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## UNDERSTANDING PROXIMITY IN THE BALTIC LANGUAGES: LATVIAN RELATIONAL ADVERBS *blakus* AND *līdzās* AND THEIR LITHUANIAN COUNTERPARTS<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** This article aims to clarify the difference in usage of the Latvian proximity lexemes *blakus* and *līdzās* and to identify their translation equivalents in Lithuanian. The data have been collected from the Lithuanian-Latvian and Latvian-Lithuanian parallel corpus, manually annotated for various syntactic and semantic variables, and analyzed quantitatively. Although Latvian relational adverbs *blakus* and *līdzās* are defined very similarly in Latvian dictionaries, our results reveal their syntactic and semantic peculiarities in more detail and outline the criteria that sanction the choice of these relational adverbs. Finally, the translation of Latvian proximity terms into Lithuanian is described emphasizing the main differences of proximal terms in both languages.

**Keywords:** the Baltic languages; corpus-driven methods; semantics; spatial language; proximity; relational adverbs; ambipositions.

### 1. Introduction

Human spatial cognition is fundamental for the ability to manage daily cognitive tasks and support abstract thinking and higher cognitive processes, such as language processing. Therefore, the usage of spatial terms has been thoroughly studied involving at least three areas of spatial language: (a) topological and geometrical notions, (b) reference frames (applied to and within a certain coordinate system: inherent, relative, or absolute) and (c) motion events (this typologically based framework for the description of spatial language is introduced in Levinson, Wilkins 2006, 2–15). However,

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a closer look at the literature on topological and geometrical spatial relations reveals that previous research has focused mostly on the usage of containment and support grams<sup>2</sup> exploring their polysemy (Herskovits 1986; Navarro 1998; Feist 2000), the importance of geometric vs. functional properties of the elements of the spatial scene (cf. Cooper 1968; Bennett 1975; Vandeloise 1991; 1994; Garrod et al. 1999; Coventry et al. 1994; Coventry, Garrod 2004; Landau 2017) and cross-linguistic diversity of spatial language (Bowerman, Pederson 1992; Bowerman, Choi 2003; Levinson, Wilkins 2006; Gentner, Bowerman 2009; Landau et al. 2017, among others).

Compared to containment and support, proximity has not received tantamount attention. It rather seems that geometric relations and the choice of certain frames of reference have been the focus of significant contributions (Levinson 2003; Majid et al. 2004; Levinson, Wilkins 2006, among others), not to mention demonstratives and proximal-distal distinction, which have also been under thorough cross-linguistic exploration (Coventry et al. 2008; project of Deictic Communication<sup>3</sup>). Proximity grams that do not refer to a certain frame of reference were included only in some of the previously mentioned works (e.g., Herskovits 1986, Navarro 1998 discuss different usages of English *at*; Coventry, Garrod 2004 – choice of *near*, *beside*, *far from*, *at*). Nevertheless, proximity terms have been explored in languages other than English, for example Slavonic (Cienki 1989; Maljar, Seliverstova 1998; Przybylska 2002; Šarić 2008; Lipovšek 2014), but despite these studies, inflectional languages are under-explored compared to, for example, English.

In the previous literature, various criteria are reported to determine the usage of proximity and distance terms to describe the relation between the two objects in the spatial scene. According to Talmy (1972), they are called Figure and Ground: the former is the object which is or has to be located, while the latter is a reference object that enables one to locate the former. Perceived proximity is described as depending on (a) the distance between the Figure and the Ground, (b) their size and shape, (c) mobility, (d) environment (small- vs. large-scale) (Coventry, Garrod 2004), and, eventually, (d) observer's features (location, aims). Interactional or functional

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<sup>2</sup> The term *spatial gram* refers to any grammatical element bearing spatial meaning (Svorou 1994).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dcomm.eu>.

constraints may also play a role: if the Figure and the Ground are functionally related (e.g., glass and jug vs. orange and jug), participants produce *beside* more frequently or rate it as more acceptable (Coventry et al. 1994, 303ff.). Accessibility is one more factor that is relevant: *near* is used when the located object is easily accessible to the reference object, but *far from* – vice versa (Aurnague, Col 2017).

Another important question concerns interrelation of proximity grams, namely, what semantic differences they exhibit. In dictionaries it is quite common to find circular definitions of proximity grams, but the question regarding a more profound understanding of their semantic peculiarities remains unaddressed.

In the following sections, we will look for the relevant semantic parameters of the proximity terms in the Baltic languages. After a brief overview of the proximity grams in Latvian and Lithuanian, we will proceed with the research questions focusing on two Latvian proximity terms – *blakus* and *līdzās*. First, we will address the problem of the differences between Latvian ambipositions<sup>4</sup> *blakus* and *līdzās* regarding their semantic and syntactic peculiarities. Second, we will try to verify our results about the semantics of *blakus* and *līdzās* comparing the Latvian data with its Lithuanian translations. As our data is drawn from the Lithuanian-Latvian, Latvian-Lithuanian parallel corpus (LILA), we also analyze the Lithuanian counterparts of the Latvian examples aiming to check whether the semantic differences of Latvian lexemes *blakus* and *līdzās* are also evidenced in their Lithuanian counterparts. We hypothesize that the equivalents of *blakus* and *līdzās* in Lithuanian text provide additional evidence about the semantic scope of Latvian lexemes. Furthermore, the comparison of the Latvian and Lithuanian texts also enables us to define the similarities and variation in the linguistic structuring of proximity in the Baltic languages.

## **2. Overview of adnominal proximity grams in the Baltic languages**

### **2.1. Adnominal proximity grams**

The main difference between Lithuanian and Latvian spatial language lies in the syntactic behavior of the grammatical spatial expressions: in Lithuanian, proximity is expressed mostly by prepositions, but in Latvian – prepositions and ambipositions.

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<sup>4</sup> Ambipositions are adpositions that appear either before or after their complements (Libert 2006, 1).

Adnominal proximity grams in the Baltic languages are listed in the Table 1.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1. **Proximity grams in the Baltic languages**<sup>6 7</sup>

	<b>Latvian</b> <sup>6</sup>	<b>Lithuanian</b> <sup>7</sup>
PROXI-MITY	[ <i>pie</i> + Gen.] ‘near, at, on, by’	[ <i>prie</i> + Gen.] ‘at, by, near, next to, beside’ [ <i>pas</i> + Acc.] ‘by, at (animate Ground)’
	<i>blakus</i> ‘beside, alongside (with), by the side (of)’ <i>līdzās</i> ‘next to, beside, side by side’	[ <i>šalia</i> + Gen.] ‘by, near, next to’ [ <i>greta</i> + Gen.] ‘near, by, beside’
	[ <i>gar</i> + Gen.] ‘along, past, by’	[ <i>palei</i> / <i>pagal</i> + Acc.] ‘by, near, along’
		[ <i>ties</i> + Instr.] ‘by, at’
	<i>tuvu</i> ‘near, nearby, close, close by, closely’ <i>netālu</i> ‘not far (from), near, next door, close by, close at hand’	<i>arti</i> ‘near, close to’ <i>netoli</i> ‘not far from, near, close to’
	<i>klāt</i> ‘near, close (to)’	

Most Baltic prepositions are etymologically primary: being inherited from Proto-Baltic, they are common-Baltic and have cognates in other IE languages. The main preposition denoting proximity, namely, La. *pie* and Lith. *prie* with the Genitive ‘near, at’, is one of them; it is related to OSlav *pri* ‘idem’ (Zinkevičius 1996, 170). These prepositions also have correspondences in verbal prefixes of the same origin, e.g. La. *pie-nākt pie* and Lith. *pri-eiti prie* ‘to approach something’. If the Ground is animate and the location in her/his personal sphere (e.g., home) is expressed, Lithuanian preposition *pas* is used (*esu pas Joną* ‘I am at John’s place’), but Lith. *prie* treats the animate Ground as physical body (*stoviu prie Jono* ‘I am standing next to John’). In

<sup>5</sup> To put more precisely, some of these grams are *potentially* adnominal, because they may also be used adverbally as it will be highlighted further in this section.

<sup>6</sup> The meanings of Latvian spatial grams are taken from online Latvian-English dictionary in [www.letonika.lv](http://www.letonika.lv).

<sup>7</sup> The meanings of Latvian spatial grams are taken from Lithuanian-English dictionary (Piesarskas 2006).

Latvian, however, both meanings are covered by the preposition *pie*. As already mentioned, La. *pie* and Lith. *prie* are the most frequent grams for proximity compared to the others listed above, the latter exhibiting certain requirements for specific Figure and Ground geometries or position. Their main differences will be outlined in the following paragraphs.

Latvian *blakus* and *līdzās* are ambipositions. In Latvian grammatical tradition, they were known as semi-prepositions (*pusprievarīdi*) (Bergmane et al. (eds.) 1959, 701, 723), but later explained as a functional category of relational adverbs (Lagzdīņa 1997, 193). These are independent words (adverbs, see example 1) that in certain syntactic structures are able to govern nominals in Dative and appear in either prepositional (example 2) or postpositional (example 3) order. The government of the Dative in such Latvian syntagmata comes from relational noun-based postpositions (Holvoet 1993; cf. Wälchli 2001, 431–432).

Latvian (examples from LVK2018)<sup>8</sup>

- (1) *Bet Ausma, klusa un nekustīga, kaķa neatkarībā sēdēja **blakus**, baidīdamās no viņa neprātīguma, kas savā neapturamajā spēkā varēja viņus iznīcināt.*  
‘But Ausma, silent and still, independent as a cat, was sitting beside, afraid of his madness, which in its unstoppable power could destroy them.’
- (2) *[...] Edgars smiedamies sēdēja **blakus Jēkabam** kādās viesībās [...]*  
‘Edgar laughing was sitting next to Jacob at a party.’
- (3) *Mēs ar kolēģiem braucām ekskursijā uz Liepāju, un tā sagadījās, ka Edgars sēdēja **man blakus**.*  
‘My colleagues and I were on an excursion to Liepaja, and it happened that Edgar was sitting next to me.’

Examples 1–3 convey the typical situation where *blakus* and *līdzās* are used: the human Figure and Ground in the position next to each other. The same is valid for Lithuanian *šalia* and *greta*. However, more accurate distinctions will be drawn in this paper.

Latvian [*gar* + Acc.] and Lithuanian [*palei* or *pagal* + Acc.] are prepositions that, in addition to proximal location, require prolonged shape of both the Figure (which might be in factive or fictive motion, Talmy 2000a, 99ff.) and

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<sup>8</sup> In all the examples the Figure will be underlined and the proximity gram and its complement (the Ground) will appear in bold letters.

the Ground; thus both elements of the spatial scene are located parallel to each other.

- (4) *Po to aš išėjau patruliuoti palei geležinkelį.* (LILA)  
*Pēc tam es gāju patrulēt gar dzelzceļu.*  
‘After that I went on patrol along the railway.’

Lithuanian [*ties* + Instr.] is a preposition that expresses proximity in rather unconstrained way describing the location of the Figure somewhere in vicinity of the Ground; however, it is not frequent as it is stylistically marked (Valiulytė 1988, 131–134). The actual usage of these prepositions requires more research.

In addition to these grams, there are also La. *tuvu* and Lith. *arti* ‘near’ as well as La. *netālu* and Lith. *netoli* ‘not far’ which usually function as adverbs, but in certain contexts they can govern Genitive (*arti*, *netoli*, *netālu*) or Dative (*tuvu*) and thus act as prepositions (*arti*, *netoli*, *netālu*) or ambipositions (*tuvu*).

Finally, Latvian *klāt* is a very heterogenous lexeme which may function as an adverb, ambiposition, or verb particle.

The syntactic and semantic behavior of Baltic adpositions is more or less outlined in different works. However, even though comprehensive descriptions are available, most studies have relied on the overview of spatial grams according to the part of speech to which they belong, but not so much on their semantic interrelations.

In addition, relational proximity expressions have one more important peculiarity in the Baltic languages. In both of them, there are adpositions that are traditionally considered to be synonymous and are defined in a circular manner in dictionaries – it is especially applicable to La. *blakus* and *līdzās*. However, cognitively oriented and usage-based paradigm posits no synonymy in languages since the choice of a certain linguistic means is usually determined by various principles (Langacker 1986, 14, among others).

It would be quite an enormous task to deal with all the proximity grams in one paper, thus we aim to analyze the two semantically closest Latvian proximity grams *blakus* and *līdzās*.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> We did not choose *pie* because it requires a more interactional analysis between the Figure and the Ground. According to preliminary results from other studies, we might argue that *pie* contains a double semantics referring to spatial but also interactional relationship between the Figure and Ground objects. Therefore, a more detailed analysis is needed to explore the distinctions between spatial and interactional meanings of *pie*.

## 2.2. *Blakus* and *līdzās* ‘next to’

Relational adverbs *blakus* and *līdzās* are similar in many aspects; therefore, they will be considered together. As has already been mentioned, the definitions of their spatial meaning in the dictionary are circular and almost identical. In the Dictionary of the literary Latvian (LLVV), *blakus* is defined as ‘very close, with no other in between; līdzās’<sup>10</sup> and *līdzās* – as ‘relatively close, with no other in between; blakus’<sup>11</sup>. In both definitions, one lexeme is used to explain the meaning of the other one and vice versa, the only difference lying in the specification of the distance, namely, *very close* (for *blakus*) vs. *relatively close* (for *līdzās*).

In addition, *blakus* and *līdzās* also have a similar semantic motivation etymologically. Adverb *līdzās* is a former Loc. pl. of the adjective *līdzs* ‘similar; equal’ which in turn stems from the verb *līgt* ‘make similar, equal, even’<sup>12</sup>. Adjective *līdzs* is also a source for adverb *līdzī* ‘equally, flat’, which meaning ‘equally’ developed into ‘blakus’ and more recently – ‘together’. There also existed adjective La. \**līgs* with the meaning ‘similar; equal’ which developed into ‘adjacent or co-existing’<sup>13</sup> (Karulis 2001, 519f., 533f.). The La. adverb *blakus* stems from the adjective *blaks* ‘even’ (cf. also adj. *blakns* ‘flat, even, broad’<sup>14</sup>, subst. *blaks* ‘see in windless weather’ that are of the same origin). Contextually, the adjective underwent the meaning change from ‘even (*līdzens*)’ to ‘one closely located and related to another one’<sup>15</sup>; such a change is compared with *līdzens* : *līdzās* (Karulis 2001, 131). Thus both adverbs have the meaning component of flatness in their origin of proximal reference. The semantic evolution of *līdzās* differs in the development of an additional meaning of similarity and further – comitativity.

From the first glance at the corpus data and the semantic similarities defined previously, it seems challenging to outline any differences of these ambipositions. However, syntactic and semantic criteria may reveal certain peculiarities of their usage.

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<sup>10</sup> *Ļoti tuvu, tā, ka starpā nav neviena cita. Līdzās.*

<sup>11</sup> *Samērā tuvu, tā, ka starpā nav neviena cita. Blakus.*

<sup>12</sup> *Padarīt līdzīgu, vienādu, līdzenu.*

<sup>13</sup> *Blakus vai kopā esošs.*

<sup>14</sup> *Plakans, līdzens, plašs.*

<sup>15</sup> *Tāds, kas atrodas cieši pie otra, saistīts ar otru.*

### 3. Methods and data

The data for this research has been collected from the Lithuanian-Latvian, Latvian-Lithuanian parallel corpus (LILA, ~8,8 million running words). The corpus consists of three parts: EU documents (41%), Lithuanian-Latvian translations (39%) and Latvian-Lithuanian translations (19%). To use only direct translations and avoid English as a mediating language, this research is based on the Latvian-Lithuanian part of the corpus which is composed of ~1,7 million running words from four genres: fiction (89%), newspapers (5%), academic prose (4%) and administrative prose (4%) (for more information on the LILA corpus see Rimkutė et al. 2013). Thus, further in this paper LILA refers to this sub-corpus of Latvian-Lithuanian.

Sentences containing Latvian preposition [*pie* + Gen.], relational adverbs *blakus*, *līdzās*, *tuvu* with the Dative and *klāt* with the Dative were extracted from the LILA corpus. The LILA corpus is relatively small, so in order to ensure that the distribution of the lexemes is more reliable, we compared the amount of proximity data of LILA to the Corpus of contemporary Latvian (LVK2018, 10 million running words). The number of proximity grams in both corpora is shown in the Figure 1.

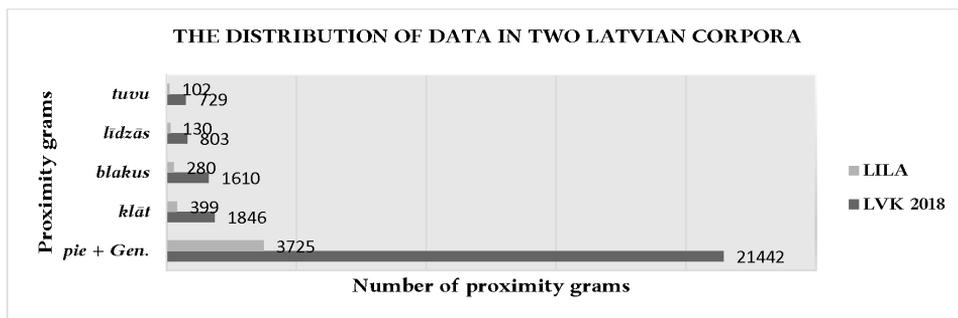


Figure 1. **The distribution of proximity grams in data in two Latvian corpora: LILA sub-corpus (~1,7 million running words) and LVK2018 (10 million running words)**

Figure 1 shows approximately the same proportions of Latvian proximity grams in both corpora: preposition [*pie* + Gen.] is the most frequent and it makes up 81% (LVK2018) / 80% (LILA) of all instances containing proximity grams listed in Figure 1, adposition *klāt* occurs in 7%/9%, *blakus* – 6%/6%, *līdzās* – 3%/3% and *tuvu* – 3%/2% of all the cases. Even though LVK2018

might be more representative and balanced, we have chosen to analyze the data of the LILA corpus as it better serves to our research question, given that it enables analysis of both Baltic languages. In addition, the fiction domain, which is the main part of LILA, demonstrates a wide array of use-types, both syntactic and semantic.<sup>16</sup> Finally, as already seen, the distribution of the data in LILA is almost the same as in LVK2018.

The data have been manually annotated for various syntactic and semantic predictors that might determine the usage of the proximity grams in Latvian. It is highly relevant for *blakus* and *līdzās* whose semantic differences are rather challenging to explain. The coding principles for *blakus* and *līdzās* were chosen according to the usage of the ambipositions as well as they were based on previous studies for grammatical synonymy (e.g., Arppe, Järvikivi 2007; Klavan 2014; Granvik 2017, among others). They are listed in Table 2 and will be outlined in individual sections.

Table 2. **The coding principles of Latvian *blakus* and *līdzās***

syntactic	semantic
1. function (preposition / postposition / adverb / compound constituent / verb particle) 2. word class for the Ground lexeme (noun or pronoun) 3. length of Ground phrase (one lexeme (noun or pronoun) or NP) 4. position in the sentence (initial / middle / final) 5. presence of modifiers	1. verb (static / dynamic) 2. nature of the Figure and the Ground (inanimate, animate, abstract) 3. scale (small-scale, large-scale) <sup>17</sup> 4. meaning extensions (usage of spatial terms in abstract domains)

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Syntactic constraints

The LILA data shows that both *blakus* and *līdzās* are used as ambipositions and adverbs. Furthermore, *blakus* also functions as a constituent of compounds (14% of all the instances of *blakus*); several compounds have been attested:

<sup>16</sup> However, it is not possible to assess socio-linguistic distinctions of the data (such as diastratic, diatopic or diaphasic).

<sup>17</sup> Small-scale spatial relations are within the visual scope whereas large-scale spatial relations are perceived while moving and navigating (and generating cognitive maps).

*blakustelpa*, *blakusistaba* ‘adjacent room’, *blakuskamera* ‘adjacent cell’, *blakusiela* ‘adjacent street’, *blakusgaldiņš* ‘adjacent table’, *blakussols* ‘adjacent desk’, *blakussliedes* ‘parallel railway track’, *blakusūdeņi* ‘adjacent waters’, *blakusesošais* ‘contiguous’, *blakussēdošais* ‘sitting next’, *blakusstāvošais* ‘standing next’, in which *blakus-* specifies the meaning of the second component of a compound as being adjacent or neighboring (in Lithuanian, most often the adjectives *gretimas* ‘adjacent’, *kaimyninis* ‘neighboring’ as NP modifiers are found as correspondents to these Latvian compounds). In some compounds *blakus-* has the meaning ‘secondary, subordinate’, e.g. *blakusietekme* ‘side-effect’, *blakusdurvis* ‘side door’. *Līdzās* is not attested as a constituent of compounds in the LILA data, but in LVK2018 there are very few instances of three compounds, namely, *līdzāspastāvēt* ‘coexist’, *līdzāspastāvēšana* ‘coexistence’, *līdzāscelš* ‘coextensive road’. However, in this paper we will consider only the instances in which *blakus* and *līdzās* occur as adverbs and ambipositions: such a decision is made in order to be able to compare the two means of proximal reference equally.

The first obvious difference between *blakus* and *līdzās* lies in the frequency of use: the data show that *blakus* is used more often than *līdzās* (240 vs. 130 instances), which shows that *blakus* is more common. Another important distinction is observed in their position regarding the dependent lexeme: *blakus* is preferred as a preposition, but *līdzās* as a postposition (43% and 42% respectively, see the data in Table 3).

Table 3. Syntactic function of *blakus* and *līdzās*

Syntactic function	<i>blakus</i>		<i>līdzās</i>	
preposition	103	43%	40	30%
postposition	67	28%	54	42%
adverb	70	29%	36	28%
In total	240	100%	130	100%

Both *blakus* and *līdzās* can be preceded by different modifiers: in LILA corpus, *blakus* is found in combination with *turpat* ‘just there’, *cieši* ‘tightly’, *tepat* ‘just here’, *tieši* ‘straight’, *tur* ‘there’, *gandrīz* ‘almost’ (in total – 10% of all instances), but *līdzās* – with *turpat* ‘just there’, *cieši* ‘tightly’, *tepat* ‘just here’, *kaut kur* ‘somewhere’, *pavisam* ‘quite’, *šeit* ‘here’ (in total – 9%). As can be seen in Table 4, the modifiers are equally frequent for both grams. In addition, the largest number of modifiers occurs when *blakus* and *līdzās*

function as adverbs. Thus, these two relational adverbs do not differ in the usage of modifiers.

Table 4. **Modifiers of *blakus* and *līdzās* used as prepositions, postpositions and adverbs**

Modifiers	<i>blakus</i>		<i>līdzās</i>		
prep ( <i>cieši, tieši, turpat</i> )	7	3%	prep ( <i>cieši</i> )	1	1%
post ( <i>cieši</i> )	2	1%	post ( <i>cieši, kaut kur</i> )	2	2%
adverbs ( <i>turpat, cieši, tepat, tur, gandrīz</i> )	15	<b>6%</b>	adverbs ( <i>turpat, cieši, tepat, pavisam, kaut kur, šeit</i> )	8	<b>6%</b>
In total	24	<b>10%</b>	In total	11	<b>9%</b>

There is one more feature that is common for *blakus* and *līdzās*: they both are used in complex adverbials, e.g.:

- (5) *Viņa novietoja savu cepuri uz galda malas blakus stārķa spalvas rakstāmriķam.*  
 ‘She placed her hat on the edge of the desk next to a stork feather pen.’
- (6) *Viņa ieiet, nosēstas uz krēsla līdzās gultai, sēž un ilgi veras Justa sejā [...]*  
 ‘She enters, sits down on a chair next to the bed, is sitting and looking at Just’s face for a long time.’

Both relational adverbs most often occur as a part of the complex adverbial when they are used prepositionally (the data is provided in Table 5). The results do not show big differences regarding this syntactic feature.

Table 5. ***blakus* and *līdzās* in complex adverbials**

Usage in complex adverbial	<i>blakus</i>		<i>līdzās</i>	
prep	37	<b>15%</b>	10	<b>8%</b>
post	7	3%	6	5%
adverbs	5	2%	3	2%
In total	49	<b>20%</b>	19	<b>15%</b>

One more similarity between *blakus* and *līdzās* is observed in their government, namely, they require a Ground object lexeme which belongs to

a particular word class. Here only prepositional and postpositional uses are taken into account, because when *blakus* and *līdzās* function as an adverb, the Ground object is explicit. Word class is highly related to the prepositional vs. postpositional occurrence of relational adverbs: both *blakus* and *līdzās* are used prepositionally when the Ground is a noun, but postpositional usage is predominant when the Ground is a pronoun (see Table 6 and compare the examples 7, 8 and 9, 10):

Table 6. **Word class of the Ground object**

Ground object	<i>blakus</i>				<i>līdzās</i>			
	prep		post		prep		post	
nouns	95	<b>92%</b>	27	40%	38	<b>95%</b>	20	37%
pronouns	8	8%	40	<b>60%</b>	2	5%	34	<b>63%</b>
In total	103	100%	67	100%	40	100%	54	100%

- (7) *Varbūt apsēsties **blakus ubadzei** pie unīša durvīm?*  
 ‘Maybe I should sit down by the beggar at the door of the department store?’
- (8) *Apsēdos uz tahtas malas **viņai blakus**.*  
 ‘I sat down on the side of the couch next to her.’
- (9) *Kamēr sēžu **līdzās virsniekam** uz soliņa pie vahtas, tiek atvests sieviešu etaps. //*  
 ‘While I am sitting by the officer on the bench on guard, the women prisoners are brought.’
- (10) *Muris sēž **man līdzās** un žāvājas.*  
 ‘Muris is sitting next to me and yawning.’

The word order shown in the previous four examples is the most frequent. Postpositional usage of *blakus* and *līdzās* with the pronoun Grounds is very entrenched. When the Ground object is a noun, it is used prepositionally, but the opposite word order also seems to be plausible though not predominant (see examples 16 and 25 below).

Complexity of the Ground object is also related to the prepositional vs. postpositional usage. Both *blakus* and *līdzās* usually occurs postpositionally when the Ground lexeme is not modified (noun or pronoun): 96% for *blakus* and 93% for *līdzās* (see Table 7). As evident in Table 6, pronouns are more often linked to the postpositional usage of relational adverbs. When used

prepositionally, *blakus* governs both simple and complex Ground-objects almost equally frequent (48% and 52%), but *līdzās* favors complex phrases as Grounds.

Table 7. **Complexity of the Ground object**

Complexity of the Ground-object	<i>blakus</i>				<i>līdzās</i>			
	prep		post		prep		post	
N (one lexeme: noun or pronoun)	49	48%	64	<b>96%</b>	13	32,5%	50	<b>93%</b>
NP	54	52%	3	4%	27	<b>67,5%</b>	4	7%
In total	103	100%	67	100%	40	100%	54	100%

A final syntactic constraint concerns the position of relational adverbs in the sentence (Table 8). Obviously, according to the corpus used, the sentence-middle position is remarkably predominant for both *blakus* and *līdzās*, regardless of their word order. The latter also does not determine the remaining positional patterns: the sentence-final position is less frequent, but the sentence-initial is the least frequent one.

Table 8. **Position in a sentence**

Position	<i>blakus</i>						<i>līdzās</i>					
	prep		post		adverb		prep		post		adverb	
initial	15	15%	9	14%	8	11%	6	15%	10	19%	5	14%
middle	57	<b>55%</b>	39	<b>58%</b>	47	<b>67%</b>	26	<b>65%</b>	31	<b>57%</b>	25	<b>69%</b>
final	31	30%	19	28%	15	22%	8	20%	13	24%	6	17%
	103	100%	67	100%	70	100%	40	100%	54	100%	36	100%

## 4.2. Semantic constraints

### 4.2.1. Spatial contexts

Relational adverbs may occur in both static and dynamic contexts, and thereby express location and motion – *blakus* and *līdzās* may represent goal of motion or appear with the verb denoting motion without any destination. The meaning of the goal of motion is rendered when the motion is translational (Talmy 2000b, 25f) or transpositional (Talmy 2000a, 181) and is distinguished by the Figure’s movement from one point in space to another (see example 11). Self-contained motion (*idem*) characterizes motion in space

without any goal: in our sample, it is usually rendered whether by iteratively moving Figure and stationary Ground (with the verbs *rosīties* ‘bustle, rustle’, *raustīties* ‘jerk’, *dīdīties* ‘fidget’, example 12) or by the simultaneously moving Figure and Ground next to each other (verbs *soļot* ‘march’, *jāt* ‘ride a horse’, example 13). Expressions of motion without any goal like in (12) or (13) are treated as stationary.

(11) [...] *Justs atkal pienāca man blakus un uzbilda mani [...]*  
 ‘Justs again came up to me and spoke to me.’

(12) *Sēnēs esmu viena pati, kaut arī man citi blakus rosās un tāpat rauš sēnes.*  
 ‘I am picking mushrooms all alone, even though the others next to me bustle and also rake the mushrooms.’

(13) *Vinš rāmi soļo man blakus.*  
 ‘He is quietly marching next to me.’

Table 9 depicts the verbs that occur with relational adverbs *blakus* and *līdzās*. Verb-less utterances are also included: they appear in the section for the static verbs because the verbs (usually copula) are omitted in static contexts, e.g.:

(14) *Kājās kalnos kāpjamiē zābaki, blakus tiem – liela soma.*  
 ‘Hiking boots on the feet, next to them – a big bag.’

(15) *Vieta man blakus tukša.*  
 ‘The place next to me is free.’

For both relational adverbs, static contexts are the most common ones. Verb-less utterances are predominant for *līdzās* (25%), but for *blakus* they also are among the most prevalent ones (11%). The most frequent verbs (> 5%) are the same; they denote location (*būt* ‘be’, *atrsties* ‘be located’) or posture (*stāvēt* ‘stand’, *sēdēt* ‘sit’). Group of the less frequent verbs also include posture verbs (e.g., *gulēt* ‘lie’). Worth mentioning, that past passive participles are also listed together with the static verbs as they denote the result of the completed action. As already mentioned, if any dynamic verbs occur (e.g., *jāt* ‘ride’, *soļot* ‘march’), they denote self-contained motion and thus are considered as static for defining proximal relation.

Table 9. Usage of verbs

Verbs	static		dynamic	
	<i>blakus</i>	<i>līdzās</i>	<i>blakus</i>	<i>līdzās</i>
> 20%		verbless 33 (25%)		
10% to 20%	verb-less 27 (11%), <i>stāvēt</i> ‘stand’ 27 (11%)			
5% to 10%	<i>sēdēt</i> ‘sit’ 22 (9%), <i>būt</i> ‘be’ 17 (7%), <i>atrasties</i> ‘be located’ 15 (6%)	( <i>ne</i> ) <i>būt</i> ‘(not) be’ 12 (9%), <i>stāvēt</i> ‘stand’ 10 (8%), ( <i>no</i> ) <i>sēdēt</i> ‘sit’ 8 (6%)		<i>apsēsties</i> ‘sit down’ 7 (5%)
< 5%	<i>dzīvot</i> ‘live’ 5 (2%), <i>gulēt</i> ‘lie’ 3, <i>izskatīties</i> ‘look like’, <i>likties</i> ‘look, seem’ 3, <i>ir uzstādīts</i> ‘is placed’ 3, <i>iznirt</i> ‘emerge to the surface’, <i>ienirt</i> ‘dive out of’ 3, <i>iet</i> ‘go’ 3, <i>pagadīties</i> ‘happen’ 3, <i>vajadzēt</i> ‘need’ 1, <i>mirdzēt</i> ‘sparkle’ 2, <i>ir nolikts</i> ‘is placed’ 2, <i>rosīties</i> ‘bustle’ 2, <i>karāties</i> ‘hang’ 2, <i>turēties</i> 2 ‘stick around’, <i>brist</i> ‘wade’ 2, <i>noenkurot</i> ‘anchor’ 2, <i>pietauvot</i> ‘moor’ 1, <i>strādāt</i> ‘work’ 1, <i>redzēt</i> ‘see’ 1, <i>augt</i> ‘grow’ 1, <i>mētāties</i> ‘be thrown’ 1, <i>tupēt</i> ‘crouch’ 1, <i>iekārtoties</i> ‘settle in’ 1, <i>dirnēt</i> ‘linger’ 1, <i>pagadīties</i> ‘chance’ 1, <i>saskatīt</i> ‘spot’ 1, <i>mist</i> ‘dwell’ 1, <i>soļot</i> ‘march’ 1, <i>iesaukties</i> ‘exclaim’ 1, <i>jāt</i> ‘ride’ 1, <i>slīst</i> ‘slip’ 1, <i>raustīties</i> ‘jerk’ 1, <i>sastingt</i> ‘freeze’ 1, <i>viļņot</i> ‘wave’ 1, <i>dīdīties</i> ‘fidget’ 1, <i>slieties</i> ‘lean’ 1, <i>parādīties</i> ‘emerge’ 1, <i>lamāties</i> ‘curse’ 1, <i>snaudūlot</i> ‘drowse’ 1, <i>mocīties</i> ‘struggle’ 1, <i>šņaukt degunu</i> ‘snort’ 1, <i>spīdināt zobus</i> ‘smile’ 1, <i>paplakšīnāt ar plaukstu</i> ‘flatten’ 1	<i>atrasties</i> ‘be located’ 4 (3%), <i>gulēt</i> ‘lie’ 4, <i>dzīvot</i> ‘live’ 3, <i>apsēdies</i> ‘sit down’ 2, <i>iet</i> ‘go’ 2, <i>nākt</i> ‘approach’ 2, <i>pastāvēt</i> ‘exist’ 2, <i>turēties</i> ‘hold to’ 2, <i>justies</i> ‘feel’ 2, <i>rakstīt</i> ‘write’ 2, <i>ierīkot</i> ‘establish’ 1, <i>ierunāties</i> ‘start speaking’ 1, <i>soļot</i> ‘march’ 1, <i>urzēt</i> ‘rustle’ 1, <i>tupēt</i> ‘squat’ 1, <i>iestādīt</i> ‘plant’ 1, <i>iekārtoties</i> ‘settle in’ 1, <i>sārtot</i> ‘pink’ 1, <i>uzsliets</i> ‘raised’ 1, <i>nolikts</i> ‘placed’ 1, <i>iekalts</i> 1, <i>skriet</i> ‘rush’ 1, <i>pazīt</i> ‘recognize’ 1, <i>izskatīties</i> ‘look like’ 1, <i>slieties</i> ‘lean’ 1, <i>uzbūvēt</i> ‘build’ 1, <i>iemirgoties</i> ‘twinkle’ 1, <i>jāt</i> ‘ride’ 1, <i>gaidīt</i> ‘wait’ 1, <i>nobremzēt</i> ‘break’ 1, <i>apturēt</i> ‘stop’ 1	<i>likt, nolikt, ielik, pielikt, salikt</i> ‘place’ 8 (3%), <i>apgulties</i> ‘lie down’ 6, <i>pienākt</i> ‘come’ 4, <i>atkrīst, nokrīst</i> ‘apsēsties’ ‘fall off’ 3, <i>nozvelties</i> ‘fall into’ 2, <i>nomest</i> ‘cast down’ 2, <i>novietot</i> ‘place’ 2, <i>notuities</i> ‘squat down’ 2, <i>piejāt</i> ‘approach riding’ 2, <i>pievīrīt</i> ‘move up’ 1, <i>atgriezties</i> ‘come back’ 1, <i>nolaieties</i> ‘descend’ 1, <i>guldīt</i> ‘put to bed’ 1, <i>apmesties</i> ‘settle down’ 1, <i>piesiet</i> ‘bind to’ 1, <i>piestiprināt</i> ‘fasten to’ 1, <i>izkļūt</i> ‘get out’ 1	<i>nolikt</i> ‘place’ 4 (3%), <i>apmesties</i> , <i>pie-mesties</i> ‘settle down’ 2, <i>notuities</i> ‘squat down’ 2, <i>novietot</i> ‘place’ 2, <i>atskanēt</i> ‘ring out’ 1, <i>nostādīt</i> ‘set’ 1, <i>pārcelt</i> ‘carry over’ 1, <i>nostāties</i> ‘place oneself’ 1
	173 (72%)	109 (84%)	67 (28%)	21 (16%)

Dynamic contexts are less frequent: 27,5% for *blakus* and only 16% for *līdzās*. Again, posture or positional verbs are the predominant ones, proper motion verbs are used only with *blakus* (e.g., *pienākt* ‘come near’, *piejāt* ‘approach riding a horse’).

In addition to verbs, the nature or type of the Figure and Ground in relation to animacy is another relevant semantic parameter. Animacy is one of the crucial factors determining differences in meaning (Feist 2000; Levinson, Wilkins 2006; Creissels, Mounole 2011). Four combinations of Figure-Ground relation regarding their animacy are possible: inanimate Figure and Ground, animate Figure and Ground, inanimate Figure and animate Ground, animate Figure and inanimate Ground. All these variations are attested for both ambipositions in LILA, and their distribution and examples are provided in Table 10.

Table 10. Number of instances according to the type of the Figure and the Ground

	<i>blakus</i>		<i>līdzās</i>	
Figure (+anim) + Ground (+anim)	91: <i>Atpakaļceļā Anga sēž māšai blakus.</i> ‘On the way back, Anga is sitting next to her sister.’	53%	55: <i>Erna sēž vecaimātei līdzās pie gultas ar pasaku grāmatu rokā.</i> ‘Erna is sitting next to her grandmother near the bed with a fairy tale book in her hands.’	59%
Figure (-anim) + Ground (-anim)	56: <i>Blakus kapam mētājās lāpsta.</i> ‘A shovel is thrown near the grave.’	33%	25: <i>Vīratēvs sācis dzīvot viņas teltī, kura bija uzslīta līdzās jauncēlamajai mājai.</i> ‘Farther-in-law started living in her tent, which has been set up next to a newly built house.’	27%
Figure (+anim) + Ground (-anim)	15: <i>Kāds vīrietis sēž smiltīs blakus manai kleitai.</i> ‘A man is sitting on the sand next to my dress.’	9%	6: <i>Tāpēc viņš vienkārši apsēdās līdzās laivai zālē.</i> ‘That’s why he just sat down next to the boat in the grass.’	6%

	<i>blakus</i>		<i>līdzās</i>	
Figure (-anim) + Ground (+anim)	8: – <i>Nebaidaties manis, es nekožu, – tā teica un nometa <u>slapjus grožus</u> uz krēsla <b>blakus Florencei</b>.</i> ‘Don’t be afraid, I don’t bite, – she said and dropped her wet baskets on the chair next to Florence.’	5%	8: <i>nolikusi zālē <b>sev līdzās tieviņo šļirci</b>, [...] Sailita sagatavoja vēl vienu devu un ar lietoto šļirci to prasmīgi ielaida savā vēnā.</i> ‘After placing a thin syringe next to herself in the grass, Sailita prepared another dose and skillfully injected it with the used syringe into her vein.’	8%
In total	170	100%	94	100%

Contexts with both animate Figure and Ground are the most frequent ones as they occur in more than half of the cases for both relational adverbs. Having in mind that posture verbs are among the dominating ones, we observe that typical situations can be described as two human-beings sitting next to each other, e.g.:

- (16) *Atvadu mielastā Āris sēdēja **Barbarai līdzās** un man pat neatvainojās.*  
‘At a farewell dinner Aris sat next to Barbara and didn’t even apologize to me.’
- (17) *Solvitu pirmoreiz ieraudzīju Rūmnieku autobusā un pat sēdēju **viņai blakus**, taču nekādi nevaru sacīt, ka mēs būtu sapazinušās.*  
‘The first time I saw Solvita was on the coach to Rūmnieki and I even sat next to her, but there is no way I could say that we had got acquainted.’

When the Figure and the Ground are animate and the relation between them is specified with the posture verb, we can infer the exact position of the Figure in relation to the Ground: sitting, standing, lying next to the Ground presuppose that Figure and Ground are located side by side, namely, that the Figure is on the lateral side of the Ground. In addition, such contexts usually presuppose an equal status of the two participants in a spatial scene.

Contexts with both inanimate Figure and Ground occur 32% for *blakus* and 27% for *līdzās* and the meaning of such phrases is more diverse compared with the contexts containing animate participants of a spatial scene. When both

the Figure and Ground are inanimate objects of the same kind, the position of the Figure on the lateral side of the Ground is attested, and it manifests itself in various ways: employing the same lexemes for the two objects in the spatial scene (17) or utilizing reciprocal pronominal constructions (18).

(18) *Darbs veicas, pirksti veikli satver filmiņu, novērtē, saliek kadru **blakus** kadram.*  
'The work is going well, the fingers grasp the film, estimate, place one frame next to the other.'

(19) *Taisīju lielo tīrīšanu un – urrā: stāv grāmatplauktā viens **otram** **blakus** divi “bērsoni”, oranžos sāņņus draudzīgi kopā saspieduši!*  
'I did the big cleaning and – hurray: two “kiddies” standing next to each other on the shelf, clutching the orange sides together!'

However, from the corpus data, it is difficult to infer the exact position of the Figure in relation to the Ground in large-scale contexts, even though the lexemes for both the Figure and the Ground denote the objects of the same kind (e.g., trees in 20, houses in 21). In the two following examples, the location of the Figure on the Ground's side is imposed from the viewer's perspective, so that the Figure is probably located to the left or right side of the Ground from the viewer's point of view:

(20) *Līdzās **kļavai** kāds iestādījis pāris ābeļu.*  
'Next to a maple, someone planted a couple of apple trees.'

(21) *Līdzās **muižas ēkām** milzīga baraka.*  
'Next to the manor houses, a huge barrack.'

Examples (20) and (21) illustrate usage of *līdzās* in large-scale contexts. Such instances are attested also for *blakus* (albeit not as frequently as small-scale ones) and they can be interpreted as locating the Figure next to / along the lateral side of the Ground. The interpretation usually depends on the shape of the Ground objects and our knowledge about them: in example (22), we know that paths and roads have sides, and other objects are located at / along their sides. However, the location of the house in (23) is rather vague and can only be interpreted as close proximity because the shape and boundaries of the Ground object (forest) are undefined.

(22) *Ņamburgas bruņinieku turnīru laukums* atradās aiz pilsētas vārtiem zaļojošā pļavā **blakus galvenajam ceļam**.

‘The tournament square of Namburg knights was located behind a city gate in a green meadow next to the main road.’

(23) *Aizaugošu lauku vidū, blakus mežam, upes likumā guļbaļķu mājā* dzīvo vīrs ar sievu.

‘In the middle of overgrown fields, next to a forest, a husband and wife live in a log house on a river bend.’

Instances with inanimate Figure and animate Ground are rare (see Table 10) and do not show many differences in the usage of *blakus* and *līdzās*. The relation is clearly spatial as the animate Ground does not affect the Figure in any functional or force-dynamic way. In addition, some contexts are very similar, e.g.:

(24) *Vieta man blakus tukša*.

‘The seat next to me is empty.’

(25) *Vakarā lietuviete Terēze, kuras vieta* sekcijā ir *Namedai līdzās*, pastāsta par kapsētu.

‘In the evening, the Lithuanian woman Teresa, whose seat in the section is next to Nameda, tells about the cemetery.’

In two previous examples the Figure lexeme (seat), animate Ground and their usual arrangement presuppose the exact position of the Figure on the lateral side of the Ground. However, not all examples are as clear in this group: the sentence illustrating *blakus* given in the Table 10 is rather ambiguous as it can locate the Figure either laterally or simply closely in relation to the Ground.

Constructions with animate Figure and inanimate Ground are infrequent as well (Table 10). These are both small-scale and large-scale uses denoting the (lateral) proximity, but no functional interaction. Even if the Ground object can potentially be used according to some function, the location of the Figure *blakus* or *līdzās* in relation to the Ground does not presuppose the functional interaction. For example, when the Ground is a wheel, standing *blakus* it does not infer steering (26), but standing *pie* it might (27), cf.

(26) *Mordāns stāvēja **blakus stūres ratam** un drūmi skatījās uz kuģa priekšgalu.*

‘Mordan was standing beside the steering wheel and gazing gently at the bow of the ship.’

(27) *Pedro stāvēja **pie stūres**.*

‘Pedro was [lit. stood] behind the wheel.’

#### 4.2.2. Abstract contexts

Interestingly, almost all the instances of *blakus* and *līdzas* represent the spatial domain, thus meaning extensions are quite rare: for *blakus* abstract meaning is attested in 6% of the cases, but for *līdzās* – 8%. Extensions mostly are attested when the Figure and the Ground are animate; several tendencies are observed:

a) Location next to each other results in emotional support, for example:

(28) *Gribu siltu cilvēku **blakus**.*

‘I want a nice person next to me.’ (i.e., life companion)

(29) *Ar leitnantu Volganski visus gadus esmu bijis **līdzās**.*

‘I have been with the Lieutenant Volganski all these years.’

(30) *Piedod, lai arī tu esi fantastiski neparasta, man tomēr **blakus** vajadzīga normāla sieviete.*

‘Sorry, even you are fantastically special, but I need a normal woman next to me.’

(31) ***Man līdzās** nav dievišķā dzejnieka, kurš pavada šajos zemumos.*

‘I do not have a divine poet next to me who accompanies me in these lowlands.’

For *līdzās*, there are formulaic expressions, e.g., phrasal verb *stāvēt līdzās* ‘stand by, support’:

(32) *Veci ļaudis teic, ka **tēva meitām Laima** stāv **līdzās**.*

‘Elderly people say that Laima stands by father’s daughters.’

b) Location next to each other results in comparison of the Figure to the Ground usually emphasizing the negative aspects of the former one. *Blakus* occurs with verbs *izskatīties* ‘look like’, *likties* ‘seem’; *līdzās* – with *justies* ‘feel like’, *izskatīties* ‘look like’, e.g.:

- (33) *Irēna viņai blakus izskatījās tik moderni vāja, ka man sažņaudzās sirds.*  
 ‘Irena next to her looked so fashionably weak that I was heartbroken.’
- (34) *Vai man bija tik ļoti svarīgi neizskatīties smieklīgai līdzās šiem laimīgajiem cilvēkiem (kaut arī es zināju viņu laimes cenu un laimes mūžu)?*  
 ‘Was it so important for me not to look ridiculous alongside these lucky people (even though I knew their happiness price and life expectancy)?’
- c) When the Figure and the Ground are inanimate, both *blakus* and *līdzās* are found with the meaning ‘in addition to, additionally’ highlighting the coexistence of the Figure object alongside the Ground object. Such instances are not frequent in the corpus and they emphasize the presence of the Figure in relation to the previously mentioned Ground, e.g.:
- (35) *Standard pakalpojuma stiprā puse ir mūsu rūpnīcas, kas blakus efektīvai projektu vadībai nostiprina arī spēju un prasmi ražot un vadīt procesu no idejas līdz risinājumam.*  
 ‘The strength of standard service is our factories, which, along with the effective project management, reinforce our proficiency and ability to produce and manage the process from idea to solution.’
- (36) *Sakausējumi, kuru masas saturā līdzās pārējiem elementiem ir vairāk nekā 10% vara, kas nav derīgi kalšanai un izmantojami galvenokārt par piedevām citu sakausējumu ražošanā vai par dezoksidētājiem, desulfurētājiem vai tamlīdzīgiem mērķiem krāsainajā metalurģijā.*  
 ‘Alloys, which, in addition to the other elements, are composed of more than 10% copper by weight and are not suitable for forging, are predominantly used as additives in other alloys or as deoxidizers, desulphurizers, or similar uses in non-ferrous metals.’
- d) *Līdzās*, but not *blakus*, in some instances acquires comitative meaning. *Līdzās* then is semantically close to its cognate – verb particle or adverb *līdzi* ‘along, with’. The latter is mostly used in comitative constructions, which presuppose the decisive status of the accompanee („the more prominent participant of the ACCOMPANIMENT situation“), but not companion („the less prominent participant“) (Stolz et al. 2006, 17ff., 26f., 314f.): “*Līdz(i)* is typically employed for the description of situations from the point of view of the participant who has less control over the action than the accompanee, if there is one at all” (idem, 314–315). Usually *līdzās* occurs with a verb *nākt* ‘come’, e.g.:

(37) *Nodzēsiet barakā gaismu, draugi, nāciet **man līdzās** un skatieties: tur laukā ir mana labākā glezna.*

‘Turn off the light in the barracks, friends, come along with me and look: there is my best painting outside.’

(38) *Lai Nameda nāk **viņai līdzās**, mēģinās izbrīvēt vietu.*

‘Let Nameda come with her, she will try to find a seat.’

In both (37) and (38), companion joins or has to join the accompanee. Thus it is the accompanee (Ground) which usually takes the initiative over the companion (Figure).

e) Finally, in combination with the verb *nolikt* ‘place’, *līdzās* gains the meaning of equation (‘equate with smb’) or counting series or things as being in similar status to one another, e.g.:

(39) *Saimnieks attopas, ka pat lielākajā sirsnībā sevi nedrīkst nolikt **mums līdzās**.*

‘The landlord realizes that even with the utmost sincerity, he should not equate himself with us (lit. put himself next to us).’

The meaning of equality stems from the etymological sources for *līdzās*, which are outlined above, and it is evoked in come contexts, e.g., in combination with the verb *pastāvēt* ‘exist’, namely, *pastāvēt līdzās* ‘coexist’, suggesting that the Figure and the Ground are equal in status but contrasting in content:

(40) *Kā lai iztēlojamies, ka viennozīmīgas atbildes iespējamās cilvēku pasaulē, kur **līdzās** pastāv instinkts un intelekts, saprāts un neprāts, idioti un ģēniņi, filozofija un pornogrāfija, demogrāfiskais sprādziens un demogrāfiskā krīze, cerība uzcelt nākotnes iekārtu un bailes, ka vispār nebūs nekādas nākotnes?*

‘How do we imagine that unambiguous answers are possible in a world of people, where instinct and intelligence, reasoning and madness, idiots and geniuses, philosophy and pornography, demographic explosion and demographic crisis, hope to build the future, and fear that there will be no future, coexist?’

### 4.3. Lithuanian equivalents for Latvian proximity terms *blakus* and *līdzās*

The data of the LILA corpus provide the possibility to compare Latvian proximity terms under discussion with their correspondences in the target language, namely Lithuanian, which may also help to clarify the differences

of Latvian *blakus* and *līdzās*. As mentioned in the introduction, we hypothesize that the translation equivalents of *blakus* and *līdzās* in Lithuanian might provide additional evidence of the semantic scope of the Latvian ambipositions. Although the means to translate these proximity terms vary significantly (see Table 11), the main tendencies are quite clear.

Table 11. Translation of Latvian proximity means into Lithuanian

	<i>blakus</i>		<i>līdzās</i>	
<i>proximity terms</i>		<b>94 %</b>		<b>85%</b>
	<i>šalia</i> ‘by, next to, beside’	137 (57%)	<i>greta</i> (62), <i>pagret</i> (1) ‘side by side, next to’	63 (48%)
	<i>greta</i> ‘side by side, next to’	65 (27%)	<i>šalia</i> ‘by, next to, beside’ (39), <i>visai šalia</i> (1) ‘right next to’	40 (30,7%)
	<i>prie</i> (13) ‘near, at’, <i>prie pat</i> (3) ‘right at’	16 (7%)	<i>prie</i> ‘near, at’	6 (5%)
	<i>visai čia pat</i> ‘right here’	1	<i>čia pat</i> ‘right here’	1
	<i>netoli</i> ‘not far’	2		
<i>anterior</i>	<i>prieš</i> ‘in front of’	3		
<i>circumjacency</i>	<i>aplink</i> ‘around’	1		
<i>lengthwise position</i>	<i>ties</i> ‘by, at’	1		
<b>omitted in LT</b>		6		2
<b>verbs</b>	<i>susiglausti, susispausti</i> ‘huddle together’, <i>suderinti</i> ‘match’, <i>atremti</i> ‘lean against’, <i>prisivyti</i> ‘catch up’, <i>eiti įdurmui</i> ‘follow right after’	<b>7 (3%)</b>	<i>lydėti</i> ‘accompany’, <i>susilyginti, sugretinti</i> ‘equalize’	<b>3 (2%)</b>
<b>addition</b>	<i>be</i> ‘without’	1	<i>be</i> ‘without’	1
<b>temporal anterior</b>			<i>iki</i> ‘till’	1
<b>comitativity</b>				<b>14 (11%)</b>
			<i>kartu su</i> ‘together with’	5 (4%)
			<i>su</i> ‘with’	3 (2%)
			<i>lygiai su</i> ‘together with’	2
			<i>drauge</i> ‘together, conjointly’	4 (3%)
		240		130

For *blakus* and *līdzās*, Lith. adverbs (also functioning as prepositions with Genitive) *šalia* ‘by, next to, beside’ and *greta* ‘side by side, next to’ are used. Utterances containing *līdzās* have *greta* as a common equivalent in Lithuanian translation (48%), but *blakus* is more often translated with *šalia* (57%), e.g.:

(41) – *Ņemiet savu bloknotu un sēstieties **man līdzās**.*

– *Prašom imti savo bloknotą ir sėstis **greta**.*

‘Take your notebook and sit next to me.’

(42) ***Man blakus** nesėž neviens, bet pie ejas – meita.*

***Šalia manęs** niekas nesėdi, bet prie įėjimo – dukra.*

‘No one is sitting next to me, but at the entrance, my daughter.’

Lithuanian prepositions *šalia* and *greta* are defined as synonymous and described together (as *šalia* / *greta*) presupposing that there are no semantic differences between them (Valiulytė 1998). They also have circular definitions in the dictionary (according to the Dictionary of Lithuanian Language (LKŽ), *gretà* denotes ‘near to each other, beside’<sup>18</sup>, but *šalià* – ‘beside, close to, near’<sup>19</sup>). But as for Latvian relational adverbs, there are slight differences. It might be hypothesized that *šalia* has a broader semantic scope in spatial domain; namely, it is more frequently used to express proximity without referring to the lateral side of the Ground. *Greta* on the other hand, also has the meaning ‘side by side’, which becomes most relevant in certain contexts and observed in certain collocations as *sustatyti greta* ‘put next to each other, together (both in spatial and abstract domains, e.g., for comparison)’. For this reason, *greta* is more compatible with *līdzās*.

Both relational adverbs are rendered with Lith. *prie* ‘near, at’ which is mostly chosen if Lithuanian sentences contain motion verbs with *prie* as a complement that carries the meaning of the goal of motion. In such contexts *šalia* and *greta* do not seem very natural; in addition, the usage of *prie* is also determined by the verbal prefix *pri-* denoting moving closer to somebody or something, e.g. *prieiti* ‘come closer to’, *prijoti* ‘ride up to’, *priartėti* ‘approach smb’:

(43) *Radziņš piejāja **viņam blakus**.*

*Ragelis prijoko **prie jo**.*

‘Croissant rode up to him.’

<sup>18</sup> *Prie vienas kito, šalia.*

<sup>19</sup> *Greta, arti, prie.*

(44) *Vienubrīd svešā barža ir **cieši līdzās tai**, kurā ved virsniekus.*

*Valandēlei suetimoji barža visiškai priartėja **prie tos**, kur gabena karininkus.*

‘For a moment, the foreign barge (La. is / Lith. comes) right next to the one carrying officers.’

The data in Table 11 shows a wider variety of Lithuanian counterparts for Latvian *blakus*. However, they not only refer to the proximal position of the Figure (e.g., *visai čia pat* ‘right here’, *netoli* ‘not far’), but may also convey other locational meanings that are compatible with proximity, such as anterior (*prieš* ‘in front of’), circumjacency (*aplink* ‘around’) or lengthwise position of prolonged Figure in relation to the Ground (*ties* ‘by, at’). *Līdzās*, on the contrary, does not exhibit such a flexibility in translation.

Sometimes *blakus* and *līdzās* do not have counterparts in Lithuanian at all: they are omitted as redundant, because proximity is already explicitly stated in the rest of the context, e.g.:

(45) *Mēs visi esam **cieši** sasėdušies **blakus cits citam** plecu pie pleca kā nekad agrāk.*

*Mēs visi labai glaudžiai susėdę, petys į petį, kaip niekada anksčiau.*

‘We are all sitting very close, [side by side] shoulder to shoulder like never before.’

(46) *Gaida tiesu, nāvessodu **tepat** **līdzās** aiz sienas.*

*Laukia teismo, mirties bausmė, rodos, čia pat – už sienos.*

‘Waiting for trial, the death penalty, right here, [close], behind the wall.’

There are also cases in which the meaning of Latvian *blakus* and *līdzās* is conveyed with Lithuanian verbs that imply proximity between the Figure and the Ground (see the row named “verbs” in Table 11). However, Lithuanian verbs for *blakus* contexts express physical proximity, but for *līdzās* – abstract domains, such as comparison and comitativity.

(47) *Tikai tad, kad līdz Kalna-Eriņiem bija atlikuši vairs vienīgi kādi simts metri, Justs atkal **pienāca man blakus** un uzbilda mani, [...]*

*Tik tada, kai ligi Kalno Eriņių buvo belikę koks šimtas metrų, Justas vėl **prisivijo mane** ir užkalbino, [...]*

‘Only when there were only about a hundred meters left until Kalna-Eriņi, Justs came to me again and started a conversation with me, [...].’

(48) *Zināms, sievietei vajadzīga ģimene, Anatolijs par to domājis jau sen un iztālēm **māsai līdzās** citu pēc cita **nostādījis** visus sava pulka neprecētos virsniekus, bet neviens no viņiem nav licies pietiekoši glīts, gudrs, izglītots, uzvedīgs.*

*Moteriškei, be abejo, reikia šeimos. Anatolijus apie tai mąsto jau seniai ir vaizduojasi su seserimi sugretintus vieną po kito nevedusius savo pulko karininkus, bet nė vienas neatrodo ganėtinai dailus, protingas, išsilavinęs, sumanus.*

‘It is known that a woman needs a family, Anatoly has been thinking about it for a long time and has placed all the unmarried officers of his regiment next to his sister, but none of them seemed handsome, smart, educated, well behaved enough.’

In (48), *līdzās* expresses the comparison of the Figure and the Ground in order to find the best match. In another nonspatial domain, comitative, *līdzās* is translated by Lithuanian *kartu su* ‘together with’, *drauge* ‘together, conjointly’ and *(lygiai) su* ‘(together) with’ (in total – 11%, see Table 11 and Example 49).

- (49) *Un viņam līdzās bērni, studenti: Sergejs un Nika.*  
*O su juo kartu vaikai studentai Sergejus ir Nika.*  
‘And with him are children, students: Sergey and Nika.’

In summary, it is obvious that both *blakus* and *līdzās* are rendered with various Lithuanian grammatical or lexical means denoting proximity. Their variety and semantics support observations about the semantic differences of *blakus* and *līdzās* described in section 4.1.2. For example, the most obvious case is the comitative sense of *līdzās*: its counterparts in Lithuanian also convey comitative meaning which is absent for *blakus*.

## 5. Conclusions

Annotation of the data for various syntactic and semantic factors enables us to define subtle peculiarities which are characteristic of terms for proximal reference, especially of the ones that have been treated as synonymous in the linguistic tradition. The comparison of *blakus* and *līdzās* in LILA corpus shows various syntactic and semantic similarities and differences. Quantitative difference is the most obvious one: *blakus* as relational adverb is used almost twice as often as *līdzās* (240 vs. 130 instances). In addition, *blakus* more frequently functions as preposition, *līdzās* as postposition. When *līdzās* is used prepositionally, it favors complex NP as its complements.

According to the remaining syntactic criteria, no differences are attested in the complexity of the phrase for the Ground object (noun or pronoun), length of Ground phrase (N or NP), position in the sentence (initial /

middle / final) and the presence of modifiers: both *blakus* and *līdzās* most often occur in the sentence-middle position, and they can be preceded by various modifiers and constitute complex adverbials, especially when they are used prepositionally. Also, when used prepositionally, they both usually govern nouns, but postpositionally – pronouns. Such a tendency is characteristic of all Latvian relational adverbs and is considered to be related to common information structure when old information (theme) comes first in the utterance and is followed by the new one (rheme), the latter receiving the logical stress (Lagzdīņa 1997, 196–197). Anaphorically used pronouns are thematic and thus more often precede relational adverbs (*idem*).

Semantically, both *blakus* and *līdzās* are most frequently used in static contexts containing posture verbs (*sit / stand / lie*) which locate Figure and Ground (two human beings conceptualized as physical bodies) next to each other. When the Ground is inanimate, spatial interpretation depends on the shape of the Ground and our knowledge of Figure–Ground relation. It seems that for *blakus* the lateral side of the Ground is not always definitive, especially in a large-scale environment; in such contexts *blakus* can be defined as locating Figure in close proximity to the Ground without specifying the location of the lateral side of the Ground. It means that the semantic scope of *blakus* is larger, thus it can be applied to more spatial situations. However, these assumptions must be tested and specified on experimental data as well because some corpus utterances allow various interpretations.

*Blakus* and *līdzās* metaphorical mappings into abstract domain are motivated by Figure–Ground alignment in physical domain. In addition to side-by-side arrangement of Figure and Ground of the same kind, change in their status, activity or function is always involved. When the Figure and the Ground are humans, the Figure acquires supportive function (sense of emotional support) or the Ground becomes the standard of comparison in order to highlight negative features of the Figure. The only difference of *blakus* and *līdzās* in the abstract domain is comitative meaning for *līdzās*. However, this extension is also related to a difference in status of the Figure and the Ground: the Ground, which is a companion in comitative construction, has decisive status, but the Figure (*accompanee*) does not.

This paper demonstrates that the analysis of translation equivalents in the target language can provide additional evidence to confirm the observations on the semantics of lexemes in the source language. Previously mentioned semantic differences between *blakus* and *līdzās* are mirrored in Lithuanian

translations of Latvian utterances: *blakus* is more often rendered by Lithuanian *šalia*, which is also applicable to more spatial scenes than Lithuanian *greta*, the translation equivalent of Latvian *līdzās*. Comitative *līdzās* is conveyed with various Lithuanian comitative constructions.

A limitation of the current study is the type of corpora and corpus analysis as a tool in general. Eventually, the corpus resources that are used in the current study do not cover all contexts wherein proximity terms are used. To explore more fine-grained distinctions in the use and comprehension of proximity terms, their dependence on the object shape, type (e.g., animacy) and the context, an experimental analysis is needed.

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## **ARTUMO RAIŠKA BALTŲ KALBOSE: LATVIŲ KALBOS RELIACINIAI PRIEVEIKSMIAI *blakus* IR *līdzās* BEI JŲ ATITIKMENYS LIETUVIŲ KALBOJE**

### *Santrauka*

Straipsnyje siekiama nustatyti latvių kalbos reliacinių prievieksmių *blakus* ir *līdzās* semantikos skirtumus bei aprašyti tekстыne rastus minėtųjų leksemų atitikmenis lietuvių kalboje. Duomenys tyrimui surinkti iš Lietuvių–latvių ir latvių–lietuvių kalbų lygiagrečiojo tekstyno (LILA), rankiniu būdu anotuoti pagal sintaksinius ir semantinius kriterijus bei analizuoti kiekybiškai. Nors *blakus* ir *līdzās* latvių kalbos žodynuose apibrėžiami labai panašiai, mūsų rezultatai atskleidžia jų semantinius ir sintaksinius ypatumus, išryškina bendrybes bei parodo, kuriais atvejais pasirenkama viena ar kita leksema. Pastebėtuosius semantinius skirtumus pagrindžia ir tekстыne rasti tiriamųjų reliacinių prievieksmių atitikmenys lietuvių kalboje.

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LKŽ – Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language. Available at: <http://lkz.lt>.

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