

The perfective present in Lithuanian

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This article offers a picture of the Lithuanian perfective present, with particular emphasis on the treatment of habituality and genericity, the use of aspect forms in narrative text types, and peripheral constructionalised and often pragmatically specialised uses of perfective presents partly harking back to the actional differences underlying the aspect opposition in Baltic as well as in Slavonic. The introductory part of the article offers a general outline of the Lithuanian aspect system and briefly discusses the vexed question of the existence or non-existence of a grammatical category of aspect in Lithuanian. It is argued that, contrary to a widely held view, the Baltic languages have a grammatical category of aspect, though weakly grammaticalised.

Keywords: Lithuanian, Baltic, verbal aspect, perfectivity, aspectual class, viewpoint aspect, present tense, telicity, progressive, habituality, narrative present, prefixation

1. Introduction¹

Lithuanian has an aspectual system of the type usually associated with the Slavonic languages, based primarily (though not exclusively) on the perfectivising effect of verbal prefixes functioning as ‘bounders’ (Bybee & Dahl 1989, 85–89). While the existence of verbal aspect in the Slavonic languages is well established (their opposition between perfective and imperfective verbs has indeed long been regarded, misleadingly, as the paradigm example of verbal aspect), its existence in Lithuanian has often been called into question, starting from Safarewicz (1939) and most

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recently in Arkadiev (2011). In Section 2 we will discuss in greater detail the arguments that have been levelled against the recognition of aspect as a grammatical category in Baltic, and against the use of the terms ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ with reference to the Baltic verb. In this section we will concentrate on what is essential in formulating the aims of this article. In our view there is no difference of principle between Slavonic and Baltic aspect: in both language families aspect rests on ‘grammaticalised lexical classes’ (Dahl 1985, 89) or, put differently, on the grammaticalisation of lexical aspect. What is different is the degree of grammaticalisation. In Slavonic, the aspects have developed into strict distributional classes, and the aspect of a verb can be established with the aid of a simple distributional test like the ability to combine with a phasal verb like ‘begin’ (only imperfective verbs have this ability) or the ability to derive certain inflectional forms (e.g., only imperfective verbs have a present active participle). This cannot be observed in Baltic, where, on the one hand, the distributional tests point to strong tendencies rather than strict rules; and, on the other hand, a perfective verb in Lithuanian or Latvian will have exactly the same paradigm as an imperfective one, even if some forms may be rare. Moreover, these languages have a large number of bi-aspectual verbs, which are a relative rarity in Slavonic. The main grounds for recognising a weakly grammaticalised aspectual opposition in Baltic is the inability of a considerable number of prefixed verbs to be used in progressive function, that is, in a situation where speech and reference time (or reference time only) are included in the temporal interval covered by the event described:

- (1) **Mes* *kaip tik* *su-organizuojame* *konferenciją.*
 1PL.NOM right_now PFX-organise.PRS.1PL conference.ACC.SG
 Intended meaning: ‘Right now we’re organising a conference.’
- (2) **Netrukdykit* *man,* *aš* *dabar*
 NEG.disturb.IMP.2PL 1SG.DAT 1SG.NOM now
pa-skaitau.
 PFX-read.PRS.1SG
 Intended meaning: ‘Don’t disturb me, I am now doing some reading.’

The prefixes occurring on these two verbs have different actional characteristics: while *su-* could be called completive in the sense that it conveys the achievement of a natural boundary of the process, *pa-* is a delimitative

prefix conveying a certain arbitrarily singled-out duration quantum of an event conceived as an activity. The verbs illustrated in (1) and (2) could thus be said to differ in Aktionsart but they have a common grammatical feature that can be characterised as perfectivity.

While a progressive present cannot be derived from the verbs illustrated in (1) and (2), this does not mean they cannot derive a present at all, because not all presents are progressive (cf. Comrie 1985, 36–41). The verb used in (1) is used in a habitual present-tense form in (3):

- (3) *Kasmet* *su-organizuojame* *apie* *20* *gebėjimus*
 every_year PFX-organise.PRS.1PL about 20 skill.ACC.PL
ugdančių *projektų* *jaunimui*.
 develop.PRS.PA.GEN.PL project.GEN.PL youth.DAT.SG
 ‘Every year we organise about 20 skill-improving projects for young people.’²

The perfective present has received a lot of attention lately, cf. Astrid de Wit’s 2017 book on ‘the paradox of the present perfective’. This notion of paradox, apparently inspired by Malchukov (2009), is somewhat misleading in that it suggests a clash between two incompatible categories—perfectivity and present tense. The conflict is basically between perfectivity and progressive meaning,³ but probably no language’s present tense is exclusively progressive: presents may be habitual, generic, historical and so forth, see Smith (2003, 76). It is true that progressive forms tend to be expansive and they may gradually conquer the whole domain of the present tense, ousting the original non-progressive forms also from those types of use that are not progressive. In part of the Slavonic languages something comparable has occurred, though the Slavonic imperfective is unbounded but not inherently progressive. Because of their inherent boundedness perfectives are banned from the progressive function, which causes them to be ousted from what is probably the most salient or prototypical present-

² <https://lvjc.lt/projektai/> (accessed 10 05 2021)

³ Here we will not be making a distinction between the notions of ‘progressive’ and ‘continuous’: what we have in mind is the inclusion of reference time in event time. ‘Progressive’ may also be defined as a subtype of ‘continuous’ (cf. “Progressiveness is the combination of continuousness with nonstativity”, Comrie 1975, 12), but the distinction is not always observed, and is not relevant here.

tense function, after which the generalisation of imperfective forms can spread to other present-tense functions. This process has been almost complete in North Slavonic (East Slavonic, Polish), where the perfective present has basically become a perfective future. In the Baltic languages this process has been more restricted, but it has occurred, for instance, in the case of the performative present tense, which is not progressive as speech time exactly coincides with event time instead of being included in it; the non-progressive character of this type of use is reflected in the non-progressive form of the verb in English, cf. Comrie (1985, 37). The use of the imperfective present in performative function can be seen in (4):

- (4) *Ĵūsų Ekscelencija, sveikinu*
 you.GEN.PL excellency.VOC.SG congratulate.PRS.1SG
 (**pa-sveikinu*) *Ĵus sulaukus naujo*
 PFV-congratulate.PRS.1SG 2PL.ACC be.granted.CVB new.GEN.SG.M
paskyrimo
 appointment.GEN.SG
 [—*tapus Kauno arkivyskupu.*]
 ‘Your Excellency, I congratulate you on your recent appointment
 [as Archbishop of Kaunas.]’⁴

In this, Lithuanian agrees with most of the Slavonic languages; an exception is Slovenian, which is known to have performative perfective presents:

- (5) Slovenian (Greenberg 2006, 81)
Prisežem, da govorim resnico.
 swear[PFV].PRS.1SG that speak[IPFV].PRS.1SG truth.ACC
 ‘I swear I’m speaking the truth.’

From the point of view of the non-progressive forms, it is not important whether a new progressive form is introduced that ousts original presents from progressive and often also from (some or all) non-progressive functions (the case of English, Modern Eastern Armenian etc.), or whether the innovation consists in prefixed verbs developing perfective meaning and consequently being ousted from progressive (and possibly also non-progressive) present-tense functions (the case of Baltic and Slavonic). But while the broad lines of development are the same in both scenarios,

⁴ <https://sc.bns.lt/view/item/185406> (accessed 10 05 2021)

there is much cross-linguistic variety in the details. On the one hand, the ousting of present-tense forms from progressive use may be a point of departure for further changes affecting more and more present-tense forms up to a point where the central meaning of such forms comes to lie in another domain of grammar, as in North Slavonic, where the perfective present has become a future, or in Modern Eastern Armenian, where the old non-progressive present has become a kind of subjunctive (Sayeed & Vaux 2017, 1155). On the other hand, the perfective or non-progressive forms may be conventionalised in various semantically or pragmatically specialised constructions that vary from one language to another.

In this article we will look at the perfective present in one individual language, attempting to get a reasonably complete picture of both the immediate and more far-reaching consequences of the perfectivisation of prefixed verbs and the concomitant rise of aspectual pairs in Lithuanian. We will look, first, at the non-progressive subtypes of the present tense (habitual, generic), and at the distribution of the aspects in these subtypes. Next, we will look at the functioning of imperfective and perfective present-tense forms in different types of context that are not directly affected by progressivity. For this purpose we will look at the use of aspect forms in two subtypes of narrative texts—stage directions and memoirs (for earlier work along the same lines, focusing, however, on past-tense forms, see Sawicki 2010). In the third part of the article we will look at a number of usage types of perfective presents that are historically connected with the grammaticalisation source of verbal aspect in Baltic and Slavonic. As Baltic and Slavonic aspect oppositions arise from the coexistence of paired verbs originally differentiated in terms of lexical aspect, they retain, in the case of accomplishment verbs, Aktionsart-related differences in volitionality between imperfective and perfective forms. This gives rise to a number of interesting patterns of usage that are not necessarily relevant to fundamental discussions about aspect semantics but afford interesting insights into the specific features of aspect systems arising from the grammaticalisation of lexical aspect.

The structure of the article follows from the purposes just formulated. First, we will briefly introduce the Lithuanian aspect system; next, we will discuss how aspect functions in the present-tense domain in habitual and generic predications; we will look at the functioning of the perfective present in different sorts of text; and finally, we will look at a number of

uses of perfective presents harking back to the original actional differences out of which the aspectual opposition has grown; these uses are often constructionalised in specific semantic and pragmatic functions that are peripheral to fundamental discussions on aspectual semantics.

2. The Lithuanian aspectual system

Verbal prefixes with a basically spatial meaning function as natural bounders telicising atelic verbs. In a number of languages this has led to the rise of an actionality-based, rather than aspecto-temporal,⁵ aspect system. The languages exhibiting this feature form a not quite contiguous area stretching from Eastern Europe to the Caucasus (cf. Arkadiev 2014, 2015).

The occurrence of telicising prefixes creates a precondition for the rise of an aspect system, but it is not in itself a sufficient condition for this. The opposition between a telic and an atelic verb is one of lexical aspect, which is a universal phenomenon (though the lexical aspect classes relevant for individual languages are not necessarily the same), but not of grammatical aspect. Moreover, telicising prefixes have the property of rendering a verb exclusively telic and non-susceptible of an atelic reading, but it is not the case that non-prefixed verbs cannot be telic. While it is true that even with an object capable of measuring out the event, a predicate like *skaityti knyga* ‘read a book’ can be construed as an activity, it can also be construed as an accomplishment, and in that case the function of the prefix in *perskaityti knyga* ‘read a book’ can no longer be called telicising, as the verb is already telic. The co-existence of the two verbs naturally tends to be exploited to mark differences of what since Smith (1991) has been known as viewpoint aspect, and these differences may be said to become grammaticalised when restrictions in use appear, as in the case of the ban on perfective prefixed verbs in progressive use, illustrated in (1) and (2). It has been argued (Sawicki 2000) that the impossibility of pro-

⁵ By ‘aspecto-temporal’ we mean an aspect system based on aspectually marked tense forms, like that of Romance. There is, in reality, no rigid line of division between the two types. In Classical Greek, for instance, the so-called ‘present-tense’ and ‘aorist’ stems also derive atemporal forms like infinitives and imperatives, which makes the Greek aspect system somewhat similar to that of Slavonic and Baltic, but the marking has become inflectional and therefore not dependent on actionality. In Homeric Greek, however, aspect was still to a much larger extent intertwined with actionality, cf. Napoli (2006).

gressive use may also be due to lexical aspect, and this is certainly true, but when within one broad aspectual class, that of accomplishments, one finds massively instantiated oppositions of alleged actional subclasses, as is the case in Baltic, the impression is that actional classes are being defined solely for the purpose of avoiding the notion of aspect.

Many authors have argued that the Baltic languages have no grammatical aspect, and that there is, in this respect, a difference of principle between Baltic and Slavonic. Most recently this case has been made by Arkadiev (2011); for a partial rebuttal see Holvoet (2014).⁶ Arkadiev claims, first, that “the ability of Lithuanian verbs of different types to combine with perfective or imperfective viewpoint or with both is reducible to the lexical semantics of verbs, more precisely, to their actional properties, most crucially, to the distinction between durative (State, Process, Multiplicative process) and punctual (Entry-into-a-State, Entry-into-a-Process, Quantum of a Multiplicative Process) actional meanings.” While this is true, it is also true of the corresponding aspectual classes in Slavonic. Secondly, Arkadiev claims that simple verbs in Lithuanian are atelic, and prefixes are needed to make them punctual. This claim is based on a specific use of the term ‘telic’ that is not universal. In the literature on aspect, the notion of telicity is understood in two different ways, as pointed out already by Dahl (1981). For some, it refers to processes that have a natural endpoint beyond which they cannot be continued, as in Lithuanian *skaityti knyga* ‘read a book’. On this understanding, there is no difference in telicity between *perskaityti knyga* ‘read a book (PFV)’ and the already telic *skaityti knyga* ‘read a book (IPFV)’—unless we want to say that *perskaityti* is somehow ‘more telic’ than *skaityti*, but telicity as a gradable notion does not seem to make much sense. For others, the term ‘telic’ makes it refer to the actual reaching of the final boundary, so that *skaityti knyga* ‘read a book (IPFV)’ is atelic and the prefix makes it telic. It is not coincidental that Dahl characterises the two definitions of telicity referred to above as the ‘Eastern’ and the ‘Western’ one respectively. From a Baltic or Slavonic point of view, it is not quite clear what the difference between telicity and perfectivity could be on the latter understanding.

⁶ Discussions have mostly focused on Lithuanian, but the Latvian aspect system is broadly comparable to that of Lithuanian. A useful discussion with specific reference to Latvian can be found in Hauzenberga-Šturma (1979).

To circumvent this problem Arkadiev argues that *skaityti* and *perskaityti* refer to distinct subevents—the durative process leading up to a transition, and the transition itself, and that the difference is never neutralised, while Slavonic does neutralise it. In Russian and several other Slavonic languages this distinction is indeed neutralised under habituality. Compare, for instance, Russian example (6) with its Lithuanian counterpart:

- (6) *Dvornik* *vsegda* *zapiraet* / **zaprēt*
 caretaker.NOM.SG always lock[IPFV].PRS.3SG lock[PFV].PRS.3SG
vorota.
 gate[PL].ACC
- (7) *Sargas* *visada* *rakina* / *už-rakina*
 caretaker.NOM.SG always lock.PRS.3 PFV-lock.PRS.3
vartus.
 gate[PL].ACC
 ‘The caretaker always locks the gate.’

In (6) the imperfective verb is used though it clearly does not refer to the durative process leading up to the transition, but includes the transition itself. This contrasts with the Lithuanian form *užrakina*, which encodes the habitual achievement of the transition. Arkadiev does not mention the fact that *rakina* is also possible in (7), which means that the neutralisation, though not obligatory as in Russian and certainly less frequent, is also possible. It should also be mentioned that a situation exactly parallel to that observed in Lithuanian exists in part of the Slavonic languages. Dickey (2000) regards the non-neutralisation as one of the most important features opposing West Slavonic aspect (Czech and Slovak, Sorbian, Slovenian) to the East Slavonic type (East Slavonic languages, Bulgarian and Macedonian), Polish and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian occupying an intermediate position; example (8) is from Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian:

- (8) *Vratar* *uvijek* *zatvori* / *zatvara*
 porter.NOM.SG always close[PFV].PRS.3SG close.[IPFV].PRS.3SG
vrata.
 door[PL].ACC
 ‘The porter always locks the door.’

The neutralisation mentioned by Arkadiev probably points to a more advanced stage in the process of grammaticalisation of aspect in the sense of a closer interaction between aspect and tense. In modern Russian, a

present tense is imperfective, whether it is progressive or habitual; in the same way, the Russian imperfective past tense could be compared to the imperfect tense of languages like Romance or Greek, combining as it does the progressive and the habitual function. But a language need not combine these two functions in order to have grammatical aspect; a progressive vs non-progressive opposition is already aspectual. Arkadiev argues that in Lithuanian this opposition is wholly determined by lexical aspect, which, for telic verbs, requires the assumption that imperfective verbs (*skaityti*) and perfective verbs (*perskaityti*) denote different sub-events. But these alleged subevents are apparently being introduced for no other purpose than to deny the grammatical status of the distinction between *skaityti* and *perskaityti*. If the difference were indeed between two subevents, there would be a tendency to use the verb denoting the preparatory phase in imperfective contexts (in terms of viewpoint aspect) and the one denoting the final phase in perfective contexts (also in terms of viewpoint aspect), but it would still be possible to coerce the verb denoting the final phase into progressive use, as can be observed with certain prefixed verbs in Lithuanian. Lithuanian verbs of motion with spatial prefixes by default assume a perfective reading, but can be coerced into progressive (imperfective) use:

- (9) [*Tai gal geriau atnešiu kavą, kai jūsų svečias atvyks?*]
Jis jau at-eina, — parodžiau
 3.NOM.SG.M already PFX-come.PRS.3 point.PST.1SG
ranka į kitą aikštės pusę.
 hand.INS.SG at other.ACC.SG square.GEN.SG end.ACC.SG
 ‘[Then perhaps I should bring your coffee when your guest arrives?]
 “There he’s coming already”, I pointed with my hand at the other end
 of the square.’⁷

The verb *at-eiti* ‘come, arrive’ can indeed be said to denote a subevent, the prefinal stage of a motion event towards the deictic centre. But this prefinal stage also has at least a minimal extension in time, and can thus, if the need arises, be extended (despite the verb’s propensity for a punctual reading) to include reference time, so that progressive use is enabled. But verbs like *perskaityti* cannot be coerced into progressive use, which sug-

⁷ <http://laiskailietuviams.lt/index.php/1951m-7-liepos/224-jis-buvo-geriausias-tevas>

gests that the opposition between *skaityti* and *perskaityti*, whatever its original status, is now grammatical.

Another important fact is that the subevent account does not hold for delimitative verbs like *pa-skaityti* in (2). A certain temporal quantum of reading, conceived as an activity, can be referred to by means of both *skaityti* and *paskaityti*, but *skaityti* allows the inner perspective imposed by progressive use whereas *paskaityti* does not. Arkadiev is evidently aware of this as he concedes that delimitatives “probably have also a sort of lexicalised perfective viewpoint” (Arkadiev 2011, 82). But if there is such a thing as ‘lexicalised perfective viewpoint’, we could also ascribe it to telic perfectives like *perskaityti*, which are also unable of being coerced into progressive use. We suggest that all the verbs discussed here, also *ateiti* in (9), have a certain lexicalised perfective viewpoint, but by prohibiting the coercion of the type *paskaityti* and *perskaityti* into progressive use, the language has actually grammaticalised the perfective viewpoint, and the ‘subevent’ account can be dispensed with.

We do not mean to deny the relevance, in certain contexts, of the subevent reading of verbs like *perskaityti*. Such verbs are systematically ambiguous between a ‘subevent’ reading referring to a change of state (led up to by the incremental process denoted by the corresponding simple verb) and a ‘complexive’ reading referring to a complete bounded event. Which of the readings applies is ruled by pragmatics. The use of aspect forms relies to a large extent on implicatures to the effect that if an incremental process is realised it will normally lead up to the desired change of state, and that the change of state is normally preceded by an incremental process leading up to it. These implicatures are cancelled in specific contexts, especially in the presence of a negation, as it is possible for a volitional incremental process to be realised without producing the usual change of state, and it is possible for a change of state to occur accidentally, without the volitional incremental process normally leading up to it. The possibility of contrasting the two subevents is important for the functioning of aspect in the imperative under negation (see Bogusławski 1985). It can be seen in (10) and (11):

- (10) *Ne-trauk* *kištuko* *iš* *lizdo*.
 NEG-pull.IMP.2SG plug.GEN.SG from socket.GEN.SG
 ‘Don’t pull the plug from the socket.’

- (11) *Ne-iš-trauk* *kištuko* *iš* *lizdo.*
 NEG-PFX-pull.IMP.2SG plug.GEN.SG from socket.GEN.SG
 ‘Don’t (inadvertently) pull the plug from the socket.’

While (10) is an appeal not to apply the agency leading to the removal of the plug from the socket, (11) is an appeal to avoid a situation in which the plug could be removed from the socket, an undesirable change of state that could be the outcome of some agency not directed at the removal of the plug. Agency and change of state are clearly opposed here. In pragmatic terms, sentences like (10) are characterised as prohibitions and sentences like (11) as warnings, but the difference is in origin actional—it is one between subevents. It is also exploited in a number of constructions to be discussed in the final section of this article. It is not usually exploited, however, in the temporal forms of the verb. A sentence like (12) is ambiguous between a reading on which somebody applied agency with the end of pulling the plug, and one on which the pulling of the plug was unintentional:

- (12) *Kažkas* *iš-traukė* *kištuką* *iš*
 somebody.NOM PFX-pull.PST.3 plug.ACC.SG from
lizdo.
 socket.GEN.SG
 ‘Somebody (has) pulled the plug from the socket.’

One could imagine a speaker using the imperfective verb instead of the perfective in (12) in order to specify that conscious agency was involved, but this would normally be prohibited by the Gricean maxim of informativity, as noted already by Dahl (1974): if the intended outcome was achieved, the imperfective verb violates this maxim unless there is a good reason for using it; the reason will usually be that reference time is located within event time, that is, we have a progressive in the past. This, however, is already a matter of viewpoint aspect.

It is, at any rate, hard to agree with Arkadiev (2011, 82) when he claims that “the traditional classification of Lithuanian verbs into ‘perfective’, ‘imperfective’ and ‘bi-aspectual’ turns out to have no theoretical validity.” It is true that the classification probably needs to be refined in the sense that prefixed motion verbs have the ‘lexicalised perfective viewpoint’ but

can be coerced into progressive use while a large body of prefixed verbs are simply bi-aspectual, that is, have no inherent aspectual profile.⁸

Arkadiev's observations are valuable in that they make us aware of an important methodological point, viz. that in investigating the grammatical properties associated with perfectivity and imperfectivity in Lithuanian one should be cautious about the use of verbs whose aspectual behaviour is indeed determined by their Aktionsart. These are mainly

- inceptive state verbs as opposed to state verbs, as in *supykti* 'get angry' as against *pykti* 'be angry';
- semelfactive verbs as opposed to state, activity and iterative verbs, as in *žvilgtelėti* 'cast a look' as against *žvelgti* 'look'.

These verbs are inherently perfective and have no imperfective counterparts. Nevertheless we will treat such lexical perfectives on a par with grammatical perfectives in Section 4, which deals with the narrative uses of aspectual forms. When dealing with textual functions, we must treat the text as a whole, without *ad-hoc* decisions as to which forms should be included. Basically, however, our conclusions concerning the functioning of aspect in Lithuanian, and particularly concerning the uses of the perfective present, will rest mainly on the evidence of aspect oppositions of the following two types:

- telic verbs, basically accomplishments but also verbs that are not naturally telic in the sense of having a natural endpoint but represent a certain quantum of an activity as an autonomous object, e.g., *sakyti* 'say' : perfective *pa-sakyti*, where a certain quantum of speaking is conventionally conceived of as an utterance; similarly certain other verbs referring to social interaction, like *pa-prieštarauti* 'object, raise objections' etc.

⁸ The special status of prefixed motion verbs is a feature shared by Lithuanian and Latvian. In Latvian, however, these verbs cannot be coerced into progressive use; in this function, they are replaced with the corresponding simple verbs accompanied by local adverbs, e.g., *nāk iekšā* 'is coming in' as against *ie-nāk* 'comes in' (cf. Endzelin 1923, 741–742). The fact that, in Lithuanian, the presents of motion verbs like *ateiti* can be coerced into progressive while those of verbs like *perskaityti* or *paskaityti* cannot might be associated with differences in informativeness. In the case of motion verbs the translocational change of state may be of many different types encoded by different prefixes, so that generalisation of the corresponding unprefixed verb in progressive function would lead to considerable information loss. Latvian, with its local adverbs, does not have this problem and therefore does not allow coercion.

- delimitative verbs of the type *pa-skaityti* ‘spend a certain time reading’ as against *skaityti* ‘read’. Delimitative verbs are traditionally classified with the Aktionsarten of the Slavonic verb, but this characterisation is not quite felicitous, cf. Arkadiev (2015, 85–89, with literature). The point is that the singling out of a certain temporal quantum of a state or activity is the principal way to perfectivise an atelic verb and thus to integrate atelic verbs into a more or less grammaticalised aspect system based on viewpoint distinctions. What perfective forms in an aspecto-temporal system like that of the Romance languages do is also to cut out a temporal quantum of a state or activity: French *il vécut dans le monde* ‘he led a worldly life’ means ‘he spent a considerable number of years of his life in a worldly fashion’. What sets delimitative verbs apart from telic perfectives is that they take temporal quantification instead of the quantification of an incremental theme as a means of measuring out an event; the two represent different dimensions of perfectivity (cf. Holvoet 1991).

More or less in conformity with the picture Lithuanian grammars draw of the status of prefixed verbs in Lithuanian, we will distinguish three types of situations:

- (a) the prefix perfectivises the verb, which blocks its use in progressive meaning:

- (13) *Senelė mezga / *nu-mezga kojines.*
 granny.NOM knit.PRS.3 PFX-knit.PRS.3 sock.ACC.PL
 ‘Granny is knitting socks.’

- (b) the prefix changes lexical meaning and the verb is bi-aspectual; it can correspondingly be used in the progressive present tense:

- (14) *Kaip tik per-žiūriu savo senas užrašų knygutes.*
 right_now PFX-look.PRS.1SG RPO old.ACC.PL.F note.GEN.PL
 book.ACC.PL
 ‘I’m just looking through my old notebooks.’

- (c) the prefix adds a spatial meaning and acts as a bounder, imposing a default perfective reading e.g. in the past, but the verb may be coerced into progressive function (cf. example 9 above):

- (15) *Štai jis jau at-eina.*
 there 3.NOM.SG.M already PFX-come.PRS.3
 ‘There he is coming this way already.’

We should add two things here. First, a small group of simple verbs is consistently bi-aspectual, e.g., *duoti* ‘give’, *gauti* ‘get, receive’, *liepti* ‘order, bid’, etc. Secondly, in a small group of verbs the prefix perfectivises the verb (which then cannot be used in a progressive present-tense form) but the basic simple verb remains bi-aspectual, so that, e.g., in the past tense simple and prefixed verb can be used interchangeably. This group comprises *grįžti* : *su-grįžti* ‘return’ (and its causative *grąžinti* : *su-grąžinti* ‘return, give back’), *dingti* : *pra-dingti* ‘disappear’ and a few others.

- (16) a. *Kaip tik grįžtu (*su-grįžtu) namo.*
 precisely return.PRS.1SG PFX-return.PRS.1SG home
 ‘Right now I am on my way home.’
- b. *Jau grįžau / su-grįžau namo.*
 already return.PST.1SG PFX-return.PST.1SG home
 ‘I’m back home already.’

We should add that the situation here outlined (and more or less corresponding to what is described in the Lithuanian grammars, cf. Ulvydas, ed., 1971, 25–46) is not stable. Bi-aspectual verbs like *peržiūrėti* in (14) increasingly face competition, in progressive use, from new imperfectives with the suffix *-inėti*. These are originally iterative (see Kozhanov 2021) but, in a development still frowned upon by prescriptive grammarians, are now extending to progressive function. Examples (17) and (18) show this competition. The originally iterative suffix *-inė-* is here glossed simply as imperfective:

- (17) *Šiuo metu namuose kaip tik per-žiūriu savo*
 right_now house.LOC.PL precisely PFX-look.PRS.1SG RPO
sukauptus daiktus
 accumulate.PST.PP.ACC.PL.M thing.ACC.PL
 [ir labai didelę jų dalį keliaus į šiukšlių konteinerius.]⁹
 ‘In my house right now I am looking through the things I have piled up there [and a huge part of them will be going to waste skips.]⁹

⁹ <https://www.lrytas.lt/pasaulis/rytai-vakarai/2015/12/27/news/keliau-jantys-amatininkai-trejus-metus-klajoja-lyg-viduramziais-2699537/>

- (18) [*Ot tai sutapimas,*
kaip tik per-žiūr-inėj-u internetines
 precisely PFX-look-IPFV-PRS.1SG internet.ADJ.ACC.PL.F
parduotuves,
 shop.ACC.PL
 [*kurios siūlo šio modelio ausines.*]
 ‘[Well that’s a coincidence,] right now I’m looking through the internet
 shops [that offer this type of earphones.]’¹⁰

3. The habitual, generic, and other characterising uses

As mentioned above, Russian has extended its imperfective present-tense forms to predications describing habitual events. This is, in a way, natural as habitual events said to apply to the present form a chain extending from the past into the future, and this chain is, when homogenised, durative in character, moreover naturally encompassing the moment of speaking. That is, we have here a natural extension of durative and, in a further development, progressive use. It is obviously from this point of view that Geniušienė (2020) says that perfective verbs are ‘imperfectivised’ in the habitual past and present. Though natural, this imperfectivisation is by no means automatic. Aspecto-temporal systems of the Romance type treat habituality as imperfective (cf. French *il rentrait*/**rentra souvent tard* ‘he often came home late’), whereas in the actionality-based Baltic and Slavonic aspectual systems a series of completed events is aspectually ambiguous because either the completion or the chain of events may be focused upon.

In that habituality does not only refer to repeated events but also attributes a property to their participants, habitual uses are similar to other types of sentences with a characterising function, that is attitudinal, potential, individual-level and generic (Bertinetto & Lenci 2012, 860). Among these, habituals and generics are most typical for the perfective present in Lithuanian (together with the narrative present, see Section 4), but other types can also be found. For a more thorough investigation we

¹⁰ <https://www.varle.lt/ausines/sony-belaides-triuksma-slopinancios-ausines-wh-1000xm3b-9363180.html>

turned to an internet-based corpus of Lithuanian (LithuanianWaC), from which we selected verbs that are not used in the progressive meaning in the present tense. (See Arkadiev 2011 on difficulties in establishing such verbs.) Our sample included several prefixed verbs (*pasiėkti* ‘reach’, *pasirinkti* ‘choose’, *išmokti* ‘learn’ etc.), one underived telic verb (*rasti* ‘find’), and several semelfactive verbs (*šyptelti* ‘smile’, *stabtelti* ‘stop’, *mirkelti* ‘blink’, *bakstelti* ‘tap’, *mostelti* ‘wave’ etc). For technical reasons, the latter is mostly represented by the 3rd person present tense in our sample; the first two groups are taken in all forms of the present.

3.1. Habitual and generic uses

The habitual and generic uses only differ in having particular or generic subjects, and are not always easily differentiated (see Carlson 2012, 830–831).¹¹ A habitual example describing a person’s habits is given in (19).¹² A generic use in (20) assigns a whole class of persons a predisposition towards certain situations.

- (19) [Zora man sakė, kad jis valgo tik juodą sužiedėjusią duoną, sudžiovintą saulėje.]

<i>Jis</i>	nusiperka	<i>kepaliuką</i>	<i>duonos,</i>
3.NOM.SG.M	PFV.RFL.BUY.PRS.3	loaf.DIM.ACC.SG	bread.GEN.SG
supjausto	<i>ją</i>	<i>riekutėmis</i>	<i>ir džiovina.</i>
PFV.CUT.PRS.3	3.ACC.SG.F	slice.INS.PL	and dry.PRS.3

‘[Zora told me that he only eats black stale bread, dried in the sun.]

He buys a small loaf of bread, cuts it into slices and dries it.’

- (20) [Niekšiška teigti,]

<i>kad</i>	<i>ligonis</i>	pasirenka	<i>savo</i>
that	sick.person.NOM.SG	PFV.RFL.CHOOSE.PRS.3	RPO
<i>ligą,</i>			
sickness.ACC.SG			

¹¹ See, for example, (21) which can be understood as referring to the historic Homer or to any person who is equal to the historic Homer in talent.

¹² The prefixed verbs ‘buys’ and ‘cuts into pieces’, referring to the inherent endpoint of the event, are followed by the non-prefixed ‘makes dry’. The latter only refers to the activity of drying and does not specify that the endpoint is reached, although we already know that the bread the person prepares eventually becomes dry from the previous sentence. It is possible to replace the non-prefixed *džiovina* with the prefixed *išdžiovina* to the effect that reaching the endpoint is stated explicitly.

[o skurdžius savo skurdą.]

‘[It is base to claim] that a sick person chooses their sickness, [and a destitute one their poverty.]’

It is clear that the situation is supposed to occur every time when the stock of dried bread needs replenishing in (19) and when a person is acknowledged as ill or poor in (20). In other examples, the frequency with which a situation occurs is expressed with adverbs of frequency.

- (21) *Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus* —
kartais ir Homeras snūsteli
 sometimes also PN.NOM.SG doze.SML.PRS.3
 [(kas lietuviškai reikštų)
ir gudri višta kartais
 and clever.NOM.SG.F chicken.NOM.SG sometimes
į dilgynes įbrenda).
 in nettle.ACC.PL PFX.walk.PRS.3
 ‘[*Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*]—Even Homer sometimes nods (which in Lithuanian means) ‘even a clever chicken sometimes walks into nettles’.’

- (22) [*Na bet žinote vaikai <...> Nors ir kokie pavargę jie būtų.*]
jie visuomet randa labai svarbią
 3.NOM.PL.M always find.PRS.3 very important.ACC.SG.F
priežastį dar nemiegoti.
 reason.ACC.SG still NEG.sleep.INF
 ‘[Well, you know these children <...> However tired they might be], they always find a very important reason for not going to bed.’

In other cases, rather than being characterised in terms of frequency, a typical situation is linked to particular circumstances, as in (23) where they are given in a dependent clause:

- (23) *Kai vienas iš mūsų turi*
 when one.NOM.SG.M from 1PL.GEN have.PRS.3
idėją iškart ją pasidalina su
 idea.ACC.SG at_once 3.INS.SG.F PFX.RFL.share.PRS.3 with
kitais. Po to visi kartu iš
 other.INS.PL.M then all.NOM.PL.M together from
jos sukuriame dainą.
 3.GEN.SG.F PFV.create.PRS.1PL song.ACC.SG
 ‘When one of us has an idea, he immediately shares it with the others. Then we create a song from it together.’

Since the circumstances are themselves repetitive, the habitual use is also found in conditional and temporal clauses.

- (24) [*Žalgirio mūšis tapo kasmetine pramoga, kai inscenizuojamas mūšis, bet nacionalinės dramos nebeliko.*]
Jei Jogaila nukrenta nuo žirgo,
 if PN.NOM.SG PFV.fall.PRS.3 from horse.GEN.SG
[nieko baisaus.]
 ‘[The battle of Grunwald has become an annual festivity during which the battle is reenacted, but the national excitement has faded.]
 If Jogaila falls from his horse, [it is not a big deal.]’
- (25) [*Kurortinio sezono metu norintieji patekti į keltą be eilės visada sulaukia kitų keliauninkų pasipiktinimo. Ypač pasibaigus didžiosioms šventėms ar subjurus orams.*]
kai iš Nidos ir Juodkrantės
 when from PLN.GEN.SG and PLN.GEN.SG
plūsteli tūkstančiai automobilių.
 pour.SML.PRS.3 thousand.NOM.PL car.GEN.PL
 ‘[In high season, those wanting to get onto the ferry jumping the queue never fail to provoke other travellers’ anger. Especially after a big festival is over or the weather gets nasty], and thousands of cars pour out of Nida and Juodkrantė.’

3.1.1. Perfectives-only contexts

While imperfective present, too, can be used habitually in the types of contexts represented above, there are certain collocations, also found in Russian (Stojnova 2016), that are exclusively found with the perfective present.

In simple clauses, they involve the perfective present coordinated with *imti* ‘take’ which is known to favour bounded events (Nau *et al.* 2019, 260–262), but does not always have a habitual/generic meaning.

- (26) [*Laimė—kaip kalėdinis žaisliukas*]
ima ir sudūžta <...>
 take.PRS.3 and PFX.break.PRS.3
 ‘[Happiness is like a Christmas bauble;] all of a sudden it breaks.’
- (27) [*Jau mūsų protėviai suvokė, kad gyvenimas sudėtingas—ne viską ranka paliesti, ne viską plika akim išvysi, ir paliko paslaptinę mitų, pasakų pasaulį.*]

iš kurio, žiūrėk, ima ir
 from which.GEN.SG.M look.IMP.2SG take.PRS.3 and
kyšteli galvą koks velnias,
 poke.SML.PRS.3 head.ACC.SG some.NOM.SG.M demon.NOM.SG
ir šmurkšteli už malūno
 and appear.SML.PRS.3 behind windmill.GEN.SG
kampo arba strykteli į
 corner.GEN.SG or hop.SML.PRS.3 into
literatūros laukus.
 literature.GEN.SG field.ACC.PL

‘[Our forefathers already knew that life is complicated. Not everything can be touched by hand or seen by eye. They left us a mysterious world of myths and fairy-tales] out of which a demon suddenly sticks out its head, then appears behind the corner of a windmill or hops into the fields of literature.’

In temporal clauses, the habitual use of the perfective present is introduced by *vos* in the meaning ‘as soon as’. (On *vos* in the modal meaning see below.)

- (28) *Vos suskamba pirmosios Šopeno*
 as_soon_as PFV.SOUND.PRS.3 first.NOM.PL.F.DEF PN.GEN.SG
kūrinio gaidos,
 piece.GEN.SG note.NOM.PL

[*salėje girdisi palaimingas pripažinimo atodūsis.*]

‘As soon as the first tones of the Chopin piece sound, [a blissful sigh of appreciation is heard in the hall.]’

- (29) [*<...> prisiuostę miesto oro, automobilių išmetamųjų dujų, CO, anglies monoksido, smalkių <...>.*]

vos kaime kvėptelime
 as_soon_as countryside.LOC.SG inhale.SML.PRS.1PL
pušyno oro — svaigstame.
 pine_forest.GEN.SG air.GEN.SG feel_dizzy.PRS.1PL

‘[After having inhaled our fill of city air, car exhaust fumes, CO, carbon monoxide <...>], we feel dizzy as soon as we breathe the pine-infused air of the countryside.’

3.2. Other characterising uses

Attitudinals (*John smokes cigars*) and potentials (*John speaks French*) do not presume a repetition or even a single occurrence of events involving smoking cigars or speaking French as they only refer to the likelihood

of such events in case a person is given an opportunity to perform them. As these types of sentences assign a permanent property to a particular referent, they are similar to individual-level predicates (*Elina is Finnish*); see also Shluinsky (2009) on the cross-linguistic tendency to use identical marking for habituals, attitudinal, potentials, and individual-level predicates. All this is also true for certain uses of the Lithuanian perfective present, and it explains the perfective form in (30), which stands alongside an imperfective form in (31). Even if nobody reads the historical sources, they still retain the ability to convey certain information:

- (30) *Šaltiniai* ***te-pa-sako***,
 source.NOM.PL only-PFV-say.PRS.3
 [*kad ji buvo nuskandinta.*]
 ‘The sources only say [that she was drowned.]’

- (31) *O* *ką* *istorijos* *šaltiniai* ***sako***
 but what.ACC history.GEN source.NOM.PL say.PRS.3
apie *Mindaugo* *vaidmenį* *Lietuvos* *valstybės*
 about PN.GEN role.ACC.SG Lithuania.GEN state.GEN.SG
raidoje?
 development.LOC.SG
 ‘But what do the sources say about Mindaugas’ role in the formation of the Lithuanian state?’

Such uses are often concerned with messages contained in books and other media that can be ‘frozen’ or ‘activated’ when an opportunity presents itself. A particular message is then imagined as a permanent property of its author. This interpretation is also suggested by Smith (2003, 104, fn. 10) alongside an alternative explanation that compares sentences like *Here the author creates an interesting metaphor* with stage directions. This brings us to the issue of the *praesens scaenicum* which is discussed in the next section together with the *praesens historicum*.

- (32) *Platonas* ***suformuoja*** *objektyviojo*
 PN.NOM.SG PFV.form.PRS.3 objective.GEN.SG.M.DEF
idealizmo *sistemą.*
 idealism.GEN.SG system.ACC.SG
 ‘Plato creates the system of objective idealism.’

4. The perfective present in narrative texts

Although both the historical and the scenic present relate to sequences of events, they are believed to correspond to different text sorts. The historical present is used in narrative and the present of stage instructions expresses directions not dissimilar from those in cooking recipes, see Dickey (2000, 156) who follows Langacker (1991, 266), also see Wiemer (2021a,b). The data that we employed to analyse the Lithuanian scenic present might nevertheless show more similarities to a pure narrative, coming from the movie script *Purpuriniai dūmai* (“Purple Smoke”) by Marius Ivaškevičius, itself loosely based on a short story by Felix Roziner. Our data on the historical present, on the other hand, are contaminated with habitual uses as we collected them from the autobiographical text by Irena Saulutė Valaitytė-Špakauskienė *Manėme, kad plaukiame į Ameriką* (“We thought we were sailing to America”). Memoirs are a genre that creates favourable conditions for fusing the *praesens historicum* with habitual and other characterising uses of the present tense. The present tense predominates throughout the book, but some passages are written in other tenses.

We took the first 200 constructions with present tense from the movie script (p. 3–11), and 200 present-tense constructions from a ten-page excerpt of the memoirs (p. 88–98). The stage directions are exclusively written in the third person of the present tense. In the memoirs, first-person singular and plural forms are typically used but third-person forms also occur. The absolute frequencies of perfective and imperfective verbs in each of the samples are given in Tables 1 and 2, with an additional differentiation of prefixed and non-prefixed verbs.

Table 1. Frequencies of perfective and imperfective verbs in the memoirs

	PFV	IPFV	sum
PFX	88	12	100
no PFX	22	78	100
sum	110	90	200

Table 2. *Frequencies of perfective and imperfective verbs in the movie script*

	PFV	IPFV	sum
PFX	130	0	130
no PFX	17	53	70
sum	147	53	200

While the absolute frequency of perfective verbs is higher in both samples, even without calculating the exact percentages, it is clearly seen from the numbers that the share of imperfective verbs is only slightly lower in the memoirs, but perfective verbs are almost three times more frequent than imperfective ones in the movie script. This fact confirms the view that treats the *praesens scaenicum* as a separate type from *praesens historicum*, see also Wiemer (2021b). A subjective evaluation of the *praesens scaenicum* by one of the present authors as easier to analyse with regard to perfective vs imperfective uses of the verbs is in accordance with Dickey (2000, 160), who makes a similar observation. This is also what prompts us to mainly use examples from the movie script, as we believe it to represent a more condensed version of tendencies that are also found in the text of the memoirs.

Not unexpectedly, most perfective verbs have prefixes, and most imperfective verbs are those without prefixes. Exceptions involve semelfactives (*mostelti* ‘wave’) and perfective uses of verbs like *duoti* ‘give’, on the one hand, and imperfective uses of verbs where the prefix changes the lexical meaning like *apšviesti* ‘illuminate’, on the other hand. The appearance of semelfactives is important as their use in both *praesens scaenicum* and *praesens historicum* in Russian is not normally found (Maslov 2004[1964], 413–414); see also Dickey (2000, 134–135 and 159).

If our figures for perfective and imperfective uses in Table 2 are correct, then the frequency of perfectives in the Lithuanian historical present exceeds the corresponding values for ‘western’ Slavonic languages discussed in Dickey (2000, 147–148) with references to Bondarko (1959), Stevanović (1967) and Stunová (1993), thus making Lithuanian a language where the

perfective-imperfective contrast is maintained most consistently.¹³ The high concentration of perfective verbs in the historical present and the scenic present is in stark contrast to the progressive uses of their non-prefixed counterparts. Examples (33) and (34) illustrate the difference between ongoing events at the time of speech, independent of the speaker's will, and the sequence of events in a narrative, controlled by the author. The perfective is only possible in the second one.

- (33) constructed example representing a real-life dialogue

Ko jūs juokiatės?
 why 2PL.NOM laugh.PRS.2PL.RFL
 'Why are you laughing?'

- (34) *praesens scaenicum*

Danka gudriai jį nu-žvelgia, ir
 PN.NOM.SG slyly 3.ACC.SG.M PFV-look_over.PRS.3 and
*abu sutartinai nu-si-juokia.*¹⁴ (MI 5)
 both.NOM in_unison PFV-RFL-laugh.PRS.3
 'Danka slyly looks him over, and both laugh in unison.'

Nevertheless, the opposition is sometimes neutralised: see (35) from the memoirs, where the original imperfective verb *prašau* 'I ask' can be replaced with its perfective counterpart *paprašau* with no change in the meaning, as well as (36) from the movie script where the same relationship holds between the original imperfective *slepiasi* 'hides' and the perfective counterpart *pasislepia*.

- (35) *praesens historicum*

[*Pradedu verkti, atsivedu Tefkė,*]
prašau / *pa-prašau* *suskaičiuoti* *likučius*
 ask.PRS.1SG PFV-ask.PRS.1SG COUNT.INF remains.ACC.PL
ir surašyti aktą. (vš 90)
 and write.down.INF act.ACC.SG

¹³ The occurrence of perfective verbs in the *praesens scaenicum* in Czech is only acknowledged by Dickey (2000, 158) as 'frequent', which is not incompatible with our Lithuanian data. But see fresh data in Wiemer (2021b) with the ratio of perfective vs imperfective verbs in modern Czech similar to that of Lithuanian.

¹⁴ A reviewer suggests that both *nusijuokia* in (34) and *pabarbena* in (42) can have an inchoative interpretation.

‘[I start crying, bring Tefkė] and ask (them) to count the remains and draw up an act.’

(36) *praesens scaenicum*

[*Joškė skubiai įlipa į vagoną, iš kurio ką tik išlipo,*]

ir slepia-si / pa-si-slepia po
 and hide.PRS.3-RFL PFV-RFL-hide.PRS.3 under
suolais. (MI 8)

bench.INS.PL

‘[Joškė quickly boards the railway carriage from which he has just alighted] and hides under the seats.’

In the present tense, both the perfective and the imperfective verbs may refer to an event in a chain of other events. Switching to the past tense would only leave us with the perfective version, as in (37), while the imperfective in (38) would refer to a background state.

(37) constructed

[*Joškė skubiai įlipo į vagoną, iš kurio ką tik išlipo,*]

ir pa-si-slėpė po suolais.
 and PFV-RFL-hide.PST.3 under bench.INS.PL

‘[Joškė quickly boarded the railway carriage from which he had just alighted] and hid under the seats.’

(38) constructed

[*Joškė skubiai įlipo į vagoną, iš kurio ką tik išlipo,*]

ir slėpė-si po suolais,
 and hide.PST.3-RFL under bench.INS.PL

[*kol jie vaikščiojo aplink.*]

‘[Joškė quickly boarded the railway carriage from which he had just alighted] and was hiding under the seats [while they were walking around].’

Factors determining the choice between imperfective and perfective verbs are easily captured with Fleischman’s (1990, 23–24) distinction between ‘visualising’ and ‘action’ uses of historical present, although, as Fleischman herself states, it depends on the context whether visualising uses serve the purpose of backgrounding or foregrounding. Dickey’s (2000, 151–154) interpretation of the Czech data as they are analysed by Stunová (1993) is carried out in the same spirit and can be straightforwardly applied to Lithuanian.

As in Czech, perfective verbs refer to quick, momentary actions, and imperfective verbs to actions that unfold more slowly. Sometimes the duration of an action is explicitly expressed by an accompanying adverb. This kind of information might relate to the camera's movements in the movie script, but the same picture also emerges from the memoirs. See the contrast between the perfective verb in *skubiai sulipame* 'we board in a hurry'¹⁵ and the imperfective verb in *ilgai vejamės* 'we chase for a long time'.

(39) *praesens historicum*

<i>Su-si-randa</i>	<i>rusiukus,</i>	<i>katerio</i>	<i>įgulą,</i>
PFX-RFL-find.PRS.3	Russian.ACC.PL	boat.GEN.SG	crew.ACC.SG
<i>su-si-taria,</i>	<i>skubiai</i>	<i>su-lipame</i> _{PFV}	
PFX-RFL-agree.PRS.3	hurriedly	PFX-climb_together.PRS.1PL	
<i>ir</i>	<i>ilgokai</i>	<i>vejamės</i>	<i>tą</i>
and	long_time	chase.PRS.1PL.RFL	DEM.ACC.SG
<i>karavaną. (vš 97)</i>			
caravan.ACC.SG			
'He finds the Russians from the boat crew, strikes a deal (with them), we board in a hurry and chase that caravan for a long time.'			

In the movie script, the imperfective view of the situation from within directly translates into showing only a character's feet in motion and leaving the rest of the body behind the scenes.

(40) *praesens scaenicum*

<i>Kažkas</i>	<i>iš lėto</i>	<i>lipa</i>	<i>vagono</i>
someone.NOM.SG	slowly	climb.PRS.3	carriage.GEN.SG
<i>laipteliais.</i>			
step.INS.PL			
[<i>Joškė mato tik kojas.</i>] (MI 9)			
'Someone slowly climbs the steps of the railway carriage.'			
[<i>Joškė only sees his legs.</i> ']			

As one might expect, quick, momentary actions referred to by perfective verbs often correspond to foregrounded events that advance the plot. The delimitative prefix in *pa-barbena* 'knocks' turns what would otherwise be a piece of background information about the surroundings (like rain tapping on the window) into an event, signalling the arrival of a character.

¹⁵ The prefix *su-* in *su-lipame* 'we board' additionally expresses the centripetal character of the motion.

- (41) ltTenTen14
Už *lango* *lietus* ***barbena*** *į*
 behind window.GEN.SG rain.NOM.SG tap.PRS.3 in
stiklą.
 glass.ACC.SG
 ‘Outside, the rain is tapping on the glass.’
- (42) *praesens scaenicum*
Kažkas *iš* *lauko pusės* ***pa-barbena*** *į*
 someone.NOM from outside PFV-knock.PRS.3 in
langą. (MI 4)
 window.ACC.SG
 ‘Someone from the outside knocks on the window.’

But imperfective verbs are also found with reference to plot-advancing events when they are shown in graphic detail, as in (43), creating the immediacy effect analysed by Dickey (2000, 152).

- (43) *praesens scaenicum*
Joškė *nustebęs* *žvelgia* *į*
 PN.NOM.SG be.surprised.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M look.PRS.3 at
karininką, *lėtai* ***kyla*** *laikydamsi*
 officer.ACC.SG slowly rise.PRS.3 hold.CVB.NOM.SG.RFL
sėdynės *turėklų.* (MI 3)
 seat.GEN.SG armrest.GEN.PL
 ‘Joškė looks at the officer in surprise and rises slowly, holding the armrests of the seat.’

Perfective and imperfective verbs are often coordinated so that an imperfective verb follows a perfective one in a construction also known not only from Czech, but also from Russian dialects (Bondarko 2005[1958], 501–502, 476), as in (44) as well as other examples in this section. Since the two verbs refer to two events in a chain, and may be followed by a third event, as in (44), both become perfective when such sentences are given in the past tense (45).

- (44) *praesens scaenicum*
Pa-žvelgia_{PFV} *į* *buvusį* *savo* *tėvų*
 PFV-look.PRS.3 at former.ACC.SG.M RPO parent.GEN.PL
namą *priešais* *ir* *greitu* *žingsniu*
 house.ACC.SG in_front and quick.INS.SG stride.INS.SG
eina *į* *kiemą.* ***Pa-si-beldžia.*** (MI 10)
 walk.PRS.3 in yard.ACC.SG PFV-RFL-knock.PRS.3

‘He looks at the house in front of him where his parents used to live and takes quick strides into the yard. He knocks.’

(45) constructed

<i>Pa-žvelgė</i>	<i>į</i>	<i>buvusį</i>	<i>savo</i>	<i>tėvų</i>
PFV-look.PST.3	at	former.ACC.SG.M	RPO	parent.GEN.PL
<i>namą</i>	<i>priešais</i>	<i>ir</i>	<i>greitu</i>	<i>žingsniu</i>
house.ACC.SG	in_front	and	quick.INS.SG	stride.INS.SG
<i>nu-ėjo</i> _{PFV}	<i>į</i>	<i>kiemą.</i>	<i>Pa-si-beldė.</i> (MI 10)	
PFV-walk.PST.3	in	yard.ACC.SG	PFV-RFL-knock.PST.3	

‘He looked at the house in front of him where his parents used to live and walked in quick strides into the yard. He knocked.’

To sum up: perfective and imperfective verbs in the *praesens historicum* and *praesens scaenicum* retain their association with differences in the internal temporal profile of the situation. Their use, however, does not directly correspond to the use of perfective and imperfective verbs in the past tense, as imperfective verbs can replace perfective verbs to refer to plot-advancing events. Such instances of neutralisation tend to gravitate towards positions inside a chain of successive events where the adjacent perfective verbs contribute to the bounded interpretation of occasional imperfective verbs.

5. Usage patterns originating in actional differences

While in the preceding sections we have concentrated on patterns of aspectual usage that follow from the rise of ‘progressive-based’ aspect (rooted, in the case of Baltic, in the impossibility of using prefixed bounded verbs in progressive function), and that are therefore essential to discussions on aspect in general, this section will deal with a number of more or less marginal and constructionalised patterns of use of perfective presents that originate in the actional differences historically underlying the aspect opposition in Baltic. These are differences relevant to the class of accomplishment predicates: accomplishments consist of a preparatory phase involving human agency directed at a change in state, and the change of state itself. The achievement of the change of state depends not only on human volition but is influenced by external factors. This creates a distinction between a volitional imperfective and a not specifically volitional perfective (there are often implicatures to the effect that

a change of state follows from agency, or that agency will normally lead to a change in state, but they may be cancelled).

5.1. Animacy shifts

The type of use referred to here involves verbs describing some kind of social interaction involving an agent and an experiencer (argument) or observer (non-argument). A mental impact is made on the experiencer-observer as a result of the subject's agency, but a comparable mental impact may be made without such agency. This will be the case when an inanimate subject takes the place of an animate one: inanimacy excludes agency, which may block the use of the imperfective form. Compare (47) as opposed to (46):

(46) constructed

<i>Mokytojas</i>	<i>aiškina</i>	<i>teoremą.</i>
teacher.NOM.SG	explain.PRS.3	theorem.ACC.SG

'The teacher explains a theorem.'

(47) ltTenTen₁₄

<i>jei</i>	<i>antras</i>	<i>žodis</i>	<i>pa-aiškina,</i>
if	second.NOM.SG.M	word.NOM.SG	PFV-explain.PRS.3
<i>pa-tikslina</i>	<i>pirmąjį,</i>		
PFV-specify.PRS.3	first.ACC.SG.M.DEF		

[*brūkšnelis nerašomas.*]

'If the second word explains and specifies the first one, [the dash is not used.]'

It is not the case that the occurrence of an inanimate subject automatically blocks the imperfective form, because verbs normally taking animate subjects may be used metaphorically and then inherit the morphosyntactic behaviour associated with use with animate subjects. The factors ruling the distribution of aspect forms may be complex and partly lexicalised, as in the case of *slėpti* 'hide', which, with an inanimate subject, allows both aspects. The imperfective *slėpti* means 'secretly contain, betray', while *paslėpti* is 'hide from the observer's eye':

(48) ltTenTen₁₄

[*O ar kada pagalvojate*]

<i>kokius</i>	<i>asmenybės</i>	<i>bruožus</i>	<i>slepia</i>
what_kind.ACC.PL.M	personality.GEN.SG	trait.ACC.PL	hide.PRS.3

Jūsų turima rankinė?
 you.GEN.PL possess.PRS.PP.NOM.SG.F handbag.NOM.SG
 ‘[Do you sometimes pause over the question] what features of your personality your handbag hides?’

(49) ItTenTen14

[*Spintos namuose užima ypatingą vietą.*]

Jos pa-slepia visus daiktus,
 3.NOM.PL.F PFV-hide.PRS.3 all.ACC.PL.M thing.ACC.PL
kurių nereikia matyti kas dieną.
 REL.GEN.PL NEG.be_needed.PRS.3 see.INF every day.ACC.SG
 ‘[Cupboards occupy a special position in a home.] They hide all the things you don’t need to see every day.’

5.2. Irresultative uses

The volitionality distinctions between imperfective and perfective accomplishment verbs gain a particular relevance in the presence of a negation. As mentioned above, agency directed at bringing about a change of state does not always bring about this change of state because factors independent of human volition may be involved. If the change of state is actually achieved, the final stage consisting in this change of state can itself be extended into a time interval in which speech time can be included, yielding a progressive reading which is now reserved for the imperfective form; the perfective present tense is thereby effectively blocked in the case of positive polarity. In the case of negative polarity the situation is different. The failure of an incremental process to reach its expected completion can be stated for the present, without the possibility of its being reached in the future being precluded. This can be seen in (50):

(50) [*Lietuvoje yra daug miestų ir miestelių, kurie daug labiau užsikonseravę tarybinėje praeityje.*]

Tarkim, Kaunas, kuris dvidešimt
 say.IMP.1PL Kaunas.NOM REL.NOM.SG.M twenty
metų areną stato ir
 year.GEN.PL arena.ACC.SG build.PRS.3 and
ne-pa-stato.
 NEG-PFV-build.PRS.3

[There are many towns and townlets in Lithuania that are much more stuck in their Soviet past.] Like, say, Kaunas, which has been building its arena for twenty years and cannot build it to the end.¹⁶

As Anna Zaliznjak (2015, 316) points out, a perfective present like this refers to a state of non-occurrence, which is perfectly compatible with progressive semantics. Sentence (50) does not entail an epistemic claim that the arena will not be built in the end. Interestingly, the same lack of entailment holds for Russian, as can be seen from the following example. As in Russian the original perfective present has acquired a default future interpretation, we gloss the tense form of the perfective verb as non-past:

- (51) Russian
Vostočnyj kosmodrom strojat-strojat,
 eastern.ACC.SG.M spaceport.ACC.SG build.PRS.3PL-build.PRS.3PL
ne po-strojat.
 NEG PFV-build.NPST.3PL
 ‘They are building the Eastern Spaceport and cannot get it built.’¹⁷

The perfective form *postrojat* normally has future meaning, but note that (51) does not entail (52):

- (52) Russian
Vostočnyj kosmodrom ne po-strojat.
 eastern.ACC.SG.M spaceport.ACC.SG NEG PFV-build.NPST.3PL
 ‘They won’t build (to completion) the Eastern Spaceport.’

In (52) we could, in good conscience, gloss the form *po-strojat* as future. This epistemic judgement pertaining to the future would, of course, be rendered by a future rather than a perfective present in Lithuanian:

- (53) constructed
Ne-pa-statys Rytų kosmodromo.
 NEG-PFV-build.FUT.3 Eastern spaceport.GEN.SG
 ‘They won’t build (to completion) the Eastern Spaceport.’

The contrast suggests that in sentence (51), with the dynamic modal interpretation, the form *po-strojat* should indeed be interpreted as a real

¹⁶ <http://old.skrastas.lt/?d`ata=2008-08-18&rub=1065924817&id=1218814602>

¹⁷ <https://rusrand.ru/forecast/volodin-est-putin--est-rossiya-sulakshin-est-putin--net-rossii--I>

present rather than a future, as this sentence makes a claim about the present rather than the future. The present reference of forms like these is reflected in the use of the perfective present in the Lithuanian counterparts. While the present-tense functions of the corresponding Russian forms can be seen as an anomaly against the background of their default future meaning, no anomaly is involved in Lithuanian.

The irresultative use of the negated perfective present is activated by certain syntactic contexts, notably in conjunction with the non-negated imperfective present as in (50). There is also a more strongly constructionalised variety where these two forms occur in prosodically close asyndetic juncture, as in (54):

- (54) [*Kūrybingos mamos internete pamatytas idėjas pavertė realybe:*]
vaikai žaidžia ne-at-si-žaidžia.
 children.NOM.PL play.PRS.3 NEG-PFX-RFL-play.PRS.3
 '[Ideas from the internet turned into reality by creative mums]:
 children play and cannot get enough of playing.'¹⁸

This has a close parallel in Russian, and indeed we may wonder whether it is not simply a copy of the Russian constructional idiom. Cf.

- (55) *Deti igrajut ne na-igrajut-sja*
 children.NOM.PL play.PRS.3PL NEG PFX-play.3PL-RFL
vašimi igruškami,
 2PL.POSS.INS.PL toy.INS.PL
 [*cena opravdyvaet kačestvo.*]
 'The children (like your toys so much that they) can't stop playing
 with them, [the price is worth the quality.]'¹⁹

5.3. The dynamic modal construction

When an incremental change is in process, the affirmation or negation of reaching the endpoint can be viewed as an epistemic judgement about the future, which is perhaps to some extent (alongside other factors) responsible for the shift of the perfective present to future meaning in Slavonic. But,

¹⁸ <https://www.lrytas.lt/tevams/mamos/2021/07/10/news/kurybingos-mamos-internete-pamatytas-idejas-paverte-realybe-vaikai-zaidzia-neatsizaidzia-20006474/> (accessed 2021-07-10). The prefix *at-*, combined with reflexive marking, conveys the so-called saturative meaning, which can be rendered as 'get one's fill of (doing sth)'.

¹⁹ <https://am.wildberries.ru/catalog/889070/otzyvy>

as we have seen, the Lithuanian perfective present negates the completion of a process in the present: it refers to the state of non-achievement of a change of state. The reasons for this non-achievement can be construed in different ways, which is largely a matter of pragmatic inferences which can be conventionalised and constructionalised. One possible construal is that there are situational (participant-internal or participant-external) factors blocking the achievement of the change of state. This yields a dynamic modal interpretation pertaining to the present, which is rendered in other languages by a modal verb:

- (56) [*Ar pertraukė skersvėjis, ar kas—Andriui suspazmavo sprandą.*]

<i>Ne-pa-suka</i>	<i>galvos,</i>	<i>ne-pa-kelia</i>
NEG-PFV-turn.PRS.3	head.GEN.SG	NEG-PFV-lift.PRS.3
<i>rankos.</i>		
hand.GEN.SG		

‘[Whether it was a draught or something else—Andrius has a spasm in his neck.] He can neither turn his head nor lift his arm.’²⁰

Once a dynamic modal interpretation is imposed, the negative polarity requirement could, in principle, be abandoned, but the construction is nevertheless skewed towards negative polarity. Non-negated uses may involve approximate negators like *vos* ‘hardly’, as in (57), or particles indicating the upper end of a possibility scale, like *dar*, literally ‘still’:

- (57) *Maratonus* *bėgęs* *vyras,* *kaip*
 marathon.ACC.PL run.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M man.NOM.SG as
pats *sako,* *dabar* *vos* *nu-eina*
 self.NOM.SG.M say.PRS.3 now hardly PFV-go.PRS.3
15 *metrų.*

15 metre.GEN.PL

‘The man, who used to run marathons, can now, as he himself says, hardly walk 15 metres.’

- (58) *Šaukštą* *dar* *pa-keliu,* *bet* *pats*
 spoon.ACC.SG still PFV-lift.PRS.1SG but self.NOM.SG.M
maisto *ne-pa-si-gaminu.*
 food.GEN NEG-PFV-RFL-COOK.PRS.1SG

‘I can somehow lift a spoon, but I cannot cook my own food.’

²⁰ <https://www.delfi.lt/sportas/kitos-sporto-sakos/gudziaus-treneris-griebiasi-uz-galvos-nebezinome-ka-daryti.d?id=76964173>

5.4. The frustrated expectation construction

The term ‘present of frustrated expectation’ (*prezens naprasnogo ožidanija*) was coined by Andrej Zaliznjak (1990) to characterise a certain type of use of forms that are now described as perfective futures rather than perfective presents.

- (59) Russian (RNC)
 [Prošël uže mesjac posle jubileja,]
 a ja vsë nikak
 but 1SG.NOM all_the_time in_no_way
 ne na-pišu vam o nëm.
 NEG PFV-write.PRS.3SG 2PL.DAT about 3.LOC.SG.N
 ‘[It has been a month since the anniversary,] but I still cannot get myself
 to write you about it.’

In fact the introduction of the ‘present of frustrated expectation’ in Russian aspectology was predated by the observation of a similar use of the Lithuanian perfective present in Buch (1959). It is illustrated in (60):

- (60) [Po Rimo ir Nijolës išvažiavimo praëjo daug laiko,]
 o aš vis ne-pa-rašau.
 and 1SG.NOM all_the_time NEG-PFV-write.PRS.1SG
 [Buvo visokių rūpesčių.]
 ‘[A lot of time has gone by since Rimas and Nijolë left,] but I still cannot
 get myself to write [to them]. [I’ve had all kinds of things to attend to.]’
 (Vytautas Kubilius, 2006, CCL)

This construction is not one of the typical uses of perfective presents widely found across languages, like the habitual or historical perfective present. Among the South Slavonic languages at least Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian offers a parallel in the form of a perfective present introduced by *nikako da* ‘no way that’; although the usual function of *da* is that of a complementiser, we should probably interpret *nikako da* as an emphatic negation, and the whole as a simple-clause construction:²¹

- (61) U nekoj sam gužvi
 in certain.LOC.SG.F be.PRS.1SG jam.LOC.SG

²¹ We are indebted to Wayles Browne for pointing out this parallel, as well as for the example and its translation.

i *nikako* *da* *na-pišem* *po* *koju*
 and no_way that PFV-write.PRS.1SG DISTR some.ACC.SG.F
pametnu *reč.*
 sensible.ACC.SG.F word.ACC.SG
 ‘I am in some kind of *Zeitnot*, and in no way can I write three or four
 intelligent words.’

More historical research could shed more light on the relationship between types, but we would like to suggest that in order to explain the frustrated expectation use we should start out from one of the better established uses of the perfective present attested in all Baltic and Slavonic languages and explain the more restricted types as optional extensions induced by widening of the lexical input.

What suggests itself as a possible source construction is the irresultative use as illustrated in (50). The rise of an aspectual opposition between *statyti* and *pastatyti* enables the contrasting use of the progressive imperfective and the non-progressive perfective present. The negated perfective present expresses the fact that despite the actual occurrence of the run-up process the result is not being achieved in a period that can be covered by the present tense, but it does not preclude the possibility that this result will be achieved in the future. In a further extension the assumption of a run-up stage in process at speech time ceases to be a condition for the use of the perfective present and the whole building event is conceived as failing to be initiated over a long period during which its initiation is expected. Biasio (2019) views this perfective present of frustrated expectation as a pragmatic extension from the impossibilitative use, with a shift from ‘be unable’ to ‘be unwilling’. But it seems equally possible to derive both constructions from a common source, an irresultative construction that is not specific about the reason for the non-achievement of the change of state; this may then, through pragmatic inferences, be construed as inability or unwillingness.

5.5. The reproach construction

Lithuanian has a pragmatically marked construction assuming the form of a ‘why’-question (introduced by *kodėl* or *ko*) containing a negated perfective present, expressing reproach:

- (62) [*Brangusis, – tauškė ji, – už ką tu mane taip baisiai myli? Už ką?*]
 Kodėl *tuomet* *ne-nu-perki* *man*
 why then NEG-PFV-buy.PRS.2SG 1SG.DAT

klipsų? Džinsų?
 clip.GEN.PL jeans.GEN.PL
 ‘[My dear—she prattled—what do you love me for so terribly? What for?]
 And if so, why don’t you buy me a pair of clip earrings? Or a pair of
 jeans?’
 [CCLL, Jurgis Kunčinas, 1997]

The function of this construction as expressing reproach requires some comment. In English the *why don’t you* construction is known to express a suggestion (Berglund 2008). Other languages areally closer to Lithuanian also have the suggestion function, see Bondarko (1971, 110–111) for Russian. This is also the case in Polish:

- (63) *Czemu nie za-dzwonisz do tej*
 why NEG PFV-call.2SG to that.GEN.SG.F
szkoły i nie s-pytasz,
 school.GEN.SG and NEG PFV-ask.2SG
 [albo wyslij maila i dopytaj jak jest z kursami SQL].
 ‘Why don’t you call that school and ask, [or else send them a mail
 and inquire about SQL courses.]’²²

However, in Lithuanian our construction expresses reproach rather than polite suggestion. For the latter function, another construction is available, also with a ‘why’ word but with the negated past active converb instead of a present tense. It is illustrated in (64):

- (64) [*Rugsėji atgimsta įvairūs teatrai.*]
kodėl tau ne-nu-ėjus į teatrą
 why 2SG.DAT NEG-PFV-go.CVB.PST to theatre.ACC
su savo geriausia drauge?
 with RPO best.INS.SG.F friend[F].INS.SG
 ‘[In September all kinds of theatres come to life again,] why don’t
 you go to the theatre with your best friend?’²³

This construction has obviously arisen from a characteristically Lithuanian type of deliberative questions, the origin of which (as suggested by the use of a converb as main predicate form) should apparently be sought in

²² <https://www.poloniainfo.se/forum/temat.php?temat=54875>

²³ <https://www.panele.lt/lt/po-mokslu/g-18171-grizimas-i-mokslus-5-lengvi-zingsniai-kaip-greiciau-isitraukti-i-juos>

insubordination. The suggestion type in (64) and the reproach type in (62) are clearly related and they show alternative pragmatic specialisations of the ‘why’ construction that constitutes their common source. The same can be stated from a cross-linguistic point of view when we compare different *why don’t you* constructions containing the perfective present. A construction analogous to the Lithuanian one exists in Latvian, but it is not as clearly specialised in the reproach function as the Lithuanian one is. The borderline between the two functions is probably not clear-cut, and when a reaction to an undesirable situation is involved the two may actually be indistinguishable.

- (65) Latvian
- | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Kapēc</i> | <i>tu</i> | <i>ne-aiz-ej</i> | <i>uz</i> | <i>aptieku</i> |
| why | 2SG.NOM | NEG-PFV-go.PRS.2SG | to | pharmacy.ACC.SG |
| <i>un</i> | <i>ne-pa-prasi</i> | <i>kādu</i> | <i>antihistamīna</i> | |
| and | NEG-PFV-ask.PRS.2SG | some.ACC.SG | antihistamine.GEN | |
- preparātu?*
preparation.ACC.SG
‘Why don’t you go to the pharmacist’s and ask for an antihistamine preparation?’²⁴

- (66) [*Es 14 gadu vecumā pēc kurpēm šitādu ņaudēšanu uztaisīju, —*]

<i>mammu,</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>kāpēc</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>man</i>
mum.ACC	PTC	why	2SG.NOM	1SG.DAT
<i>ne-no-pērc</i>	<i>tās</i>	<i>kurpes ...</i>		
NEG-PFV-buy.PRS.2SG	these.ACC.PL.F	shoe.ACC.PL		

 ‘[At age 14 I set up such a whining because of a pair of shoes:] Mum, but why don’t you buy me these shoes?...’²⁵

Both pragmatic functions could thus be said to derive from that of *why* questions, but what should be discussed here is the use of the perfective present. We may assume that it is a constructional feature distinguishing the constructions involved from normal ‘why’ questions, which are information questions. The perfective aspect is significant because we find it in all the languages concerned. Reproach is an illocutionary effect naturally obtaining when instead of the non-volitional construal of the

²⁴ <https://forums.dieviete.lv/forums/topic/161822-/?sort=desc&pnr=3#postid-1582700>

²⁵ <http://attiecibas.jautajums.lv/1338568> (accessed 29 04 2021)

non-occurrence of an event discussed above and illustrated in the dynamic modal construction, a volitional construal is applied. The perfective verb then refers not only to the final stage and completion of a process (if it did, it would naturally be low in volitionality, as shown in pairs like (10) and (11) above), but to a holistic event including the initiation of a process. The non-occurrence of a course of action expected from a person then becomes the basis for constructional meanings like ‘suggestion’ and ‘reproach’.

5.6. Imperative uses of perfective presents

The 1st person plural of the perfective present is used in a function similar to that of the inclusive 1PL imperative, used to express an exhortation or suggestion. The present-tense form may be accompanied by the adverb *gal* ‘maybe’:

- (67) *Mielasis gal nu-einam antradienį*
 dear.NOM.SG.M.DEF maybe PFV-go.PRS.1PL Tuesday.ACC
į šokių pamoką?
 to dance.GEN.PL lesson.ACC.SG
 ‘Shall we go to the dance lesson on Tuesday, darling?’²⁶

The 1PL imperative, when accompanied by the adverb *gal* ‘maybe’, appears to be basically similar both semantically and pragmatically:

- (68) [*Tai va, sutinku, siūlausi panešti krepšį,*
teiraujuosi, gal nu-eikim šįvakar
 inquire.PRS.1SG maybe PFV-go.IMP.1PL tonight
į šokius?
 to dance.ACC.PL
 ‘[So I meet her and I offer to carry her bag for her,] and I ask:
 “Perhaps we could go dancing tonight?”’
 (Aivaras Veiknys, *Metai* 2016.3, <https://www.zurnalasmetai.lt/?p=959>)

Latvian has the same construction:

- (69) Latvian
 [*Tad, kad esi aprunājies par laika apstākļiem vai kādiem citiem niekiem, vari savam interešu objektam uzjautāt:*]

²⁶ <https://jievaiikai.lt/vaikas-moka-ir-gali-bet-nedaro-to-ka-daro-kiti-vaikai/>

“*Varbūt aiz-ējam iedzert kādu kafiju?*”
 maybe PFV-go.PRS.1PL drink.INF some.ACC.SG coffee.ACC.SG
 ‘[Then, after some talk about the weather and other trifles, you can ask
 the object of your interest:] Maybe we could go and have some coffee?’²⁷

Similar constructions seem to exist at least in some of the South Slavonic languages that have retained a perfective present that has not undergone a shift to future-tense value.²⁸

- (70) Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian
Možda po-pijemo kafu?
 maybe PFV-drink.PRS.1PL coffee.ACC.SG

Near-parallels can be found in Slavonic languages that show the shift to future tense meaning. Russian, in particular, regularly uses the 1PL form of the perfective future in the function of an inclusive 1PL imperative, as Russian does not have a special imperative form for the 1st person plural:

- (71) *Po-jdēm po-guljat’.*
 PFV-go.FUT.1PL DELIM-walk.INF
 ‘Let’s go for a walk.’

The situation in Polish, on the other hand, is similar to that of Lithuanian in that it does have a distinct form for the 1PL, but instead of this it may also use the 1PL of the perfective future to express a ‘negotiable’ suggestion:

- (72) Polish (НКЖР, Gazeta Wyborcza 1995-09-15)
[Dokąd tak pędzisz?]
Może pójdziemy razem na herbatę?
 maybe go.FUT.1PL together for tea.ACC
 ‘[Where are you hurrying to like that?] Maybe we could go and have tea together?’

While there seems to be no marked difference between the present-tense construction and that with the imperative, illustrated in (67) and (68) respectively, it is possible that the present tense is used as a strategy to avoid the directness of the imperative. But the function is quasi-imperative anyway, and the use of aspect forms seems to echo that which we observe

²⁷ http://www.atputasbazes.lv/lv/blogi/ir_viedoklis/1864_kautribas_valgu_gusta/

²⁸ We are indebted to Wayles Browne for pointing out this Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian parallel.

in the imperative. The negative construction is imperfective, as is usually the case in the imperative:

- (73) *Gal n-einam šiandien į paskaitas?*
 maybe NEG-go.PRS.1PL today to lecture.ACC.PL
Gal į barą nu-einam?
 maybe to bar.ACC.SG PFV-go.PRS.1PL
 ‘Maybe let’s not go to class today? Maybe let’s go to a bar?’²⁹

Compare the corresponding imperatival constructions:

- (74) *Nu-eik šiandien į paskaitas.*
 PFV-go.IMP.2SG today to lecture.ACC.PL
 ‘Go to class today.’
- (75) *N-eik šiandien į paskaitas.*
 NEG-go.IMP.2SG today to lecture.ACC.PL
 ‘Don’t go to class today.’

This parallelism in the distribution of aspects in the present tense and the imperative suggests that the perfective aspect in constructions like (67) is perhaps determined by the modal (directive) function of the forms in question. Imperatives belong to the domain of deontic (volition-based) modality, which operates on temporally non-anchored ‘state-of-affairs’ predications. The distribution of aspect forms in this type of predicates differs from that observed in temporal contexts (see Panov 2021). In a directive speech act, in the affirmative form, the focus is naturally on the achievement of the result rather than on the process leading up to it, hence the use of perfective forms.

6. In conclusion

In this article we have argued that Lithuanian (and, for that matter, Baltic in general) has an aspectual system comparable to, though less grammaticalised than, that of the Slavonic languages, with which it shares a process of grammaticalisation of lexical aspect classes. The Slavonic languages are, however, not homogeneous with regard to aspect, and Lithuanian (Baltic) sides with the Western Slavonic languages (in Stephen Dickey’s classification) in failing

²⁹ <http://www.anekdotai.biz/anekdotas-6954>

to broadly generalise imperfectivity beyond its durative-progressive nucleus; this manifests itself in the free use of perfective verbs in habitual-generic contexts and in the narrative present. The generalisation of imperfectives in such contexts in Eastern Slavonic can be viewed as a more advanced stage in the process of grammaticalisation, resulting in ever stronger dominance of aspect in the temporal system. It is with (most of) Southern Slavonic that Baltic shares the retention of the perfective present as a present rather than future tense. Compared to Slavonic as a whole, Baltic verbal aspect has remained closer to its lexical roots: owing to the very limited extent of secondary imperfectivisation of perfective verbs, many Baltic verbs are bi-aspectual. Still, both Baltic and Slavonic have retained a number of usage types basically harking back to the pre-grammaticalisation stage of lexical aspect: many patterns in the use of aspect forms have their origin in the opposition between imperfective accomplishment verbs characterised by agency and their perfective counterparts denoting change-of-state events. This opposition is exploited mainly with negation and manifests itself in the imperative but also in a number of constructionalised peripheral uses described in Section 5 of the article. On a general note, we can conclude that Baltic verbal aspect, through its lesser degree of grammaticalisation, can shed an important light on Slavonic verbal aspect, and on the typology of boulder-based verbal aspect in general.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACC — accusative, ADJ — adjective, CVB — converb, DAT — dative, DEF — definite, DELIM — delimitative, DEM — demonstrative, DIM — diminutive, DISTR — distributive, F — feminine, FUT — future, GEN — genitive, IMP — imperative, INF — infinitive, INS — instrumental, IPFV — imperfective, LOC — locative, M — masculine, N — neuter, NEG — negation, NOM — nominative, NPST — non-past, PA — active participle, PFV — perfective, PFX — prefix, PL — plural, PLN — place name, PN — personal name, PP — passive participle, PRS — present, PST — past, PTC — particle, REL — relative pronoun, RFL — reflexive, RPO — reflexive possessive, SG — singular, SML — semelfactive, VOC — vocative

SOURCES

LithuanianWaC_V2 = Lithuanian Web Corpus (48,650,918 words), at sketch.engine

ItTenTen14 = Lithuanian Web Corpus (778,151,979 words), at sketch.engine

CCLL = Corpus of the Contemporary Lithuanian Language at <http://tekstynas.vdu.lt>

NKJP = Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego at <http://nkjp.pl>

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