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The Lithuanian passive perfect

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Outline of the talk

- Introduction into the topic and research questions
- Diachronic study
- Synchronic study
- Summing up and conclusions

What is a passive perfect?

A passive whose auxiliary is in the perfect form:

(1) *The second reactor at the Ignalina nuclear power station **has been closed** down after a leak of radioactive steam. (BNC)*

(2) *gamykla* *yra* *už-dary-t-a*
plant(F).NOM.SG be.PRS.3 PVB-close-PST.PP-NOM.SG.F

(a) 'The plant is closed down.'

(b) 'The plant has been closed down.'

Development of the passive in Lithuanian

The Lithuanian dynamic passive developed from object-oriented resultatives, which denote a state resulting from a prior event. Such development presumably involved a meaning shift foregrounding the prior event, so that, for instance, a present resultative passive came to be reinterpreted first as a perfect and then as a past actional passive (cf. the development path resultative>perfect>past described by Bybee & Dahl 1989, 57):

- (3) *yra* *atras-t-as*
 be.PRS.3 find-PST.PP.NOM.SG.M
 initial meaning: ‘is found’;
 new meaning: (‘has been found’ →) ‘was found’
- (4) *yra* *atras-t-as* → *buvo* *atras-t-as*
 be.PRS.3 find-PST.PP.NOM.SG.M be.PST.3 find-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M

What do the grammars say?

The English-language Lithuanian Grammar (Ambrazas, ed., 2006, 324–325) calls *esu (at)neštas* ‘I have been brought’ a present perfect.

In the Academy Grammar (Ulvydas, ed., 1970), such forms are cautiously described as ‘passive constructions with past participles’ which can both convey a stative and a dynamic meaning.

The perfect – resultative and experiential

According to Dahl & Velupillai (2013), a fully developed perfect should have at least two uses:

- i) resultative (*Someone has stolen my purse.*)
- ii) experiential (*I have seen worse things in my life.*)

Research questions

- Does Lithuanian have a passive variety of the prototypical perfect with the usual resultative/experiential function cluster and how is it expressed?
- Which temporal meanings did predicative constructions with past passive participles have in Old Lithuanian texts (from 16th to 19th century)? When did the form *yra atneštas* lose its past-tense function?

Sources

Bible translation	yra + PPP	buvo + PPP	PPP	active (incl. reflexive)	other	Total
Bretke (1590)	89	39	15	18	45	206
Chyliński (1660)	126	77	0	0	3	206
Ruhig (1727)	52	35	65	18	36	206
Giedraitis (1816)	82	60	22	28	14	206
Total	349	211	102	64	98	824

Adjectival participles

- (5) *Paɛchlowinti* *ira,* *kurie* *Dwaɛiɛchkai*
 bless.PST.PP.NOM.PL.M be.PRS.3 which.NOM.PL.M spiritually
ubagais *ira...*
 poor.INS.PL.M be.PRS.3
 Bretke NT Matthew 5,3
 ‘Happy the poor in spirit...’
- (6) *Paɟławinti* (*ira*) *ubagey* *Dwasioy...*
 bless.PST.PP.NOM.PL.M be.PRS.3 poor.NOM.PL.M spirit.LOC.SG
 Chyliński NT Matthew 5,3
 ‘Happy the poor in spirit...’
- (7) *Palaiminti* (*yra*) *vargšai* *dvasia...*
 rejoice.PST.PP.NOM.PL.M be.PRS.3 poor.NOM.PL.M spirit.INS.SG
 Burbulis NT Matthew 5,3
 ‘Happy the poor in spirit...’

yra + PPP as present tense of the resultative or the perfect of the dynamic passive

Constructions with participles denoting a state implying a prior action are relevant for the development of the passive. Such *yra* + PPP constructions are numerous in the analysed texts (236 examples) and they could be interpreted either as the present tense of the resultative or the perfect of the dynamic passive:

- (8) *Wel* *taipaieg* *ra£chita* *ira.* *Diewo* *Wie£chpaties* *tawo*
again also write.PST.PP.N be.PRS.3 god.PST.3 lord.GEN.SG poss.2SG
ne *turi* *gundinti.*
NEG must.PRS.3 tempt.INF
Bretke NT Matthew 4.7

- (9) *Para£syta* *teypag* *ira:* *Negundÿnsi* *Pona* *Diewa* *tawo.*
write.PST.PP.N also be.PRS.3 NEG.tempt.FUT.2SG lord.GEN.SG god.GEN.SG POSS.2SG
Chyliński NT Matthew 4.7

`It hath been written (is written), Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'

Development of passive perfect

According to Bybee and Dahl (1989, 57), resultative constructions may become passive perfects, which subsequently may develop into past-tense forms. This scenario implies that we must posit a passive perfect as an intermediary stage in the process of creation of the passive preterite. As the relationship between preterite and perfect is hierarchical (the existence of a perfect presupposes the existence of a preterite), this implies that the category of perfect had been previously established, e.g., in the form of an active perfect consisting of 'be' + past active participle. In the opposite case, we must assume the original resultative to have developed into an undifferentiated preterite/perfect.

yra + PPP as past tense of the resultative or the perfect of the dynamic passive

- (10) *Wießpats tykrey kieleś, ir regietas ira*
 lord.NOM.SG truly rise.PST.3.RFL and see.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M be.PRS.3
nog Simona.
 from PN.GEN.SG
 Chyliński NT Luke 24,34
- (11) *Wießpat's tikkray pri-fi-kêles, ir Simonui*
 lord.NOM.SG truly PVB-RFL-rise.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M and PN.DAT.SG
paſiródeś.
 PVB.RFL.show.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
 Ruhig NT Luke 24,34
- (12) *užtikra kéle-s Wieszpats, ir pasirole Simonuy.*
 truly rise.PST.3-RFL lord.NOM.SG and PFV.RFL.show.PST.3 PN.DAT.SG
 Giedraitis NT Luke 24,34
 'The Lord was raised indeed, and was seen (has been seen) by Simon.'

Past tense passives with *buvo*

A precondition for the ultimate loss of the past-tense meaning of *yra* + PPP was the introduction of forms with the past-tense form of the auxiliary in past-tense function. This form was not in itself new, for even at the resultative stage there had to be, alongside the present-tense form, a past-tense form. In the Old Lithuanian texts it already firmly established as a past-tense dynamic passive:

- (13) *Bet buvo prieg tos wietos, kur buvo*
 but be.PST.3 on this.GEN.SG.F place.GEN.SG where be.PST.3
nukriawotas Daras...
 crucify.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M garden.NOM.SG
 Bretke NT John 19.41

- (14) *Es war aber an der Stätte, da er*
 that be.PST but in ART place where 3SG.M
gekreuziget ward, ein Garten...
 crucify.PPP become.PST.3.SG ART garden
 Luther NT John 19.41
 ‘and there was in the place where he was crucified a garden...’

Resultative passives with *buvo*+PPP

In a small number of instances *buvo* + PPP represents the past tense of the resultative passive:

- (15) *Bet Pétras, ir kurrie fu jumi*
but PN.NOM.SG and which.NOM.PL.M with 3.SG.M.INS
buwo, Miegu buwo
be.PST.3 sleep.INS.SG be.PST.3
apimti.
possess.PST.PP.NOM.PL.M
Ruhig NT Luke 9.32
'but Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep'

Pluperfect with *buvo*+PPP

buvo + PPP could also function as a pluperfect:

(16) *Ir ataia ing Nazareth kur*

and come.PST.3 to PN where

buwa užchaugintas.

be.PST.3 rise.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M

Bretke NT Luke 4.16

‘And he came to Nazareth, where he hath been brought up.’

Passives with *m-participle*

An important step in the development of the dynamic passive was the introduction of the *m-participle* alongside the *t-participle*. It is already firmly established in Bretke's Bible translation, in agreement with Ambrazas' assumption that in West Aukštaitian (reflected in Bretke) the *m-participle* entered the passive paradigm much earlier than in other dialects of Lithuanian (Ambrazas 2001, 15).

	yra+m-part.	buvo+m-part.	m-part.	Total
Bretke	6	8	1	15
Ruhig	1	2	1	4
Total	7	10	2	19

Passives with *m-participle*

- (17) *akis* *iu* *laikamas* *buwa,* *idant* *ia* *ne*
eye.NOM.PL 3.PL.GEN hold.PRS.PP.NOM.PL.F be.PST.3 that 3SG.M.GEN NEG
pařintû.
know.IRR.3
Bretke NT Luke 24.16
- (18) *akis* *ju* *buwo* *uzturetos* *jog* *nepazyna*
eye.NOM.PL 3.PL.GEN be.PST.3 hold.PST.PPP.NOM.PL.F that NEG.know.PST.3
jo
3SG.M.GEN
Chyliński NT Luke 24.16
'their eyes were holden so as not to know him.'

Development

- (19) *Bet* *εtaghîEi* *eEt* *kaip* *numire* *ubagas,* *ir* *neEchtas*
 but happen.PPA.N be.PRS.3 how die.PST.3 poor_man.NOM.SG and
 carry.PST.PP.NOM.SG.
buwa *nog* *Angelû* *ing* *εterblî* *Abrahama.*
 be.PST.3 from angel.GEN.PL to bosom.ACC.SG PN.GEN.SG
 Bretke NT Luke 16.22
- (20) *Jr* *stojos* *jog* *numire* *ans* *elgieta,* *ir*
 and happen.PST.3.RFL that die.PST.3 this.NOM.SG.M beggar.NOM.SG and
nugabentas *ira* *nog* *Anjelu* *prieglaupstÿn*
 Abraham.
 carry.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M be.PRS.3 from angel.GEN.SG bosom.ILL PN.GEN.SG
 Chyliński NT Luke 16.22
- (21) *Bet* *nufidawe,* *jog* *Ubbag's* *numirre,* *ir*
 but happen.PST.3.RFL that poor_man.NOM.SG die.PST.3 and
Angelû *nunesttas* *tape* *i* *Prieglobftq* *Abraomo.*
 angel.GEN.PL carry.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M become.PST.3 to bosom.ACC.SG
 PN.GEN.SG
 Ruhig NT Luke 16.22
 `And it came to pass, that the poor man died, and that he was carried away by the messengers to the bosom of Abraham.'

yra + PPP in 19th century

The lack of clear instances of a past-tense value of forms with the present-tense form of the auxiliary in Ruhig's Bible might suggest that in the 18th century this function had been lost. However, this claim should be formulated cautiously as *yra* + PPP in the past-tense function reappears once again in Giedraitis' Bible:

- (25) *[O kad iszsipilde asztuonios dienos, idant apipjaustitu waykeli;]*
pramintas ira wardas jo Jezus,
call.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M be.PRS.3 name.NOM.SG 3SG.M.GEN PN.NOM.SG
kursay pramintas buwo nuog Anioło...
which.NOM.SG.M call.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M be.PST.3 from angel.GEN.SG

Giedraitis NT Luke 2.21):

‘[And when eight days were fulfilled to circumcise the child,] then was his name called (has been called) Jesus, having been so called by the Messenger...’

Modern language data

- Our aim was to investigate the range of uses that predicative past passive participles may obtain in contemporary Lithuanian in order to find out which of those uses pertain to the expression of the passive perfect, and which types of perfects may be distinguished.
- The corpus Lithuanian WaC v2 (LtWaCv2), 48 mio. words
- A random sample of 1000 examples with past passive participles was obtained and filtered manually for uses of predicative passive participles either with an auxiliary in present or past tense, or without any auxiliary. The filtered sample contained 283 examples.

What was filtered out

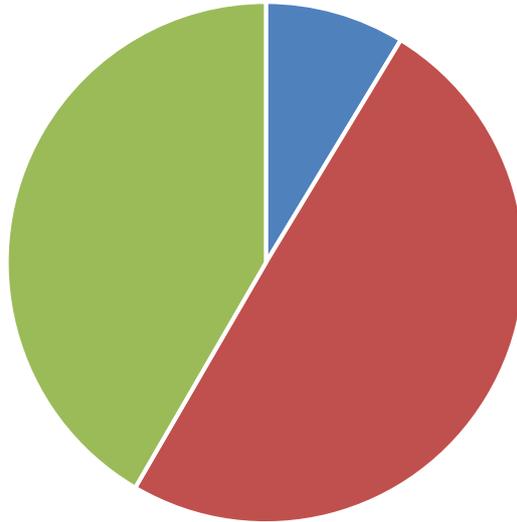
- Adjectivized participles (*užimtas* ‘busy’, *pagrįstas*, *paremtas* ‘based (on)’)

All instances susceptible of a verbal interpretation, such as *įrengtas* ‘equipped’, *padarytas* ‘made’, were though included into the sample.

- Evidentials (*Turgų būta pačių įvairiausių* ‘[Evidently,] there were different markets’)
- Examples which occurred in headlines, incomplete sentences, or which were difficult to interpret

Results

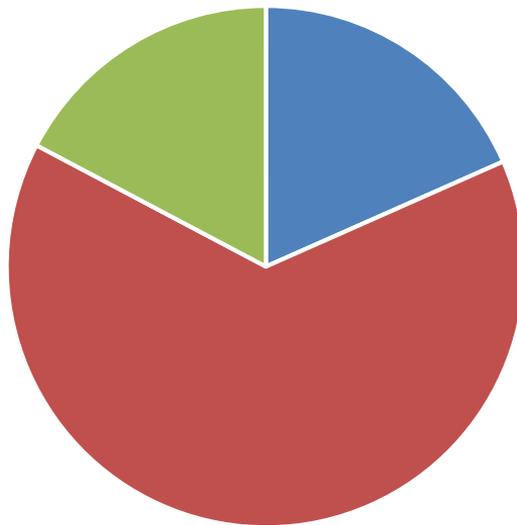
Auxiliary use with past passive participles



■ present (8,8%) ■ zero (50,2%) ■ past (42%)

Results

Occurrence of tenses/constructions



■ resultatives (18,4%) ■ preterits (64,3%) ■ perfects (17,3%)

Resultatives

- Formed of perfective telic verbs (except *qualitative resultatives* (Nau et al. 2020))
- Denote states resulting from prior events
- Are not denotationally synonymous with corresponding active clauses
- Compatible with durative time adverbials
- May be coordinated with adjectives
- Predominantly contain referential subjects

Resultatives

- (26) *Mano veidas iš-pieš-t-as*
1SG.POSS face(M).NOM.SG PVB-paint-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M
tatuiruotėmis, ausyse į-ver-t-i
tattoo.INS.PL ear.LOC.PL insert-PPP-NOM.PL.M
auskarai.
earring(M).NOM.PL
'My face **is painted** with tattoos, earrings **embedded** in
my ears.' (LtWaCv2)

Qualitative resultatives

- (27) *O Lapių bažnyčia yra*
but PLN church(F).NOM.SG be.PRS.3
staty-t-a 1620 metais
build-PST.PP-NOM.SG.F in_1620
[*ir yra dvylikta bažnyčia Lietuvoje pagal amžių.*]
‘But Lapiai church **was built** (literally: **is built**)
in 1620 [and it is the 12th church in Lithuania
according to the age.]’

Preterits of the dynamic passive

- Most numerous (64,3% of the sample)
- Denote past events, often contain definite time adverbials
- Are denotationally synonymous with corresponding active clauses
- Incompatible with durative time adverbials
- Compared to resultatives, to a larger extent include subjectless passives (15 cases out of 182)
- May convey the meanings of present perfect and pluperfect
- To a large extent permit auxiliary omission (40% of the preterits in our sample occur with a zero auxiliary)

Preterits of the dynamic passive

- (28) *Taip Konfucijus buvo pavers-t-as*
thus PN be.PST.3 make-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M
šventuoju, o jo mokslas
holy.INSTR.SG.M.DEF and 3.SG.GEN.M teaching.NOM.SG
pripažin-t-as religija.
recognize_as-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M religion.NOM.SG
‘Thus Confucius was made a saint, and his teaching
was recognized as a religion.’ (LtWaCv2)

Preterit may substitute resultative perfect

- (29) *Visiškai neseniai buvo išleis-t-a*
quite recently be.PST.3 release-PST.PP-NOM.SG.F
nauja šios knygos
new.NOM.SG.F DEM.GEN.SG.F book.GEN.SG
versija
version.NOM.SG
'A new version of this book ... **has been released quite recently ...**' (LtWaCv2)

Preterit may substitute experiential perfect

- (30) [*Negalime patikrinti, ar ši teorija teisinga, ar ne; kas žino,*]
pasaulis, kuris, manome, kad
world(M).NOM.SG REL.NOM.SG.M think.PRS.PL.3 that
yra unikalus, galbūt anksčiau buvo
be.PRS.3 unique.NOM.SG.M maybe earlier be.PST.3
perkurtas daug kartų.
redesign-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M many_times

‘[We cannot verify whether this theory is correct or not; who knows,] the world that we think is unique may **have been redesigned** many times before.’ (LtWaCv2)

Perfects

A gram which “is used to express events that took place before the temporal reference point but which have an effect on or are in some way still relevant at that point.” (Dahl & Vellupilai 2013)

➤ dynamic meaning, denote events, not states

Present tense auxiliary	Zero auxiliary	Total
9	39	48

43 resultative perfects, 5 experientials

Resultative perfects

(31) [*Tokia įmonė tiki, kad vartotojai antrą kartą pirks dėl to, kad yra patenkinami jų poreikiai,*]

<i>o</i>	<i>taip pat</i>	<i>su-formuo-t-a</i>		<i>palanki</i>		<i>visuomenės</i>
and	also	PVB-form-PST.PP-NOM.SG.F		favorable.NOM.SG.F		society.GEN.SG
<i>nuomonė</i>	<i>apie</i>	<i>įmonę</i>		<i>ir</i>	<i>jos</i>	
opinion.NOM.SG.F	about	company.ACC.SG		and	3.GEN.SG.F	
<i>siūlomą</i>	<i>prekę.</i>					
offer.PRS.PP-ACC.SG.F	product(F).ACC.SG					

‘Such a company believes that consumers will buy a second time because their needs are being met, and also a favorable public opinion **has been formed** about the company and the product it offers.’
(LtWaCv2)

(31')	<i>*o</i>	<i>taip pat</i>	<i>suformuota</i>		<i>ir</i>	<i>palanki</i>	<i>visuomenės</i>
	and	also	PRV-form-PPP-NOM.SG.F		and	favorable.NOM.SG	society.GEN.SG
	<i>nuomonė</i>						
	opinion.NOM.SG.F						

‘[Intended meaning:] and also a public opinion has been formed and favourable’

Coordination with adjectives as a test for perfect status?

Šalia keleivio buvo padė-t-a
near passenger.gen.sg be.pst.3 place-pst.pp-nom.sg.f
panešiota odinė valiza.
well-worn.nom.sg.f leather.nom.sg.f suitcase.nom.sg

(Geniušienė 2016, 91)

‘A well-worn leather suitcase **was placed** next to the passenger.’

**Šalia keleivio buvo juoda,*
near passenger be.pst.3 black.nom.sg.f
padėta odinė valiza.
place-pst.pp-nom.sg.f leather.nom.sg.f suitcase.nom.sg

‘[Intended meaning: A leather suitcase was black and placed next to the passenger.]’

Resultative perfects

The perfect interpretation may be triggered by time adverbials, such as *dabar* ‘now’, *jau* ‘already’, *nuo praėjusių metų pradžios* ‘since the beginning of last year’:

- (32) *Dabar* „Augimo ribos“ *yra išvers-t-os*
now Growth Limits be.PRS.3 translate-PST.PP-NOM.PL.F
į daugiau nei 30 kalbų ir parduo-t-a
into more than 30 language.GEN.PL and sell-PST.PP-NA
apie 10 milijonų vienetų
about 10 mio. unit.GEN.PL
‘Growth Limits **has now been translated** into more than 30 languages and **has sold** about 10 million copies’ (LtWaCv2)

Ambiguous cases

(33) *Nuomonėje turi būti nurodyta, kokia*
opinion.LOC.SG must.PRS.3 be.INF state-PPP-NA rel.INSTR.SG
apimtimi ne-įvykdy-t-os 2 straipsnio
extent.INSTR.SG NEG-fulfill-PST.PP-NOM.PL.F 2 Article.GEN.SG
nuostatos.

provision.NOM.PL

- i. ‘The opinion shall state the extent to which the provisions of Article 2 **have not been complied with.**’
- ii. ‘Det skal af udtalelsen fremgaa, i hvilket omfang bestemmelserne i artikel 2 **ikke er opfyldt.**’ (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu>)

Experiential perfects

Experiential perfect may be signalled by such time adverbials as *ne kartą* ‘repeatedly, several times’, *daug kartų* ‘many times’, *kol kas* ‘so far’:

(34) „Zepter“ produktai yra ne kartą
PN product.NOM.PL be.prs.3 repeatedly

apdovano-t-i

award-PST.PP-NOM.PL.M

[*už aukštą kokybę, puikų dizainą ir sveikatinimo bei žmonių gerovės skatinimą.*]

‘Zepter products **have been repeatedly awarded** [for high quality, excellent design and the promotion of health and human well-being.]’

(LtWaCv2)

A marginal structure—only experiential use

(35) *Anksčiau M.Lengvelis yra buvęs*
earlier PN be.PRS.3 be.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M
teis-t-as.

convict-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M

‘M.Lengvelis has earlier been convicted.’ (LtTenTen2014)

(36) *tėvas buvo buvęs*
father(M).NOM.SG be.PST.3 be.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M

ištrem-t-as *į* *Sibirą*
deport-PST.PP-NOM.SG.M to PLN.ACC

‘father had been deported to Siberia’ (LtTenTen2014)

We cannot really speak of a paradigm of perfect passive forms with compound forms of the auxiliary.

Evidentials

Interestingly , a separate search for the structure *buveş* + past passive participle (with omitted finite auxiliary) in LtWaCv2 did not yield a single instance of a perfect—the absolute majority of the examples were evidentials (mostly reportative, but also inferential).

Evidentials

- (37) [*Kadangi „Pilkainyje“ rašoma: tikt pereit miestus Naujų Prūsų,*
o *Naujieji Prūsai (Neuostpreussen) buvę įkur-t-i*
and PLN be.PPA.PL.M found-PST.PP-NOM.PL.M
tik po 1796 m., tai ir kūrinys buvęs
only after 1796 then also work.nom.sg be.PPA.NOM.SG.M
pa-rašy-t-as ne anksčiau kaip 1796–1797 m.
PVB-write-PPP-NOM.SG.M not earlier than in_1796–1797.
‘[Since it is written in Pilkainis: you shall pass through the cities of New
Prussia,] and New Prussia (Neuostpreussen) **was founded** only after 1796,
the work **must have been written** not earlier than 1796–1797.’ (LtWaCv2)

Conclusions

- Passive perfect, as a gram, exists in Lithuanian, however, it does not have dedicated means of expression and is in most cases homonymous with the stative passive. The experiential variety of the passive perfect may additionally be expressed by the present perfect form of the auxiliary *būti* followed by past passive participle of the main verb (*yra buvęs ištremtas* ‘has been deported’). However, such constructions are very rare and somewhat marginal. The same structure without a finite auxiliary (*buvęs ištremtas* ‘been deported’) is never used as a perfect—it has developed an evidential use.
- Both the resultative and the experiential variety of the perfect are attested, but the latter seems to be less frequent than the former.

Conclusions

- The passive perfect in Lithuanian is most often expressed by the bare past passive participle, which, depending on the context, may also have the meaning of present, as well as past tense of the stative passive, and also of preterit of the dynamic passive. Thus, Lithuanian passives with past passive participles are highly ambiguous. In many cases the temporal meaning of a passive clause can be disambiguated with the help of time adverbials and other contextual clues, but there are also cases where it is impossible and even meaningless to try to distinguish dynamic passives (including perfects) from stative passives in Lithuanian (cf. Geniušienė 2016, 81).

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