic association with the verb. When taken in the lative sense, a marker of location may oscillate between the status of adposition and that of an adverb. In such cases it is not clear whether the noun denoting the reference object is syntactically dependent on the marker of location or on the compound verbal syntagm consisting of verb and adverb. Consider (15):

(11) Debesi klūst tumšāka, saulei prieksā velkas mākoņi. (R. Valdes)

The dative is obligatory here. Prieksā has a different status here than in (2), as can be seen from the fact that in (11) we may have inverse word order, i.e. we have extraction of the noun from the adpositional phrase, cf. (12), where inverse word order occurs:

(12) ... mākoņi velkas prieksā saulei.

Furthermore the close association of prieksā with the verb is often shown by the occurrence of a prefix with the verb. In sentences comparable in meaning to (11) the prefix aiz- may be added to the verb; the idea associated with this prefix is that of covering up, obstructing, concealing. This meaning of the prefix aiz- occurs exclusively in combination with prieksā, so that one might
even consider aiziet priekšā to be a kind of verbal compound obligatorily
governing the dative.

(13) Mēnesīm priekšā aizgāja mākonis. (A. Jakubāns)
Two different ways of segmenting the verb phrase might be considered
here: [aiziet priekšā mēnesīm] or [aiziet [mēnesīm priekšā]]. Clearly, in (2)
the verb phrase could be segmented in one way only: [stāvet [durjvu priekšā]].
The specific features distinguishing (11)-(13) from (2) seem to be both
syntactic and semantic. But one may also contrast two sentences where the
same semantic distinction occurs without a syntactic difference being mani-
fest:

(14) Vārtu priekšā ir smilšu kaudze.
(15) Vārtiem priekšā ir smilšu kaudze.
(14) just denotes location in front of the gate, whereas (15) suggests
the gate being obstructed. Of course one could consider proposing different
syntactic derivations for (14) and (15) (by operating with a compound bit
priekšā), but that would not solve the problem. The dative may occur in sen-
tences where we are clearly dealing with an adpositional phrase representing
no more than an optional modifier, as in (16):

(16) Viņa ieraudzīja [...] omnībusu, kuram priekšā snauda divi pāti, izdē-
dejusi zirgi. (P. Rozītis)
Here, of course, we have no reason whatsoever to suppose that priekšā
constitutes a verbal compound together with snauda. Syntactically, there are
no differences between (16) and (2) with regard to the features which concern
us here. The fact that in (16) it is the pronoun kurš, not a noun, that occurs
in the dative, is irrelevant, cf. (17), where we have the genitive:

(17) Dievu šie saimnieki turēja par savu vienigo kungu, kura priekšā va-
jadzēja piekāpūtes [...] (E. Virza)
The only conceivable reason for the use of the dative in (16) is thus
exclusively semantic. I think the semantic feature associated with the use of the
dative is that of “affectedness”. If the mere idea of location with regard
to a reference object is involved, without this reference object being affected
by it, then we will expect the genitive to be used. Now the idea of obstruction
conveyed by (13) and (15) is clearly a kind of affectedness. We probably have
another kind of affectedness in (16): here the use of the dative suggests the
the located object somehow belongs to the reference object; in this particular
case, that the horses are harnessed to the coach, not just standing in front
of it.

A still closer relation, that of part to whole, is suggested in (18). Here,
however, it is not clear whether we are still dealing with a postpositional
phrase. The sentence may be viewed as containing a possessive predicate,
expressed by a construction of the type mīli est, and priekšā may be just an
adverb. The translation might be ‘The door has a padlock on it’ as well as
‘There is a padlock on the door’.

(18) Apeju laidadaru — durvim atstēgas priekšā. (E. Virza)
The choice between these two alternative constructions is probably not
always associated with semantic differences. Extraction of the noun from the
adpositional phrase allows word order to be changed, and word order is often
determined by topicalisation. A reason for the use of izīst sētai pa apakšu
instead of izīst pa sētas apakšu may be that the reference object is topicaled
and the path is in focus. Another reason for the noun to be extracted from
the adpositional phrase may be the wish to attach a relative clause to it,
which is impossible if the noun is immediately followed by the postposition
or the right part of the circumposition.

5. Types of adpositional local microsystems.
5.0. The microsystems of case forms and adpositional phrases covering
the particular reference domains are thus structured in various ways. Nearly
all of them are heterogeneous. Only two of them are consistently postposi-
tional/circumpositional: those based on vidus and priekšā. Not a single one
is consistently prepositional. The following microsystems illustrate the
particular types (the overview is far from complete):

5.1. ‘IN’: locative and lative meaning are covered by the locative case,
ablative meaning by no. The preposition pa, which marks perative meaning
in compound adpositional phrases, has by itself a rather imprecise meaning,
as it also denotes dispersion over a surface, and in purely perative meaning
the preposition caur or the semi-preposition cauri are commonly used (sedēt
istabā, ieiet istabā, iziet no istabas, iziet cauri istabai).

5.2. ‘ON’: locative and lative meaning are covered by uz, ablative meaning
by no, perative meaning by pa ... virsū, as in pa ūdens virsū ‘over the surface
of the water’. Pa ... virsū may sometimes function as a perative counter-
part of virs ‘above’ (mākoņi skrien pa galvus virsū). It may be derived from
virs ‘top, upper surface’, whereas the locative virsū (in the isolated Biblical
expression zemes virsū) is derived from the now obsolete form virsus. There
are also (mainly ablative) adpositional phrases based on augša ‘top, upper
part', e.g. *nocell koferi no skapja augšas*. It seems that *augšas* is used when the vertical dimension of the reference object is stressed (in *no ... augšas* the reference object is viewed as having a certain height and a downward motion is suggested), whereas in the case of *virsa* the horizontal dimensions of the object are prominent. Adpositional phrases with *virsa* and *augšas* seem to be used mainly when the unmarked type of location is inside the reference object, so that the mere preposition *no* (as in *zeml koferi no skapja*) would be taken to mean 'from inside the reference object'.

5.3. 'UNDER': locative and lative meaning are covered by *zem* (or *apakš*, which dominates in some regions but is felt to be somewhat archaic in the literary language), ablative meaning by *no* ... *apakšas*, perlocative meaning by *pa* ... *apakšū*. The regularity of this microsystem is disturbed by occasional uses of *apakšū* (always with the dative) in locative and lative meaning. *Apakšū* may be translated as 'at the bottom of something', and it is used when the located object is thought of as being a part, or an essential accessory of, the reference object, as in (19), (20):

(19) Man gan bija acis redzēt, ka jūs [...] bāzēt vienai cūpičai *apakšū* norūmātas kārtis. (A. Deglavs)

(20) [...] ja viņš apiecēbo reiz licīs *apakšū* savu parakstā [...] taj nevienam nebijā tēsa par viņu ko labāk zināt [...] (A. Deglavs)

Such uses of *apakšū* always show extraction of the noun from the postpositional phrase. From the semantic point of view, there seem to be similar situations on the use of such constructions as on the uses of *prieķšu* with extraction of the noun: in (19) and (20) there is a relation of part to whole between the located object and the reference object, as in (16), (18).

5.4. 'BETWEEN, AMONG': this microsystem is comparable to the preceding one in that the locative and lative meanings are covered by a preposition: *starp*, whereas the perlocative *pa* ... *starpu* is based on the noun *starp*. Here as well, there are postpositional phrases competing with the preposition in locative and lative meaning, but here the semantic differentiation is more clearly defined: postpositional *starp* means 'among', and it is used with plural nouns referring to groups of persons or objects.

5.5. 'IN THE MIDDLE OF': locative and lative *vidū*, ablative *no* ... *vidus*, perlocative *pa* ... *vidu*. Probably the most regular of the microsystems mentioned here.

5.6. 'IN FRONT OF': *prieķšū* in locative and lative meaning, *no* ... *prieķšūs* in ablative meaning. The perlocative *pa* *prieķšū* shows a certain semantic specialisation. It can only mean 'ahead of (some object or person in motion)' and thus lacks the meaning of motion across the reference domain, which is characteristic of the remaining perlocative phrases. In this case we observe obligatory extraction of the noun from the circumpositional phrase, whereas the perlocative phrases denoting motion across the reference domain are regularly used as circumpositions with the genitive:

(21) *Draugiem pa prieķšū viņš noskrieja pa trepēm zemē*. (P. Rozitīs)

Perhaps this deviant syntactic treatment correlates with the semantic deviancy of these expressions. It may be noted that *pa prieķšū* shows the same syntactic features as the antonymous *pakal*, which belongs to the class of semi-prepositions:

(22) *Vigiem *pakal* aizgāja arī citi puikas*. (P. Rozitīs)

5.7. Some microsystems are defective; this is the case with *aiz* 'behind', for which there are no regular ablative and perlocative counterparts. These can be constructed only when there is a nominal compound with *aiz*- denoting the reference domain. So, for instance, there is a noun *aidurve* 'the place behind the door', from which (in addition to the locative *aidurve* 'behind the door') an ablative *no aidurve* may be derived. In other cases such a compound noun doubles prepositional expressions, cf. *pabāzē koferi pagultē* and *pabāzē koferi zem gultas*. The productivity of this derivational type in both Lithuanian and Latvian is quite striking. Perhaps the cause should be sought in the tendency of Baltic to denote the reference domain in local phrases by means of a noun, as in expressions with *prieķšū, apakšā* etc. The names of familiar objects often used as landmarks were even incorporated, which gave rise to nouns denoting the reference object and the reference domain at the same time.

6. The semi-prepositions

The second group mentioned at the start, and referred to in Latvian grammatical terminology as semi-prepositions, comprises the following items: *apkārt* 'around', *blakus, lidzās* 'next to', *cauri* 'through', *garum* 'past, by', *pāri* 'over, above', *pakaļ* 'behind, after', *pretī* 'opposite'.

Between the noun-based postpositions and the semi-prepositions there are

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1 There is no equivalent for this in Slavonic, where formations like Polish *podstrzecz* (from *strzeka*) do exist, but are not used just to mark the reference domain in local phrases.
two major differences. The most salient feature of noun-based postpositions is that they can govern the genitive, whereas the semi-prepositions cannot. The semi-prepositions always govern the dative, and they may be either prenominal or postnominal:

(23) Zėna aizskrėja mājai garām.
(24) Zėna aizskrėja garām mājai.

It should be added that some of the noun-based adpositional phrases mentioned above show, in certain of their uses, a distinct preference for the construction with extraction of the noun from the adpositional phrase, and combine with the dative only; they are thereby reminiscent of the dative prepositions. With regard to syntactic properties, the line of division between both groups is not always a neat one.

A second difference between the noun-based adpositions and the semi-prepositions is that, while the former are (to a varying extent) serial, the latter are not. As a preposition cannot be added to the semi-preposition, there is no means of deriving, say, an ablative phrase from them.

Semantically, the semi-prepositions are heterogeneous. *Blakus, lidzās and preti* are either locative or dative. *Apkārt* is locative, dative or per locative, without it being possible to determine which meaning is primary (the same can be said of the corresponding prepositions in various languages). *Cauri, garām, pakāl* and *pāri* are in themselves per locative, and they normally occur with motion verbs. However, in this case as well as in that of the per locative phrases discussed in 3.3., a per locative expression can be used to denote static location, as in (25) and (26):

(25) ... to variēža dziedēt ne tikai Lasmaņa skārni, bet cauri visai pilseņai.
(P. Rozitis)

(26) [...] pāri visai Krievijai esmu veicinājis dejas mākslu. (J. Greiste)

Were it not for constructions like these, one could view the combinations of verbs with the semi-prepositions as a kind of compound verbs (as their Estonian counterparts are in Estonian grammar). Some of them, like *iet, braukst garām* ‘to pass’, can in fact be used without a noun, as in *vilciens pašlaik brauc garām*. The same question was raised above in connection with the noun-based adpositions. Such an approach, however, would not permit a uniform treatment of either the semi-prepositions or the noun-based adpositions.

As to the distinction between these two categories, it exists from the morphological point of view, but there are no serious semantic or syntactic arguments for keeping them apart. We might rather speak of a continuum than of a neat line of division. The noun-based *pa priekšā* in (21) is more similar in syntactic behaviour to the semi-preposition *pakāl* in (22) than to *priekšā* in (2), which is noun-based too.

As to the government of the semi-prepositions, I assume it was taken over from the noun-based adpositions. With the latter, the dative has a purely syntactic motivation; it replaces an abinal genitive. In the case of the semi-prepositions, one would have a priori expected other kinds of government, especially prepositional ones. Note that, if we have *iet istabā iekšā and kāpā kalnā augšā* (with double marking of the reference domain in each case), we would expect an analogous *iet ap māju apkārt*, instead of which we usually have *iet mājai apkārt*.

In fact, we have two divergent developments here. Some locatives of nouns with a spatial meaning started functioning as postpositions. This was not the case with *iekšā and augšā*, which are never used as postpositions replacing the locative case and the preposition *az* respectively. Therefore these forms retain a purely adverbal function, and in *iet istabā iekšā and kāpā kalnā augšā* they merely provide redundant marking of a spatial relation already marked by the case form. *Apakšā*, on the other hand, developed a somewhat different meaning from the preposition *zem* (as we saw above), and instead of being used as a redundant marker occurring alongside with a preposition, it behaves itself as an adposition, competing (but usually not co-occurring) with *zem*. For this reason we have the dative *apličēbat*, but not *zem apličēbas*, in (20). Now this pattern was followed by semi-prepositions such as *apkārt*. As the dative (replacing the abinal genitive) was syntactically motivated in the case of noun-based adpositions, these must have provided the model for the government of the semi-prepositions.

It should be noted that this type of government was even transferred to verbal constructions without semi-prepositions. Verbs with the prefixes *ap-* and *pār-* may now often govern the dative, which is a Latvian innovation, unknown to either Slavonic or Lithuanian. These datives originally depended on the semi-prepositions *apkārt* and *pāri* respectively, as in *apiet mājai apkārt* and *pāriet pāri ielai*. As a result, constructions arose where the dative was retained although the semi-preposition was dropped. In addition to the traditional types of government represented by *pārkāpt sliksni* and *pārkāpt pār sliksni* Latvian now has a third possibility, *pārkāpt sliksnim*, whereas Lithuanian has only constructions of the first two types (*peržengti sienkysti*
On the syntax and semantics ... Lithuanian vidury sodo (which is reminiscent of Russian posredni sada, Polish pośrodku sady) is more conspicuously deviant than Latvian dārza vidū. Here and elsewhere, the Slavonic adstratum of Lithuanian is as much of a problem as the Fennic adstratum of Latvian. When studying the Baltic languages from the viewpoint of areal linguistics, one is in a much worse situation than the investigators of the Balkan languages, who at least have Ancient Greek, Latin and Old Church Slavonic as reliable landmarks.

A second point is that the Latvian system of adpositional locative phrases is characterised by a quaternary opposition including perative meaning as a distinct term, whereas Fennic has only a ternary system (locative, lative and ablative). What is characteristic of Fennic is that perative meaning may often be marked by an expression of the ablative type, sc. the elative. For Finnish this is noted by Fromm & Sadeniemi (1956:150). The reason for this seems to be that passing through, by, over or beneath some object ultimately results in motion away from the object (which seems to be echoed by the use of the prefix iz- in combination with cauri, pa apakšu etc. and aiz- in combination with gurām in Latvian). In Estonian as well, the elative regularly occurs in this function (cf. Tauli 1983:112-4). We may note the following constructions:

(27) lāksima saalist lābi 'we traversed the room'
(28) lāksin oma majast mōda 'I walked past my house'
(29) ta lāks sillast ute 'he crossed the bridge'

Livonian has similar constructions, cf. kōranst pi'ddāž 'långs dem gehöfte' (Kettunen 1938:285).6 Neither of the neighbouring Fennic languages has a distinct set of perative expressions. Curiously enough the type of locative phrases showing the most consistent use of postpositional markers is the one which is not represented in Fennic.

The cause of the rise of a distinct set of perative expressions in Latvian should perhaps be sought in the loss of the instrumental case. In the original Indo-European case system the expression of the perative relationship seems to have been the spatial function of the instrumental (cf. Kuryłowicz 1964:189), and this function is well preserved in Slavonic and in Lithuanian (Fraenkel 1928:190–1), cf. Polish isć drog, Lith. eiti keliu. Along with the loss of the instrumental as a distinct case form, Latvian generalised prepositional phrases with pa, as in jet pa ceļu (the Slavonic and Lithuanian equivalents of this preposition denote only dispersion over a surface). There are no instances

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6In the Livonian examples the orthography of the sources is retained.
and it is to be sought within Latvian itself.

On the other hand, the Latvian use of case forms with postpositions seems to have been at least partly adopted by Livonian. Livonian differs from the remaining Balto-Finnic languages in having developed a kind of dative case (Kettunen’s “Dativ-Lokativ”), which, though proto-Finnic in origin (it is derived from an original locative), seems to have acquired its present functions under the influence of Latvian (Kettunen 1938:XL1, de Sivers 1970:499). One of the uses of this Livonian dative may be observed in constructions analogous to the Latvian ones discussed here, cf. ta ai’i’iz sie mi’en taga’i elle courut après cet homme’ (Latv. skrēja šim viram pakal, tarā um tubān immer ‘der garten ist um das haus herum’ (Kettunen 1938:73a; Latv. mājai apkārt). This use of the dative could be due to Latvian influence. It is interesting to note that with certain postpositions both the genitive and the dative can be used in Livonian: Kettunen (1938:404b) cites tabā um uksēn / uks je ‘s ein vorhängeschloss hängt vor der türe’. The available material is fragmentary and I could not establish whether the distribution of these case forms is comparable to what we observe in Latvian. But de Sivers (1970:498) also notes that in similar cases Estonian would have the allative, whereas Finnish would have the genitive: Est. sellele jalale alla = Fin. sen jalun allit ‘sous ce pied’. This, in turn, seems to be connected with the fact that Estonian makes extensive use of the allative in possessive function, cf. Est. kaurnade seiju (‘elle se mit’) sur le dos du corbeau’ (de Sivers 1970:498). On the other hand, it should also be noted that Latvian makes much more extensive use of the possessive dative than Lithuanian does’. This is probably an areal feature shared by Latvian, Estonian and Livonian. It deserves to be separately investigated, not only in connection with the postpositional phrases.

From the point of view of areal linguistics I think the extensive use of postpositional phrases in Latvian and their occurrence in neighbouring Fennic cannot be a mere coincidence. In the details, however, there is much divergence.

Footnote 7: Freemel (1928:121) deals with a few Lithuanian instances of the possessive dative derived from animate nouns under the heading "dativus sympatheticus". He expresses the view that the Baltic languages, unlike many other IE languages, do not frequently use this kind of dative, giving preference to the possessive genitive instead. This statement is based on Lithuanian material only and is obviously due to ignorance of the Latvian facts.
References


