ASPECTUAL USES OF PREFIX *be-* IN LITHUANIAN

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1. Introduction: Overview of the aspectual system of Lithuanian

➢ No grammaticalized perfective vs. imperfective opposition (Mathiassen 1996a, Kränzle 1997, Sawicki 2000, Wiemer 2002, Arkadiev to appear) — despite claims by the traditional grammarians (Dambriūnas 1959, Ambrazas (ed.) 1997: 234–237).

➢ Rather, a system of lexical **aspectual classes** coupled with productive **aspectual derivation**. Aspectual classes differ as to the interpretations of the Present and Simple Past tenses (cf. the procedure for identification of actional classes proposed in Tatevosov 2002).

Major aspectual classes in Lithuanian

Class	Present	Simple Past	Examples
Stative	state	state	*gulėti* 'lie', *laukti* 'wait'

Processual
    a. atelic
    b. inherently telic
    c. multiplicative
	process	process	a. *suktis* 'rotate', *kalbėti* 'talk'
			b. *rašyti* 'write', *tirpti* 'melt'
			c. *kosėti* 'cough', *moti* 'wave'

Telic	process	change of state	*atidaryti* 'open', *mirti* 'die'

Punctual
    a. without a pre-supposed process
    b. with a presup-posed process
	habitual or praesens his-toricum,
	*process
		change of state	a. *rasti* 'find', *susirgti* 'fall ill'
			
			b. *parašyti* 'write down', *ištirpti* 'melt away'

Inchoative	state	change of state, state	*patikti* 'like', *suprasti* 'under-stand'

Major aspectual derivations

➢ "Perfectivizing" prefixation: turns inherently telic processual verbs into punctual verbs denoting the natural endpoint of the process (cf. Armoškaitė 2006, inter alia):

(1) a. *Jon-as*   **raš-ė**   *laišk-ą.*
     John-NOM.SG   write-PST   letter-ACC.SG
     'John was writing a letter.'

   b. *Jon-as*   **pa-raš-ė**   *laišk-ą.*
     John-NOM.SG   PRV-write-PST   letter-ACC.SG
     'John wrote a letter.'

➢ Delimitative prefixation: turns stative, atelic processual, and certain telic processual verbs into predicates denoting a bounded situation with arbitrary endpoints:

(2) a. *Jon-as*   **gyven-o**   *Vilni-uje.*
     John-NOM.SG   live-PST   Vilnius-LOC.SG
     'John lived/was living in Vilnius.'

   b. *Jon-as*   **pa-gyven-o** *du   met-us   Vilni-uje.*
     John-NOM.SG   PRV-live-PST   two   year-ACC.PL Vilnius-LOC.SG
     'John lived in Vilnius for two years.'

➢ Punctual prefixation: turns stative and processual verbs into verbs denoting entry into the state or process denoted by the base:

(3) a. *Jon-as*   ***sirg-o***   *grip-u.*
    John-NOM.SG   be.ill-PST   influenza-INS.SG
    'John was ill with influenza.'

    b. *Jon-as*   ***su-sirg-o***   *grip-u.*
    John-NOM.SG   PRV-be.ill-PST influenza-INS.SG
    'John caught influenza.'

➢ Semelfactive prefixation or suffixation: turns verbs denoting multiplicative processes (consisting of a series of identical subevents) into predicates expressing a single quantum of such a process:

(4) a. *Jon-as*   ***kosė-jo***.   b. *Jon-as*   ***su-kosė-jo***.
    John-NOM.SG   cough-PST   John-NOM.SG   PRV-cough-PST
    'John coughed <several times>.'   'John coughed <once>.'

(5) a. *Jon-as*   ***knark-ė***.   b. *Jon-as*   ***knark-telė-jo***.
    John-NOM.SG   snore-PST   John-NOM.SG   snore-SML-PST
    'John was snoring.'   'John gave a snore.'

➢ Iterative suffixation (Geniušienė 1997: 238–240): turns (almost) any verb into a (processual) predicate denoting an indefinite repetition of the event denoted by the base:

(6) a. *Jon-as*   ***raš-ė***   *laišk-us.*
    John-NOM.SG   write-PST   letter-ACC.PL
    'John was writing letters.' (at a particular occasion)

    b. *Jon-as*   ***raš-inė-jo***   *laišk-us.*
    John-NOM.SG   write-ITER-PST   letter-ACC.PL
    'John wrote letters from time to time.'

(7) a. *Jon-as*   ***atidar-ė***   *lang-us.*
    John-NOM.SG   open-PST   window-ACC.PL
    'John opened the windows.'

    b. *Jon-as*   ***atidar-inė-jo***   *lang-us.*
    John-NOM.SG   open-ITER-PST   window-ACC.PL
    'John was opening the windows <one after another>.'

Inflectional and periphrastic aspectual categories

➢ Habitual Past (sometimes called Frequentative, Mathiassen 1996a: 9–10; Sližienė 1995: 224; Geniušienė 1997: 230–232; Roszko & Roszko 2006):

(8) a. *Jon-as*   ***atvažiav-o***   *pas*   *tėv-us.*
    John-NOM.SG   come-PST   to   parent-ACC.PL
    'John came to his parents.'

    b. *Jon-as*   *dažnai* ***atvažiou-dav-o*** *pas* *tėv-us.*
    John-NOM.SG   often   come-HAB-PST   to   parent-ACC.PL
    'John often visited his parents.' (Geniušienė 1997: 231)

➢ Periphrastic Perfect/Resultative (Geniušienė, Nedjalkov 1988; Sližienė 1995: 224–227):

(9) a. *J-is*   ***(yra)***   *šiltai* ***apsireng-ęs***.
    3-NOM.SG.M   AUX+PRS.3 warmly dress.oneself-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
    'He has dressed himself ǁ is dressed warmly.' (Geniušienė, Nedjalkov 1988: 370)

    b. *J-is*   ***buv-o***   *šiltai* ***apsireng-ęs***.
    3-NOM.SG.M   AUX-PST warmly dress.oneself-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
    'He had dressed himself ǁ was dressed warmly.' (ibid.)

2. The "continuative" prefix *be-*: General issues

➢ A non-derivational prefix of unclear origins attaching to the left of the aspectual prefixes.

➢ A diverse range of uses, both aspectual and non-aspectual; poorly described.

➢ **Avertive**: a periphrastic construction with auxiliary *būti* and the present active participle obligatorily prefixed with *be-* (alternative names: "Continuative", Sližienė 1995: 227–228; "Thwarted Inceptive", Mathiassen 1996a: 8–9).

(10) *Aldon-a*   **buv-o be-išein-a-nt-i,**   *bet persigalvoj-o ir sustoj-o.*
     Aldona-NOM.SG   AUX-PST CNT-leave-PRS-PA-NOM.F but change.mind-PST and stop-PST
     'Aldona was about to leave, but she changed her mind and stopped.'

➢ **Continuative**: synthetic forms in combination with two other prefixes: ***te-be-*** positive, ***ne-be-*** negative (barely mentioned in grammars, cf. Schleicher 1856: 305–306; Kurschat 1976: 130; Otrębski 1965: 368–369; Mathiassen 1996b: 171–172; Chicouene, Skūpas 2003: 126; Ambrazas (ed.) 1997: 399, *nebe-* only).

(11) *Aš*   **ne-be-suprant-u,**   *k-ą*   *j-is*   *kalb-a.*
     I(NOM)   NEG-CNT-understand-PRS.1SG what-ACC he-NOM.SG.M say-PRS
     'I no more understand what he is saying.'

(12) *Kai* *aš*   *parėj-a-u, Kaz-ys*   **te-be-raš-ė**   *laišk-us.*
     when I(NOM) come-PST-1SG Kazys-NOM.SG POS-CNT-write-PST letter-ACC.PL
     'When I came home, Kazys was still writing letters.'

➢ Other uses not considered here in detail:

– "emphatic" use, mainly with non-finite predicates, cf. the following two examples from a folktale "Eglė žalčių karalienė" (Egle the Queen of Serpents):

(13) *Žiūr-i* *jauniausi-oji*   *Egl-ė —*   *j-os*   *rūb-uose*
     look-PRS youngest-NOM.SG.F.DEF Egle-NOM.SG 3-GEN.SG.F clothes-LOC.PL
     žalt-ys   **be-gul-įs.**
     grass.snake-NOM.SG   CNT-lie-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M
     'The youngest, Egle, looks, and hark! there is a grass snake in her clothes.'

(14) *...gegut-ė*   *j-iems*   *kukuo-ja netikr-ą*   *nuotak-ą*   **be-vež-a-nt** *...*
     cuckoo-NOM.SG 3-DAT.PL.M cuckoo-PRS fake-ACC.SG bride-ACC.SG CNT-carry-PRS-PA
     '... the cuckoo says (lit. cuckoos) to them that they are carrying a fake bride'.

– "dummy" use with reflexive participles: the prefix shifts the reflexive marker to the prefixal position ("reflexive displacement", see Stolz 1989), which allows to avoid the morphophonological complications arising when the reflexive marker attaches to the adjectival desinence (Ambrazas (ed.) 1997: 348):

(15)a. *juok-iąs-is*   b. **be-si**-*juok-ia-nči-o* // #*juokiančiosi*
     laugh-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M-RFL   CNT-RFL-laugh-PRS-PA-GEN.SG.M

3. The Avertive

Kuteva (2001: 78): "an action which was potentially imminent but did not ultimately get realized".

FRENCH: *failir* + V*inf*

(16) *... et ça **a failli amener** une rupture entre ma femme et moi*. (Maupassant, *Bel ami*: 15)
     '...and this has almost brought about a break-up between my wife and myself.'

Lithuanian data is not considered in Kuteva's cross-linguistic discussion, though the construction shown in (10) is a good representative of the cross-linguistic Avertive gram.

Morphosyntactic properties

➢ The auxiliary is most often in the Simple Past tense, more rarely in the Past Habitual (17), but never in the Present (18), which is consistent with the essential characteristics of Avertive (Kuteva 2001: 84): *imminence, pastness, counterfactuality*.

(17) *Kai   j-ie   atei-dav-o   mūs-ų kvies-ti,   mes   jau*
    when   3-NOM.PL.M   come-HAB-PST   we-GEN invite-INF   we(NOM)   already

    bū-dav-o-me   be-ein-ą   *iš   nam-ų.*
    AUX-HAB-PST-1PL   CNT-go-PRS.PA.NOM.PL.M   from   home-GEN.PL

    'When they would come to invite us, we would be already leaving home.' (Sližienė 1995: 228)

(18) **Jon-as   **yra**   **be-atidar-ąs***   *lang-ą.*
    John-NOM.SG AUX+PRS.3   CNT-open-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   window-ACC.SG

➢ Examples with the auxiliary in the Future or the Subjunctive, given in the grammars, are judged as obsolete by the native speakers and anyway do not convey the Avertive meaning:

(19) *Aš   **bū-si-u**   **be-mieg-ąs**,   kai atei-s-i   man-ęs guldy-ti.*
    I(NOM) AUX-FUT-1SG   CNT-sleep-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   when come-FUT-2SG   I-GEN   put.to.bed-INF

    'I'll be sleeping when you come to put me to bed.' (Ambrazas (ed.) 1997: 250)

(20) *K-o   j-is   lauk-ė   ši-o   laik-o   ne-ved-ęs,*
    what-GEN 3-NOM.SG.M   wait-PST   this-GEN.SG.M time-GEN.SG   NEG-marry-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M

    bū-tų   be-tur-įs   *šeininink-ę!*
    AUX-SBJ   CNT-have-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   housewife-ACC.SG

    'Why did he wait so long and didn't marry, he would have a housewife now!' (ibid.: 258)

➢ However, such uses can shed light on the historical origins of the Avertive, i.e. the Progressive. The latter is attested in the Western Lithuanian dialects, as well as in the older texts (see Ambrazas 1990: 180–181). Cf. (21) showing a possible semantic link between the 'focused' Progressive (Bertinetto et al. 2000: 517) and the Avertive (22):

(21) *Tawa tarn-as   **buw-a** **be-gan-ans**   aw-is   sawa*
    your   servant-NOM.SG   AUX-PST CNT-pasture-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   sheep-ACC.PL   his

    Tiew-o,   ir   ateij-a   Lęw-as.
    father-GEN.SG   and   come-PST   lion-NOM.SG

    'Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep, and a lion came...' (Bretke's 1579–1590 translation of Luther's Bible, Sam. 17: 34, cited after Ambrazas 1990: 181)

(22) situation ongoing but interrupted → situation not realized

➢ Avertive can be used in non-finite predications, such as Accusativus-cum-Participio:

(23) *Mač-ia-u   Kaz-į   **buv-us**   **be-nukrint-a-nt-į***
    see-PST-1SG   Kazys-ACC.SG AUX-PST.PA CNT-fall-PRS-PA-ACC.SG.M

    ir   atbėg-a-u   j-am   padė-ti.
    and   come.running-PST-1SG   3-DAT.SG.M   help-INF

    'I saw that Kazys had almost fallen down and came running in order to help him.'

Interaction with aspectual classes

Lithuanian Avertive is interesting in that it groups together verbs of 'opposite' actional properties: verbs denoting durative situations, on the one hand, and verbs expressing spontaneous momentary events, on the other.

Aspectual class	Interpretation of the Avertive	No. of ex.
Stative	preparatory stage	(24)
Processual, type a	preparatory stage	(25)
Processual, type b	preparatory stage	(17), (26)
Punctual, type a	preparatory stage	(23), (27)
Punctual, type b	process	(28), (29)
Telic	process	(30)

➢ Stative:

(24) *Aš*   ***buv-a-u***   ***be-klaus-a-nt-i***   *muzik-os,*
     I(NOM)   AUX-PST   CNT-listen-PRS-PA-NOM.SG.F   music-GEN.SG
     kai   *kiem-e*   *pasigird-o*   *triukšm-as.*
     when   yard-LOC.SG   be.heard-PST   noise-NOM.SG
     'I was just going to listen to music when some noise came from the yard.'

➢ Processual, inherently atelic:

(25) *Aš*   ***buv-a-u be-dirb-ąs,***   *kai*   *netikėtai*   *atvažiav-o*   *draug-as.*
     I(NOM)   AUX-PST   CNT-work-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   when   unexpectedly   arrive-PST   friend-NOM.SG
     'I was going to start working, when a friend of mine unexpectedly arrived.'

➢ Processual, inherently telic:

(26) *Aš*   ***buv-a-u***   ***be-raš-ąs***   *laišk-us,*   *kai*   *suskamb-o*   *telefon-as.*
     I(NOM)   AUX-PST   CNT-write-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   letter-ACC.PL   when   ring-PST   phone-NOM.SG
     'I was going to write letters, when the phone rang.'

➢ Punctual without a presupposed process:

(27) *– Man*   *čia patink-a, –*   *pagaliau, kai*   *jau*   ***buv-a-u***
     I(DAT)   here   like-PRS   finally   when   already   AUX-PST-1SG
     be-užmiršt-ąs   *mūs-ų*   *buvim-ą,*   *pasak-ė, – bet...*
     CNT-forget-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   we-GEN   existence-ACC.SG   say-PST   but
     'I like it here, – finally said he, when I was already on the verge of forgetting about our existence, – but...' (LKT)

➢ Punctual with a presupposed process (derived from telic processual, cf. (26)):

(28) *Aš*   ***buv-a-u***   ***be-pa-raš-ąs***   *tau*   *laišk-ą, kai*   *baig-ė-si rašal-as.*
     I(NOM)   AUX-PST-1SG   CNT-PRV-write-NOM.SG.M   you(DAT)   letter-ACC.SG   when   end-PST-RFL   ink-NOM.SG
     'I have almost finished the letter to you when the ink ran out.'

(29) *Aldon-a*   ***buv-o***   ***be-perplauk-ia-nt-i***   *Nemun-ą,*   *bet*   *nuskend-o.*
     A.-NOM.SG   AUX-PST   CNT-swim.across-PRS-PA-NOM.SG.F   Neman-ACC.SG   but   drown-PST
     'Aldona has almost swum across Neman, but drowned.'

➢ Telic:

(30) *Penkt-ą*   *valand-ą*   *Jon-as*   ***buv-o***   ***be-parein-ąs***   *namo,*
     fifth-ACC.SG   hour-ACC.SG   John-NOM.SG   AUX-PST   CNT-return-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M   home
     kai   *j-am*   *paskambin-o*   *iš*   *darb-o.*
     when   3-DAT.SG.M   call-PST   from   work-GEN.SG
     'At five o'clock John has almost come home, but someone called him from the office.'

➢ Such a distribution is quite natural: Avertive denotes an imminent event which did not happen, and this event is either the endpoint of a telic situation (31a), or the starting point of a durative situation (31b). However, in order for a verb to yield the process interpretation of the Avertive, it must be able to denote a real endpoint, not a virtual one, as the inherently telic processual verbs (31c). The behaviour of the Avertive is a strong argument for treating the two kinds of Lithuanian processual verbs as belonging to the same aspectual class.

(31)a. Avertive b. Avertive c. Avertive
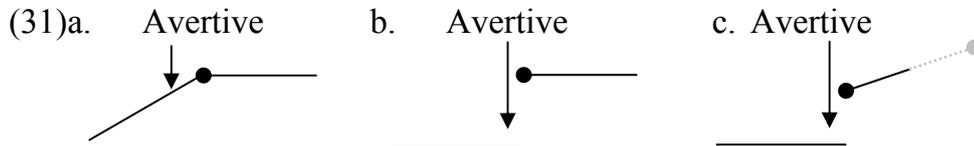
4. Continuative: *te-be-* 'still' and *ne-be-* 'no more'
Morphosyntactic properties
➢ Morphological idioms: *te-be-* and *ne-be-* are not compositionally derived from *te-* or *ne-* + *be-*:

(i) though widely used on its own, *te-* does not have the meaning of positive polarity in its independent uses (see Mathiassen 1996b: 171–172);
(ii) Continuative *be-* is not the same as *be-* in the Avertive: the two have very different combinatory restrictions with respect to aspectual classes of verbs (see below);
(iii) Continuative *be-* is (at least synchronically) not the same as the "emphatic" *be-* (13)–(14), because the latter does not convey a clearly identifiable aspectual meaning;
(iv) The behaviour of Positive Continuative (*te-be-*) and Negative Continuative, or Discontinuative (*ne-be-*) is not exactly parallel, and the differences between them cannot be reduced to mere difference in polarity.

➢ Limited transcategoriality: can attach not only to verbs, but also to adjectives (32), (33):
(32) *Praėj-o 40 met-ų, Brigitte Bardot mit-as te-be-gyv-as.*
  pass-PST year-GEN.PL myth-NOM.SG POS-CNT-alive-NOM.SG.M
  '(Though) 40 years passed, the myth of Brigitte Bardot is still alive.' (LKT)
(33) *Tačiau buv-im-as čia nusistovė-jo iš ties-ų ne-be-sald-us.*
  however BE-NML-NOM.SG here become-PST from truth-GEN.PL NEG-CNT-sweet-NOM.SG.M
  'However, staying here became indeed no more pleasant.' (LKT)

➢ Genuine prefixes, not proclitics/particles, because, like aspectual prefixes (35b), trigger "reflexive displacement" (34c-d):
(34)a. *džiaug-ė-si* b. *ap-si-džiaug-ė*
  rejoice-PST-RFL PRV-RFL-rejoice-PST
  's/he rejoiced' 's/he started rejoicing'
  c. *te-be-si-džiaug-ė* d. *ne-be-si-džiaug-ė*
  POS-CNT-RFL-rejoice-PST NEG-CNT-RFL-rejoice-PST
  's/he still rejoiced' 's/he no more rejoiced'

➢ However, there exists a particle *nebe*, which is written separate and can attach to words of any class and have phrasal scope; *tebe-* lacks a corresponding particle-like use.
(35) *Es-u Indij-oje, jau nebe Tibet-e.*
  be:PRS-1SG India-LOC.SG already no.more Tibet-LOC.SG
  'I am in India, not in Tibet any more.' (LKT)

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➢ Prefixal *tebe-* and *nebe-* freely attach to non-finite forms: infinitive (36), attributive participle (37), predicative participle in Nominativus-cum-Participio (38a), Accusativus-cum-Participio (38b), and Dativus-cum-Participio (39) constructions, converb (40), but not to deverbal nouns (41).

(36) *Nė kart-o ne-suabejo-ja-u dėl savo apsisprendim-o*
  not.even time-GEN.SG NEG-doubt-PST-1SG because RFL.POSS self.determination-GEN.SG
  ne-be-dalyvau-ti *rinkim-uose.*
  NEG-CNT-participate-INF election-LOC.PL
  'I have never cast doubt on my determination to no more participate in the elections.'
  (LKT)

(37) *... tai stipr-us sukrėtim-as dar **te-be-gyven-a-nt-iems***
  this strong-NOM.SG.M shock-NOM.SG still POS-CNT-live-PRS-PA-DAT.PL.M
  prieškari-o karinink-ams.
  pre.war-GEN.SG military.officer-DAT.PL
  '... this is a strong shock for the still alive military officers of the pre-war times.'
  (LKT)

(38)a. *Kaz-ys sak-ė **te-be-gyven-ąs** Šiauli-uose.*
  Kazys-NOM.SG say-PST POS-CNT-live-PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M Šiauliai-LOC.PL
  'Kazys said that he still lived in Šiauliai.'

 b. *Žin-a-u Kaz-į **ne-be-gyven-a-nt** Šiauli-uose.*
  know-PRS-1SG Kazys-ACC.SG NEG-CNT-live-PRS-PA Šiauliai-LOC.PL
  'I know that Kazys does not live in Šiauliai any more.'

(39) *Tok-s priežod-is buv-o paplit-ęs Rom-oje dar*
  such-NOM.SG saying-NOM.SG AUX-PST spread-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M Rome-LOC.SG still
  ***te-be-gyven-a-nt** ši-am filosof-ui patriot-ui.*
  POS-CNT-live-PRS-PA this-DAT.SG.M philosopher-DAT.SG patriot-DAT.SG
  'Such a saying has spread in Rome when this patriotic philosopher was still alive. (LKT)'

(40) *Kunigaikšči-ai ir kit-i didžiūn-ai, **ne-be-bijo-dam-i** jau*
  prince-NOM.PL and other-NOM.PL.M lord-NOM.PL NEG-CNT-be.afraid-CNV-PL.M already
  popieži-aus, lup-o bažnyči-as ir klioštori-us...
  Pope-GEN.SG strip.off-PST church-ACC.PL and monastery-ACC.PL
  'Princes and other lords, already no more afraid of the Pope, plundered the churches and monasteries...' (LKT)

(41) a. **te-be-miegoj-im-as*   b. **ne-be-dainav-im-as*
   POS-CNT-sleep-NML-NOM.SG   NEG-CNT-sing-NML-NOM.SG
  intended meanings: 'that one is still sleeping', 'that one no more sings'

➢ Interaction with periphrastic forms: both *tebe-* and *nebe-* can attach to both auxiliary and participle in Perfect (42), Resultative (43), and Counterfactual (44) constructions without any discernable difference in meaning.

(42)a. *Kai parėj-a-u, Kaz-ys **te-be-buv-o** išėj-ęs.*
  when return-PST-1SG Kazys-NOM.SG POS-CNT-AUX-PST go.out-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
  'When I came back, Kazys was still gone.'

 b. *Kai parėj-a-u, Kaz-ys **buv-o** **te-be-išėj-ęs**.*
  when return-PST-1SG Kazys-NOM.SG AUX-PST POS-CNT-go.out-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
  '=44a'

(43)a. *Kai parėj-a-u, lang-as **ne-be-buv-o** atidary-t-as.*
  when return-PST-1SG window-NOM.SG NEG-CNT-AUX-PST open-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M
  'When I came back, the window was not open any more.'

b. *Kai   parėj-a-u,   lang-as   **buv-o   ne-be-atidary-t-as**.*
  when   return-PST-1SG   window-NOM.SG   AUX-PST   NEG-CNT-open-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M
  '=45a'

(44)a. *Jeigu   Kaz-ys   pernai   **te-be-bū-tų   gyven-ęs**   Vilni-uje,*
    if   Kazys-NOM.SG   last.year   POS-CNT-AUX-SBJ   live-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M   Vilnius-LOC.SG
    mes   bū-tumė-m   susitik-ę.
    we(NOM)   AUX-SBJ-1PL   meet-PST.PA.NOM.PL.M
    'If last year Kazys had still resided in Vilnius, we would have met.'

b. *Jeigu   Kaz-ys   pernai   **bū-tų   te-be-gyven-ęs**   Vilni-uje,*
  if   Kazys-NOM.SG   last.year   AUX-SBJ   POS-CNT-live-PST.PA.NOM.SG.M   Vilnius-LOC.SG
  mes   bū-tumė-m   susitik-ę.
  we(NOM)   AUX-SBJ-1PL   meet-PST.PA.NOM.PL.M
  '=46a'

Semantic properties and combinatory restrictions

➢ Continuative forms presuppose that a situation falling into the extension of the verbal stem held before the reference time and assert that this situation is still holding (*tebe-*) or holds no more (*nebe-*). It follows from this definition that Continuative can combine only with durative (homogeneous) situations (note that *tebe-* cannot mean 'one more time').

➢ In the Simple Past, Positive Continuative can attach to Stative (45) or Processual (46) verbs, including Iterative derivatives (47), but not to Punctual (48) or Telic (49) verbs:

(45) *Kai   aš   parėj-a-u,   vaik-as   **te-be-miego-jo**.*
    when   I(NOM)   return-PST-1SG   child-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-sleep-PST
    'When I came back, the child was still sleeping.'

(46) *Kai   aš   parėj-a-u,   Kaz-ys   **te-be-raš-ė**   laišk-us.*
    when   I(NOM)   return-PST-1SG   Kazys-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-write-PST   letter-ACC.PL
    'When I came back, Kazys was still writing letters.'

(47) *Kai   aš   vėl atėj-a-u,   Kaz-ys   **te-be-atidar-inė-jo**   lang-us.*
    when   I(NOM)   again come-PST-1SG   Kazys-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-open-ITER-PST   window-ACC.PL
    'When I came again, Kazys was still opening the windows.'

(48) **Kai   aš   parėj-a-u,   Kaz-ys   **te-be-pa-raš-ė**   laišk-ą.*
    when   I(NOM)   return-PST-1SG   KAZYS-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-PRV-write-PST   letter-ACC.SG

(49) **Kai   aš   parėj-a-u,   vaik-as   **te-be-užmig-o**.*
    when   I(NOM)   return-PST-1SG   child-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-fall.asleep-PST

➢ The restriction that the "input" of the Continuative should be homogeneous is not lexical in nature. With Telic and Punctual verbs, *tebe-* is incompatible only with the Simple Past (48), (49), (50a), but its combinations with Present and Past Habitual are felicitous (50b,c), (51):

(50)a. **Kaz-ys   **te-be-atidar-ė** lang-ą   prieš   užmig-dam-as.*
    Kazys-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-open-PST   window-ACC.SG   before   fall.asleep-CNV-SG.M

b. *Kaz-ys   **te-be-atidar-o**   lang-ą   prieš   užmig-dam-as.*
  Kazys-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-open-PRS   window-ACC.SG   before   fall.asleep-CNV-SG.M
  'Kazys still opens the window before going to sleep.'

c. *Kaz-ys   **te-be-atidary-dav-o** lang-ą   prieš   užmig-dam-as.*
  Kazys-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-open-HAB-PST   window-ACC.SG   before   fall.asleep-CNV-SG.M
  'Kazys still used to open the window before going to sleep.'

(51)a. *Tėv-as*   ***te-be-parein-a***   *namo*   *dešimt-ą*   *valand-ą.*
      father-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-return-PRS   home   tenth-ACC.SG   hour-ACC.SG
      'Father still comes home at 10 o'clock.'

   b. *Pernai*   *tėv-as*   ***te-be-parei-dav-o***   *namo*   *dešimt-ą*   *valand-ą.*
      last.year   father-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-return-HAB-PST   home   tenth-ACC.SG   hour-ACC.SG
      'Last year father used to come home at 10 o'clock.'

➢ Continuative can have scope over the Habitual operator built into the Past Habitual and Present tenses. The Habitual serves as a "homogenizing" (Vikner 1994) operator feeding the Continuative.

➢ However, with homogeneous verbs Continuative + Past Habitual can have two interpretations: Continuative > Habitual (52a) and Habitual > Continuative (52b):

(52)a. *Pernai*   *tėv-as*   ***te-be-dirb-dav-o***   *nakt-imis.*
      last.year   father-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-work-HAB-PST   night-INS.PL
      'Last year, father still used to work at night.' <he used to work at night before, too>

   b. *Pernai,*   *man*   *parėj-us,*   *tėv-as*   ***te-be-dirb-dav-o.***
      last.year   I(DAT)   return-PST.PA   father-NOM.SG   POS-CNT-work-HAB-PST
      'Last year, father would still be working when I came home.'

Similar duality can be observed in the Present tense, too, cf. (53a) Continuative > Habitual vs. (53b) Habitual > Continuative:

(53)a. *Šiemet*   *tėv-as*   *dešimt-ą*   *valand-ą*   ***ne-be-dirb-a.***
      this.year   father-NOM.SG   tenth-ACC.SG   hour-ACC.SG   NEG-CNT-work-PRS
      'This year father does not work at 10 o'clock any more.'

   b. *Šit-as*   *knygyn-as*   *aštunt-ą*   *valand-ą*   ***ne-be-dirb-a.***
      this-NOM.SG.M   bookstore-NOM.SG   eighth-ACC.SG   hour-ACC.SG   NEG-CNT-work-PRS
      'This bookstore is already closed at 8 o'clock.'

➢ Is this ability of the Continuative to attach both over and beneath the Habitual akin to its morphologically overt duality with respect to periphrastic constructions (42)–(44)? Cf. similar interaction with modal verbs:

(54)a. ***Galė-jo***   *nuleis-ti*   *galv-ą*   *ir*   ***te-be-maty-ti***   *žvaigžd-es.*
      can-PST   lower-INF   head-ACC.SG   and   POS-CNT-see-INF   star-ACC.PL
      'He could lower his head and still see the stars.' (LKT)

(55)b. *Aš*   *niek-o*   ***ne-be-galė-ja-u***   *maty-ti.*
      I(NOM)   nothing-GEN.SG   NEG-CNT-can-PST-1SG   see-INF
      'I couldn't see anything any more.' (LKT)

➢ In contrast to the Positive Continuative, *nebe-* can attach to the Simple Past forms of Punctual and Telic verbs yielding the meaning 'the event did not occur another time':

(56) *Motin-a*   *paliet-ė*   *rank-a*   *j-o*   *koj-as,*   *j-is*   ***ne-be-krūp-telė-jo.***
      mother-NOM.SG   touch-PST   hand-INS.SG   3-GEN.SG.M   leg-ACC.PL   3-NOM.SG.M   NEG-CNT-start-SML-PST
      'Mother touched his legs with her hand, and this time he did not give a start.' (LKT)

(57) *Bet*   *į*   *kit-ą*   *susitikim-ą*   *j-is*   ***ne-be-atėj-o.***
      but   in   other-ACC.SG   meeting-ACC.SG   3-NOM.SG.M   NEG-CNT-come-PST
      'But he did not come to the next meeting.' (LKT)

➢ In this use the Negative Continuative shifts towards a more discourse-oriented interpretation, which has to do with the expectations of the speech-act participants rather than with aspect proper, cf. (58), (59), which do not imply that the situations denoted by the VP ('write an article', 'spoil') have occurred before the reference time.

(58) *...j-is   reng-ė-si   t-uo   klausim-u   pa-rašy-ti   straipsn-į.*
3-NOM.SG prepare-PST-RFL   that-INS.SG.M   question-INS.SG   PRV-write-INF   article-ACC.SG
*Tačiau, atrod-o,   t-o   straipsni-o   **ne-be-pa-raš-ė**,*
however   seem-PRS   that-GEN.SG article-GEN.SG NEG-CNT-write-PST
nes   po   pusmeč-io   mir-ė.
because   after half.a.year-GEN.SG die-PST
'... he was going to write an article on this topic. However, it seems that he never wrote <lit. never more wrote> this article, since in half a year he died.' (LKT)

(59) *Mes   esa-me   taip įklimp-ę,   kad kažkoks   tip-as   iš*
we(NOM) AUX.PRS-1PL   so   stick-PST.PA.NOM.PL.M that some   fellow-NOM.SG from
*laikrašči-o   niek-o   **ne-be-su-gadin-s**.*
newspaper-GEN.SG nothing-GEN.SG   NEG-CNT-PRV-spoil-FUT
'We got so bogged down, that a fellow from the newspaper won't make the things worse.' (LKT)

➢ The semantic development of *nebe-* can be hypothesized thus:

(60) a. A situation of type V no more lasts / situations of type V occur no more →
b. An expected situation of type V did not occur another time →
c. An expected situation of type V did not occur

The development in (60) involves the loss of the presuppositional component of the meaning of the Discontinuative ('a situation of type V held/occurred before the reference time') and the highlighting of the component 'a situation of type V was expected to occur' (which is merely an implicature of the regular aspectual use of the Discontinuative).

5. Conclusions

➢ Lithuanian has no systematic morphological opposition between the cross-linguistically well attested Perfective and Imperfective, but has grammaticalized several less common aspectual categories: Avertive, Continuative, and Discontinuative.

➢ From the point of view of grammaticalization, Lithuanian Avertive exemplifies a poorly documented development of the Progressive.

➢ Though all three forms employ the same formal marker (prefix *be-*), which suggests a possible common origin, they differ substantially in their morphosyntactic and semantic properties, most importantly in their ability to combine with predicates of different aspectual types.

➢ Both Continuative and Discontinuative show variable scope with respect to the Habitual and modal operators, paralleled by semantically vacuous (at least, so it appears on the current stage of the investigation) variability of attachment in periphrastic forms.

➢ Combinatory possibilities and restrictions of the "peripheral" forms employing the prefix *be-* can prove to be of no less importance for our understanding of the covert hierarchical structure of the Lithuanian verbal complex than the better known morphological devices (lexical aspectual prefixation and suffixation).

Abbreviations

ACC − accusative, AUX − auxiliary, CNT − continuative, CNV − converb, DAT − dative, DEF − definite, F − feminine, FUT − future, GEN − genitive, HAB − habitual, INF − infinitive, INS − instrumental, ITER − iterative, LOC − locative, M − masculine, NEG − negation, NML − nominalization, NOM − nominative, PA − active participle, PL − plural, POS − positive, POSS − possessive, PP − passive participle, PRS − present, PRV − preverb, PST − past, RFL − reflexive, SBJ − subjunctive, SG − singular, SML − semelfactive

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