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Comitative-based inclusory constructions in Lithuanian and their cross-linguistic background

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Abstract. In this contribution, I examine Lithuanian constructions of the type *mes/jūs/jie su X* 'we/you/they with X' that refer to only two participants. In other words, the referential scope of the first element encompasses the referential scope of the second. Such constructions are known as inclusory or inclusory pronominal constructions in the literature. In the descriptive tradition of Lithuanian studies, these constructions have not gained enough attention. This paper fills this gap by presenting an elicitation-based investigation of the morphosyntactic parameters and semantics of this family of constructions. While the primary focus is descriptive, the Lithuanian case is also situated within a broader typological and areal context. I propose the preliminary hypothesis that inclusory constructions based on comitative markers are the result of language contact and constitute an areal feature in parts of Europe and Asia.

Keywords: inclusory constructions, comitative, pronouns, Lithuanian, areal linguistics, typology, morphosyntax, semantics

Inkliuzorinės komitatyvinės konstrukcijos lietuvių kalboje ir jų tarpkalbinis kontekstas

Santrauka. Šiame straipsnyje analizuojamos tokios lietuvių kalbos konstrukcijos kaip *mes/jūs/jie su X*, kurios žymi tik du dalyvius, t. y., pirmojo elemento referencija apima taip pat ir antrojo elemento referenciją. Lietuvių kalbos deskriptyviojoje tradicijoje to-

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kios konstrukcijos nesulaukė pakankamai dėmesio. Šiuo elicitacijos metodu paremtu tyrimu siekiama užpildyti spragą. Straipsnyje detaliai analizuojamos nurodytos konstrukcijų šeimos morfosintaksinės bei semantinės savybės. Nors pirminis straipsnio tikslas yra detalus reiškinio aprašymas, lietuvių kalbos duomenys yra įtraukiami ir į platesnį tipologinį ir arealinį kontekstą. Išsakoma preliminari hipotezė, jog inkliuzorinės komitatyvinės konstrukcijos gali būti dalies Europos ir Azijos regiono arealiniu bruožu.

Raktažodžiai: inkliuzorinės konstrukcijos, komitatyvas, įvardžiai, lietuvių kalba, morfosintaksė, semantika, arealinė lingvistika, tipologija

1 Introduction

In this brief contribution, I provide an overview of the syntactic and semantic properties of the family of Lithuanian constructions of the following type:

(1) ***mes*** ***su*** ***tavim*** *patys* *būt**ume*** *viską*
1PL.NOM **with** **2SG.INS** self.NOM.PL be.**1PL** everything.ACC
išsiaiškinę
figure.out.PST.PA[1]
'We would have figured it out ourselves' (LKT)

In this example, *mes su tavim* (1PL with 2SG.INS, 'you and me'), as well as the agreeing verb form *būtume* (COP.SUBJ.1PL) refers to only two participants – the speaker and the addressee – despite the plural form of the first pronoun *mes* 'we'. Therefore, what literally reads as 'we with you' is interpreted as 'you (SG) and me'. This phenomenon is only very briefly mentioned in the main academic grammar of Lithuanian (Ambrazas 2006, 190). The goal of this paper is to provide an overview of the properties of this family of constructions in Lithuanian and contribute to its adequate description. Additionally, I aim to contextualize the Lithuanian data within a broader typological and areal framework.

2 Definition of inclusory constructions

The construction mentioned in the introduction is well-known in cross-linguistic studies and is now usually referred to as the inclusory (pronominal) construction. The alternative

[1] If not indicated otherwise, the provided examples are obtained via elicitation. I follow Salos glossing rules in the Lithuanian examples (Nau & Arkadiev 2015). In other examples, Leipzig glossing rules are adhered to. I do not show morpheme boundaries in this paper as they are irrelevant to my central argument. In examples from others' work, the original presentation has been preserved (including morpheme boundaries).

term plural pronoun construction (Schwartz 1988; Vassilieva & Larson 2005) has largely gone out of use. Inclusory constructions should not be confused with inclusive pronouns (Filimonova 2005) – the two phenomena are distinct, albeit partly overlapping. The term inclusory constructions was coined by Lichtenberk (2000), who was focusing primarily on the Austronesian language Toqabaqita and included other languages for a typological background.

(2) *Kamareqa* *doqora-ku* *meki* *lae* *ma-i* *qusungadi*
1DU(EXCL) brother-1SG.PERS 1DU(EXCL).FUT go VENIT-at tomorrow
'I and my brother will come tomorrow' (Lichtenberk 2000, 2)

Although the referential phrase *kamareqa doqora-ku* (1DU(EXCL) brother-1SG.PERS.) translates into English as 'my brother and I', 'I' is not overtly expressed in Toqabaqita. Rather, the referential phrase includes a reference to both participants in the first element, *kamareqa* 'the two of us'. According to Haspelmath (2007, 20), in such constructions, "one of the constituents has the same reference as the entire construction". Arkhipov's formulation is more detailed: "An inclusory construction is formed by two noun phrases, one of which itself has a plural reference (most often, it is a non-singular personal pronoun). The referent of the second noun phrase is included into the set of referents of the first, hence the name *inclusory.*" (Arkhipov 2009, 235)

Inclusory constructions are relatively widespread worldwide. *Grambank* has a map dedicated to this specific feature (Figure 1).

In this map, it can be seen that languages with inclusory constructions tend to cluster in specific areas of the world, namely, Central, Eastern and Northern Europe, North Asia, and Polynesia.[2] Triangles represent languages for which relevant information is missing. Regarding data sources, source literature is often cited, but in some cases, the *Grambank* project participants rely on their personal knowledge. Although somewhat rough, the map clearly shows areal patterns in the worldwide distribution of the construction type studied here. There is some literature on inclusory constructions in specific languages, but it is eclectic with respect to the questions asked and the approaches taken (see Section 4 for some references). A large-scale typological overview of the problem is still missing.

[2] Already at this stage, it is safe to say that the map is not quite accurate. For example, Hungarian is marked as a language without an inclusory construction, which is misleading (Dalmi 2024).

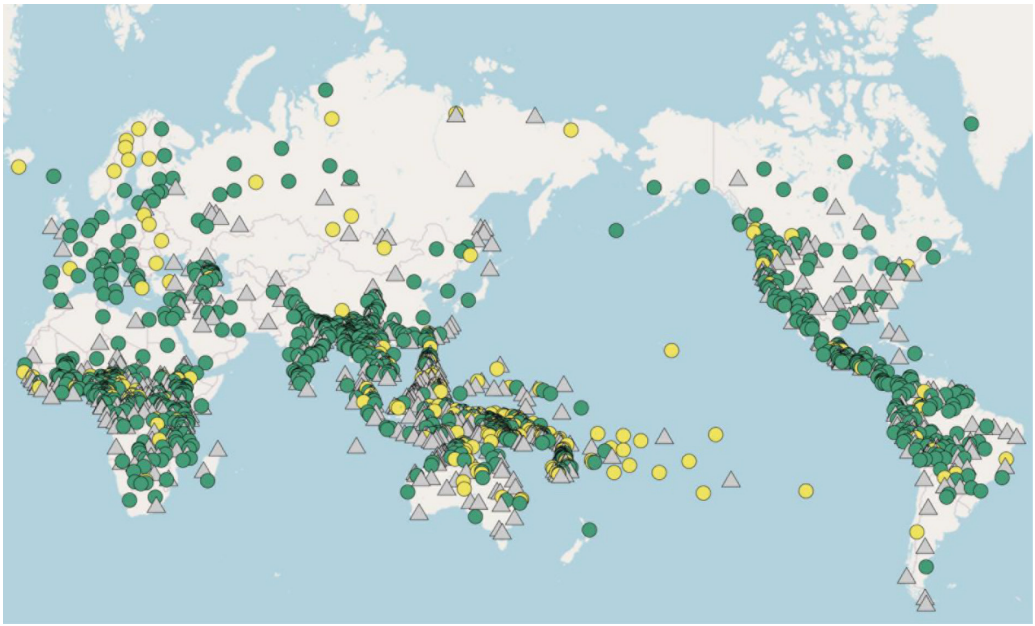

Figure 1. The approximate distribution of inclusory constructions worldwide according to the *Grambank.* Darker/green dots = there is an inclusory construction; brighter/yellow dots = there is no inclusory construction; triangles = no data

3 Inclusory constructions in Lithuanian

In this section, I provide an overview of the structural and semantic variation of inclusory constructions in modern Lithuanian. By modern Lithuanian, I refer to both the literary standard and the urban spoken *koiné*. These two varieties exhibit differences at all levels (see, e.g., Ramonaitė (2019) for a case study). However, the construction under question is not subject to prescriptive normalization in the standard language; this is why I treat both varieties as a single whole.

3.1 General characteristics

Rather than speaking of a single inclusory construction, it makes sense to speak of the family of inclusory constructions in Lithuanian, as there is a lot of variation in this domain. The crucial characteristic of this family of constructions is the obligatory presence of the comitative preposition *su* 'with'. *Su* requires a referential phrase (NP or PP) in the instrumental case. The NP introduced with *su* is the "extra" one, having a narrower reference:

(3) a. *mes* *su* *tavim*
1PL.NOM with 2SG.INS
'you (SG) and me'

b. *mūsų* *su* *draugais* *paslaptis*
our with friend.INS.PL secret.NOM.SG
'my friends' and my secret'

The referential phrases in the two examples above differ greatly in terms of the parts of speech and grammatical categories involved. They only share a generic construction principle, which can be visualized in the following construction schema (RP = referential phrase).

RP1(BROAD) ***su*** **RP2**(NARROW, INCLUDED IN RP1).INS

Although there is a clear preference toward the RP1-RP2 order, the relative order of RP1 and RP2 in a construction is not strictly fixed and depends on information structure. The RP1 can be instantiated by a verbal inflection only (see 3.2). The sentence in the example (1) can be, for example, reorganized as follows so that RP2 is fronted:

(4) ***su*** ***tavim*** *mes* *patys* *būtume* *viską* *išsiaiškinę*
with 2SG.INS 1PL.NOM self.NOM.SG be.COND.1PL all.ACC clarify.PST.PA.NOM.PL
'we would have figured everything out ourselves'

In this case, *su tavim* 'with you' is a contrastive focus NP ('you, not someone else').

3.2 Inclusory *pronominal* constructions or not?

Although Lichtenberk's label includes the element "pronominal", which apparently applies to RP1 in our schema, RP1 is not necessarily expressed by a pronoun in Lithuanian, a pro-drop language. If a subject (nominative) inclusory construction consists of two RPs (i.e., if it is not a possessive construction), a plural verbal inflection suffices for the construction to be well-formed:

(5) *Buvot* *su* *Elena* *teatre?*
be.PST.2PL with Elena.INS.SG[F] theater.LOC.SG[M]
'Have you and Elena been/gone to a theater?'

This claim does not hold for inclusory possessive constructions as in (6). In these constructions, the predicate agrees with the head noun, which refers to the possessed entity:

(6) *Mūsų su draugais paslaptis buvo* atskleista
our with friend.INS.PL secret.NOM.SG be.PST.3 reveal.PST.PP.SG[F]
'My and my friends' secret became known.'

3.3 Syntactic variation

Slots RP1 and RP2 differ in the types of referents they allow. Additionally, there are semantic restrictions on the compatibility between elements in RP1 and RP2. Below, I discuss each slot separately.

3.3.1 RP1

The "broader" reference slot can only be occupied by pronouns and/or verbal inflection markers (but see 3.3.1.4). Taking the construction *mes su draugu* (1PL.NOM with friend.INS.SG, 'my friend and I' as the starting point), the following transformations of RP1 (*mes* 'we') are acceptable.

3.3.1.1 A plural personal pronoun can occur in any person and gender form (in the 3rd person): *jūs su draugu* (2PL.NOM with friend.INS.SG[M], 'your friend and you'), *jie su draugu* (3PL.NOM[M] with friend.INS.SG[M], 'his/her friend and her/him (masculine or mixed group)'), *jos su drauge* (3PL.NOM[F] with friend.INS.SG[F], 'her friend (female) and she'). *Jos su draugu* (3PL.NOM[F] with friend.INS.SG[M]) cannot have an inclusory meaning because the masculine gender of the RP2 is semantically incompatible with the feminine gender of the plural pronoun of the RP1. The only possible reading of *jos su draugu* is non-inclusory: it can refer to a group of females with their male friend ('they[F] and their friend[M]').

3.3.1.2 A dual pronoun may be used instead of a plural one. This does not affect the interpretation of the construction. In the case of PRON *su draugu* 'with (a) friend', if the reading is inclusory, the entire construction refers to two people. In this case, the use of the dual is stylistically marked as literary, whereas the plural is stylistically neutral. Examples include *mudu su draugu* (1DU with friend.INS.SG 'my friend and I') etc.

3.3.1.3 All of the aforementioned pronoun types freely inflect for case, exhibiting all possible forms without restriction: *mums su draugu* (1PL.DAT with friend.INS.SG[M]), *jus su draugu* (2PL.ACC with friend.INS.SG[M]), *juose su draugu* (3PL.LOC[M] with friend.INS.SG[M]).

3.3.1.4 A plural or dual possessive pronoun can be used. In Lithuanian, these forms are formally identical to, and diachronically related to, the genitive forms of the personal pronouns. However, they do not agree in gender or number with the head noun. This

means that, formally, such uses can be described as plural/dual personal pronoun constructions in the genitive case, where the genitive has a possessive function, which is only one of its many possible functions. It also makes sense to not consider the head (semantically possessed) noun phrase part of the construction:

(7) *mūsų* *su* *draugu* *paslaptis*
we.1PL.GEN with friend.INS.SG[M] secret.NOM.SG[F]
'my and my friend's secret'

Importantly, in possessive inclusory constructions, a pronominal RP2 cannot occur in possessive form. A simple personal pronoun is required, although it functions possessively within the construction:

(8) a. *mūsų* *su* ***jumis*** *paslaptis*
we.1PL.GEN with 2PL.INS secret.NOM.SG[F]
'a secret between you and me'

b. *mūsų* *su* ****jūsų*** *paslaptis*
we.1PL.GEN with 2PL.GEN secret.NOM.SG[F]

The same meaning can be expressed using different grammatical means, for example:

(9) a. *mano* *su* *jumis* *paslaptis*
my with 2PL.INS secret.NOM.SG[F]
'my and your secret'

b. *mano* *ir* *jūsų* *paslaptis*
my and 2PL.GEN secret.NOM.SG[F]
'my and your secret'

c. *mano* *ir* *draugų* *paslaptis*
my and friend.GEN.PL[M] secret.NOM.SG[F]
'my and my friend's secret'

Neither of these constructions, however, matches the definition of the inclusory construction.

3.3.1.4 Another construction type lies on the periphery of what can be included under the label "inclusory constructions". These are cases in which two noun phrases (NPs) are combined in a comitative construction:

(10) *Marija* *su* *vyru*
Marija.NOM with husband.INS.SG
'Marija and her husband'

If an adjectival modifier, or an adjectival or nominal predicate is added, it appears in the plural form. For male or mixed referents, the form is masculine, and for female referents, the form is feminine:

(11) a. *tie* *patys* *Marija* *su* *vyru*
DEM.NOM.PL[M] self.NOM.PL[M] Marija.NOM.SG[F] with husband.INS.SG
'the same Marija and her husband'

b. *Marija* *su* *vyru* *buvo* *pavargę*
Marija with husband.INS.SG be.PST.3 tired.NOM.PL[M]
'Marija and her husband were tired'

c. *Marija* *su* *vyru* *buvo* *mokytojai*
Marija with husband.INS.SG[F] be.PST.3 teacher.NOM.PL[M]
'Marija and her husband were teachers'

In these constructions, the mechanism of pure formal syntactic agreement does not apply and semantics – the total number of referents – wins. These constructions match Haspelmath's definition of inclusory constructions if the modifier's or the predicate's inflection is viewed as a referential device in its own right, which is legitimate in such cases.

In the typological literature, this type is sometimes considered distinct from inclusory constructions, labels such as *comitative conjunction* (Haspelmath 2007, 29–33) and *coordinating comitative constructions* (Arkhipov 2009) are used.

3.3.2 RP2

The main semantic constraint of the second referential phrase is its narrow reference, which should be contained within the reference of the RP1. This is part of the cross-linguistic definition of the inclusory construction. The foundational formal constraint on RP2 is the obligatory presence of the comitative preposition *su* 'with', which governs a nominal or pronominal phrase in the instrumental case. However, the referential phrase under the scope of *su* 'with' itself is not significantly constrained. It can be simple or extended by various modifiers, including other noun phrases. It can also be headed by a noun or pronoun of any number form:

(12) a. *mes* *su* *draugu*
1PL.NOM with friend.INS.SG[M]
'my friend and I'

b. *mes* *su* *draugais*
1PL.NOM with friend.INS.PL[M]
'my friends and I'

c. *mes* *su* *tavim*
1PL.NOM with 2SG.INS
'you(SG) and I'

d. *mes* *su* *jumis*
1PL.NOM with 2PL.INS
'you(PL) and I'

e. *mes* *su* *mūsų* *kaimynų* *gerais* *draugais*
1PL.NOM with our neighbor.GEN.PL good.INS.PL friend.INS.PL
'I and my neighbors' good friends'

Another obvious constraint is the prohibition of coreference between RP1 and RP2. For example, **jūs su jumis* (2PL.NOM with 2PL.INS) is unacceptable. Similarly, dual RP1 imposes a number constraint on RP2, which can only occur in the singular for the construction to have an inclusory reading. The following examples are grammatical albeit unnatural:

(13) a. *mudu* *su* *tavim*
1DU.NOM with 2SG.INS
'you and me (incl.)/the two of us and you (SG) (non-incl.)'

b. *mudu* *su* *jumis*
1DU.NOM with 2PL.INS
'the two of us and you (PL)'

c. *mudu* *su* *judviem*
1DU.NOM with 2DU.INS
'the two of us and the two of you'

3.3.3 Distance and order effects

Any inclusory construction can be potentially interpreted as non-inclusory:

(14) a. *Mes* *su* *draugu* *pasikalbėjom*.
1PL with friend.INS.SG talk.PFV.PST.1PL

b. *Pasikalbėjom* *su* *draugu.*
talk.PFV.PST.1PL with friend.INS.SG

'I have talked to my friend.' / 'We have talked to our friend.'

In the examples above, an inclusory reading is more natural and likely than non-inclusory one. However, the likelihood of an inclusory interpretation decreases with the growth of the distance between RP1 and RP2:

(15) *Mes* *vakar* *labai* *gerai* *pasikalbėjom* *su* *draugu.*
1PL yesterday very well talk.PFV.PST.1PL with friend.INS.SG

'We have talked to our friend.' / '?I have talked to my friend.'

The quantitative study of distance effects in structurally parallel constructions of Finnish has been conducted (Kurki 2024). Such an analysis is beyond the scope of this paper. For the purposes of this paper, it is sufficient to note that, as in Finnish, the distance between the RPs affects the interpretation of a construction as inclusory.

3.4 The semantics

In Lithuanian, as in many other languages, inclusory constructions are distinct from (a) pure coordination and (b) pure comitative. In the case of coordination, the distinction is formal: the conjunction *ir* 'and' is not used, instead, the comitative construction *su*+N.INS 'with N' is evoked. Nevertheless, a formal distinction of inclusory constructions from pure comitative is often lacking or only weakly expressed. The situation is complicated by the fact that the comitative as a cross-linguistic domain and a language-specific category of Lithuanian is itself extremely polysemous. Furthermore, comitative markers often serve as the diachronic source of coordination markers and are sometimes formally indistinguishable (Stassen 2000; Arkhipov 2009). Both semantic components are present in inclusory constructions, however. In short, inclusory constructions are an intermediate case between coordination and the comitative, but they are more than that. Lithuanian has a variety of reference strategies for two participants acting or being acted upon jointly. The inclusory construction is just one option:

(16) a. ?*Marija* *ir* *jos* *vaikas* *atvažiavo*
Marija.NOM and her child.NOM.SG arrive.PST.3
'Marija and her child arrived'

b. *Marija* *atvažiavo* *su* *vaiku*
Marija.NOM arrive.PST.3 with child.INS.SG
'Marija and her child arrived'

c. *Marija* *su* *vaiku* *atvažiavo*
Marija.NOM with child.INS.SG arrive.PST.3
'Marija and her child arrived'

d. *Jie* *su* *vaiku* *atvažiavo*
3PL.NOM[M] with child.INS.SG arrive.PST.3
'The two of them, the one being a child, arrived'

e. *Jie* *atvažiavo* *su* *vaiku*
3PL.NOM[M] arrive.PST.3 with child.INS.SG
'They arrived with a child'

Among the above examples, (a) is reported as grammatical but quite unnatural, (d) is the most uncontroversial instance of an inclusory construction, and (c) is a borderline case of a coordinating comitative construction. In both cases, the referential phrases in the subject position – *Marija su vaiku* 'Marija and her child' and *jie su vaiku* 'them and their child' – frame the two acting individuals as a single entity, as a couple of people closely associated with each other. The two referents constitute the joint topic of the utterance/sentence in both cases. This main semantic component distinguishes Lithuanian inclusory constructions from simple coordination or plain comitatives. In the remaining examples (a, b, and e), only one referential phrase is the topic, while the other introduces an additional referent and functions as part of a comment.

For certain referents, the inclusory construction is the only option, or the most common one. For instance, when the speaker and the recipient are present face-to-face and the speaker wants to refer to both of them as a single actor, the inclusory construction is the default option:

(17) ***Mes/mudu*** ***su*** ***tavim*(*i*)** *seniai* *pažįstam-**i***
1PL.NOM/1DU.NOM **with** **2SG.INS** long.ago acquaintant-**1PL.NOM**
'We have known each other for a long time'

The following sentences are not judged as ungrammatical but sound clumsy and "foreign" and do not typically occur in natural speech:

(18) a. ?***Aš*** ***ir*** ***tu*** *seniai* *pažįstam-**i***
1SG.NOM **and** **2SG.NOM** long.ago acquiantant-**1PL.NOM**

b. ?***Tu*** ***ir*** ***aš*** *seniai* *pažįstam-**i***
2SG.NOM **and** **1SG.NOM** long.ago acquaintant-**1PL.NOM**
'?We have known each other for a long time'

In the Corpus of Contemporary Lithuanian language (LKT), most attestations of *aš ir tu* 'me and you' and *tu ir aš* 'you and I' come from literary texts. One single use is attested in its spoken subcorpus. Most attestations represent rather specific uses. The single use attested in the spoken subcorpus is a list: *Eglė, jos abi kambariokės,* ***aš ir tu*** 'Eglė, both her roomates, **me and you**'. Other contexts are not neutral references to the speaker and the addressee either. Many instances evoke poetic connotations: *ir eisim mes abudu per šitą gražų kraštą, abudu,* ***aš ir tu*** 'we will both walk across this beautiful land, **me and you**', and another typical use is with the focus adverbial tik 'only': *tauta – tai ne* ***tik aš ir tu*** 'a nation is not **only me and you**'. The same is true for the reversed order (*tu ir aš* 'you and I').

Therefore, an inclusory construction frames two or more animate referents as a single, holistic entity – a Gestalt of sorts. This phenomenon is reminiscent of what has been addressed in the literature as *natural coordination*, as opposed to *accidental coordination* (Wälchli 2005; Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2006) as well as *tight coordination*, as opposed to *loose coordination* (Moyse-Faurie & Lynch 2004). Wälchli defines natural coordination as follows:

> "Natural coordination [...] implies, among other things, that the parts express semantically closely associated concepts such as 'brother and sister', 'hands and feet', 'eat and drink', 'knife and fork', etc., which are on the same hierarchical level, and that the whole meaning ('siblings', 'limbs', etc.) is more general than the meaning of the parts." (Wälchli 2005, 1)

In inclusory constructions, the association between concepts is tight but primarily defined within a speech situation, as opposed to "naturally" occurring, as in Wälchli's examples. This can be seen in the following minimal pair:

(19) a. *Mes* *su* *draugu* *mėgstam* *kefyrą*
1PL.NOM with friend.INS.SG[M] like.PRS.1PL kefir.ACC.SG[M]

b. *Aš* *ir* *mano* *draugas* *mėgstam* *kefyrą*
1SG.NOM and my friend.NOM like.PRS.1PL kefir.ACC.SG[M]
'My friend and I like kefir'

The subtle difference in meaning between the two sentences is that, in (a), the friendship between the two referent persons is framed as the common ground between the speaker and the addressee. This does not mean that friendship is actually the common ground, but rather, it is part of the speaker's intention to frame it as such. This information may even come as a surprise to the recipient. The natural reading of example (b), however, does not presuppose any shared knowledge about the friendship.

The case of the association between the speaker and the recipient, (*mes su tavim* (1PL.NOM with 2SG.INS), 'you and I') is closer to Wälchli's natural coordination due to universal life conditions. People often act in the world with their speech addressees. This is why the inclusory construction in Lithuanian is the most natural way to refer to the speaker and addressee. In many other languages, inclusive pronouns ('we plus the addressee') are used in parallel contexts as opposed to exclusive pronouns ('we minus the addressee'), a phenomenon known as "clusivity" (Filimonova 2005). Therefore, the two phenomena partially overlap. In Lithuanian, the default referential contexts of the type 'the speaker+addressee' are expressed by an inclusory pronominal construction with either a plural (*mes su tavim*(*i*), 1PL.NOM with 2SG.INS, 'you and me/us') or a dual (*mudu su tavim*, 1PL.NOM with 2SG.INS, 'you and me') RP1. Another popular way of referring to the speaker and the addressee is *mes abu* (1PL.NOM both.NOM), meaning 'both of us', which is not an inclusory construction and is neutral with respect to person of the second referent's person (2nd or 3rd). The same is true for cases with a nominal RP2 such as *mes/mudu su draugu* 'my friend and I': the inclusory construction is the default option.

4 Typology, language contact, areal effects

Inclusory constructions as such are not a typological rarum, as the data in the introduction suggests. However, no monograph-length typological study dedicated specifically to them exists. There are studies that address particular aspects of inclusory constructions in specific languages, as well as contrastive studies of two languages (Dyła & Feldman 2008). Without such a study, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the distribution of various morphosyntactic types of inclusory constructions worldwide.

Nevertheless, some preliminary observations can be made. The most common type of inclusory construction mentioned in the literature is the simple juxtaposition of RP1 and RP2. This is evident in Toqabaqita (Ex. 2). Other examples come from the Mano (Mande) and the Tzotzil (Mayan):

(20) Mano (Mande)

a. *kò* *Pèé*
we Pe

'Pe and I/we (lit.: we [including] Pe)' (Khachaturyan 2019, 92)

Tzotzil (Mayan)

b. *L-i-bat-otikotik* *ta* *ch'ivit* *xchiʔuk* *li* *Xune.*
ASP-A1-go-1PL.EXCL to market with DEF Xun

'I/we went to the market with Xun.' (Aissen 1989, 522)

In Europe, such a strategy is attested in peripheral Icelandic (as well as old Norse[3]):

(21) a. *Við* *María* *fórum.*
we.NOM Mary.NOM go.PST.1PL

'Mary and I went/left.'

b. *Þið* *María* *fóruð.*
you.PL.NOM Mary.NOM go.PST.2PL

'Mary and you.sg went/left.' (Sigurðsson & Wood 2020, 4)

Another peripheral European language, Basque, has an inclusory construction that uses a simple *and*-coordination strategy. Additionally, RP1 can be expressed by a numeral:

(22) ***Ama*** ***eta*** ***bi-ak*** *bizi* *ziren* *bertan.*
mother **and** **two-PL** live AUX.PST.2PL there

'She lives there with her mother.' (Arkhipov 2009, 236)

Preliminary evidence suggests that the comitative-based inclusory construction is a prominent feature in parts of Europe and Asia. However, it is also present in other regions, such as Hausa (Afroasiatic > Chadic):

(23) *Abdù ya* *gan* *mù* (*jiyà*) *dà* *Bintà.*
Abdu 3SG.M.PFV see 1PL (yesterday) with Binta

'Abdu saw us (yesterday), Binta and me.' (Abdoulaye 2004, 186)

No published studies have been dedicated specifically to the areality of comitative-based inclusory constructions. However, preliminary and limited evidence from available publications, internet search, and free interviews suggests that this construction may

[3] Rasa Baranauskienė, personal communication.

be an areal feature in a large part of Europe, including Central, Eastern, Northern, and Southeastern Europe, as well as parts of Western Asia. This construction is present in all three East Slavic languages: Belarusian, Russian (Vassilieva & Larson 2005), and Ukrainian, in West Slavic Polish (Trawinski 2005; Dyła & Feldman 2008), Czech (Lichtenberk 2000), and Slovak, South Slavic Bulgarian and Slovene (Uhlik & Žele 2019), the non-Slavic Rumanian, Hungarian (Dalmi 2024), Estonian, Finnish, Latvian, as well as in modern Greek (Spyropoulos et al. 2012), Turkish (Kornfilt 1997, 286–287), Beserman (Arkhangelsky, Usacheva & Cheremisinova 2026, 235), and Kazakh (Ren 2024). Conversely, Western and Southern European languages seem to lack this construction altogether. Thus, BCMS, which lacks an inclusory construction, stands out among the rest of the Slavic languages. Peripheral European languages such as Basque (Arkhipov 2009) and Icelandic (Sigurðsson & Wood 2020) have inclusory constructions that are not comitative-based. Interestingly, evidence supporting language contact as the primary factor in the development of an inclusory construction comes from Finland's Swedish. Unlike standard Swedish, Finland's Swedish has a comitative-based inclusory construction, similar to Finnish (Kurki 2024). In all the listed languages, inclusory constructions are present to varying degrees and exhibit different limitations on occurrence and compatibility. For example, Polish and Russian both have such constructions, but they differ significantly in distribution and interpretation (Dyła & Feldman 2008).

A comprehensive study of comitative-based inclusory constructions in Europe and Asia has yet to be conducted. Currently, the available cross-linguistic data is too sparse and sporadic. This issue requires large-scale, long-term, cross-linguistic research conducted by multiple participants. The author of the present paper has proposed a group project of this study, which is currently under review. However, it can be preliminarily stated that the feature is highly likely to have an areal nature, although little can be said now about its history, ultimate source (or sources), and precise boundaries. In any case, Lithuanian lies within the isogloss in question.

Conclusion

I have demonstrated that the family of inclusory constructions is a remarkable aspect of Lithuanian grammar that has received little attention thus far. It can be formally described in terms of two slots, RP1 and RP2, and lists of element classes that can occupy these slots. These constructions exhibit a high degree of internal variation. They can include or lack a personal pronoun in RP1, which can be expressed exclusively by verbal inflection. RP2 allows for a wide variety of elements. Semantically, inclusory constructions differ from simple coordination in that they frame referents as tightly associated with each other in a given situation. In many cases, especially in pronominal reference to the participants

of a speech situation, such as the speaker and addressee, the inclusory construction is the default option. The Lithuanian case appears to be an example of an areal a feature common to much of Europe and Asia, although more research is needed.

Abbreviations

1 – first person
2 – second person
3 – third person
A – absolutive
ACC – accusative
AUX – auxiliary
COND – conditional
DAT – dative
DEF – definite
DEM – demonstrative
DU – dual
EXCL – exclusive
F – feminine
FUT – future
GEN – genitive
INS – instrumental
LOC – locative
M – masculine
NOM – nominative
PFV – perfective
PERS – personal
PL – plural
PST – past
PA – active participle
PRS – present
VENIT – venitive

Data Sources

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