

The TAME domain in Baltic and its neighbours. An introduction

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This article outlines the aims, methodological approaches and research topics of the thematic volume *Studies in the TAME Domain in Baltic and Its Neighbours*. It also briefly characterises the individual contributions to the volume, highlighting their main ideas and pointing out their relevance to ongoing discussions as well as the impulses they can give to further (also cross-linguistic) research. The grammatical domains explored in the volume are tense, aspect, mood and evidentiality/mirativity.

Keywords: perfect, present tense, future tense, narrativity, mood, complementation, mirativity, Lithuanian, Latvian, Baltic, Slavonic, Fennic

1. The goals of the volume¹

The present volume deals with the grams of the TAME (Tense-Aspect-Mood-Evidentiality) domain in Baltic, with extensions into the contiguous areas of Slavonic and Fennic, continuing the basically constructional approach reflected in the earlier volumes *Minor Grams in Baltic, Slavonic and Fennic* (*Baltic Linguistics* Vol. 10) and *Studies in the Voice Domain in Baltic and Its Neighbours* (*Baltic Linguistics* Vol. 11). The assumption underlying these as well as the present volume was that interesting insights could be gained by looking at smaller fragments of grammatical structure where the categorial values often intersect—present tense with aspect and with evidentiality /mirativity, perfect with voice, aspect with modality etc. Like

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its predecessors, this volume aspires to offer new insights on grammatical semantics in Baltic and to raise new questions for future research. The domains most strongly represented are those of tense and aspect, but those of mood and evidentiality / mirativity are also represented in one article each.

2. The articles in the volume

2.1. The perfect

The tense domain is mainly represented, in this volume, by the perfect, a gram that remains in several respects elusive in spite of the large body of work that has been devoted to it. We could probably say that a hallmark of the perfect is a certain instability; Bybee and Dahl's (1986) article already captured the inherent fluidity of the perfect, but still established this gram as one of the grammatical 'foci' in the domain of tense and aspect. More recently, additional insights have been provided by research viewing the perfect in conjunction with the closely related domain of 'iamitives' (Dahl & Wälchli 2016).² In this light, the traditional definitional meanings of the canonical perfect, resultative and experiential, can be slightly reformulated. Following Laca (2010), Dahl and Wälchli distinguish two dominant profiles for the perfect, viz. the 'transition' and the 'extended time span' profiles. Their findings appear to be relevant for Baltic as well.

Danguolė Kotryna Kapkan's article "Perfect in Lithuanian: A case study based on data from Facebook comments" offers a fresh look at the Lithuanian perfect, based on a language variety that is somewhat intermediary between written and spontaneous spoken language. This choice of empirical base is particularly valuable because generalisations about the functions of the perfect have generally been based on standard varieties, while the situation in the dialects and colloquial language may differ radically from what we know from the standard language. Kapkan's research shows that the Lithuanian perfect has not moved too far away from its source, the subjective resultative (Nedjalkov & Jaxontov 1988, 9), which was in origin a copular construction. The fact that the Baltic perfect

² The term 'iamitive', created by Dahl, refers to a gram related to the perfect but "differ[ing] in that they can combine with stative predicates to express a state that holds at reference time" (Dahl & Wälchli 2016).

(like that of Fennic) is a ‘be’-perfect rather than a ‘have’-perfect might be of some significance here. The ‘transition’ meaning (change and transition to a new state) is relatively rare, and emphasis is mostly on a state or property of the subject, which readily lends itself to extension in the direction of an experiential perfect but only rarely in the direction of an object-oriented resultative perfect based on prototypically transitive verbs. Transitive verbs, to the extent that they occur, are mostly ingestives or reflexive-marked autobenefactives with affected agents. The predominant subject orientation is evident in examples like (1), where it is, of course, strengthened by the autobenefactive reflexive marker:

- (1) Lithuanian (from Kapkan)
- | | | | |
|--------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Visus</i> | <i>nuopelnus</i> | <i>yra</i> | <i>pa-si-savinęs.</i> |
| all.ACC.PL.M | merit.ACC.PL | be.PRS.3 | appropriate-RFL-PST.PA.SG.M |
- ‘All his merits are usurped.’

Thanks to its innovative approach, Kapkan’s article opens a completely new vista on the use of tenses in Baltic, and it is to be hoped that similar work will soon be undertaken for Latvian, and also for other domains of the verbal system.

Anna Daugavet and **Peter Arkadiev**’s article “The perfects in Latvian and Lithuanian: A comparative study based on questionnaire and corpus data” is broader in scope than Kapkan’s in that it deals with both Baltic languages and covers the whole system of perfect tenses, including the pluperfect and the future perfect. This broader perspective is particularly welcome with reference to the pluperfect, whose sphere of use is not wholly disjoint with that of the present perfect. With regard to the empirical basis this article is to some extent complementary to Kapkan’s, as the data were partly elicited (on the basis of the Perfect Questionnaire in Dahl, ed., 2000) and partly taken from a Lithuanian-Latvian parallel corpus reflecting, in principle, carefully edited texts. Although Daugavet and Arkadiev’s data differ markedly from Kapkan’s, the results show striking similarities as far as Lithuanian is concerned. The Lithuanian perfect has remained close to its source construction and is predominantly resultative in the sense that it characterises subjects in terms of changes undergone or experiences accumulated. In Latvian, the present perfect has further evolved in the direction of a canonical perfect with more strongly developed experiential uses as well as uses based on ‘cur-

rent relevance', i. e. characterising effects that are 'not directly derivable from the meaning of the verb' (Dahl & Hedin 2000, 392). An example of 'current relevance' would be (2):

- (2) Latvian (from Daugavet & Arkadiev)
- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <i>Es</i> | <i>neesmu</i> | <i>gulējis</i> | <i>trīs</i> |
| 1SG.NOM | NEG.be.PRS.1SG | sleep.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M | three.ACC |
| <i>naktis.</i> | | | |
| night.ACC.PL | | | |
- 'I have not slept for three nights.'

By combining two complementary sets of data, Daugavet and Arkadiev succeed in bringing to light a considerable number of hitherto unnoticed contexts for the use of the Baltic perfect. But they also point out the inherent limitations of these research data, and they conclude their article with a sizeable list of research questions for the future.

The relatively weak degree of grammaticalisation of the Lithuanian perfect is also evident from **Birutė Spraunienė** and **Paweł Brudzyński's** article "The Lithuanian passive perfect and its history", whose topic could be more accurately formulated as "is there a passive perfect in Lithuanian?" The Lithuanian passive perfect originates as an 'objective resultative' (Nedjalkov & Jaxontov 1988, 9), and it has not yet become clearly emancipated from its source construction. A considerable part of the process of formation of a passive tense paradigm on the basis of the original resultative construction can be followed in Old Lithuanian texts from the 16th to 19th century, as the authors show, but it has not run its full course even now. In addition to forms ambiguous or vague between resultative passive and perfect passive, Lithuanian has also developed a dedicated passive perfect based on a passive participle in combination with a perfect form of the auxiliary. In the function of what we could call a resultative perfect we thus find a form hard to distinguish from the present resultative passive (3), while the form with the perfect of the auxiliary has only experiential function (4):

- (3) Lithuanian (from Spraunienė & Brudzyński)
- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Kol kas</i> | <i>Lietuvoje</i> | <i>neatlikta</i> | |
| so_far | Lithuania.LOC | NEG.perform.PST.PP.NOM.SG.F | |
| <i>visuotinė</i> | <i>tokių</i> | <i>objektų</i> | <i>inventorizacija, ...</i> |
| general.NOM.SG.F | such.GEN.PL | object.GEN.PL | inventory.NOM.SG |
- 'So far, no general inventory of such objects **has been drawn up** in Lithuania, ...'

- (4) ... *yra* *buvęs* *įvestas* 274 m
 be.PRS.3 be.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M dock.PST.PP.NOM.SG.M 274 m
 ilgio tanklaivis.
 length.GEN.SG tanker.NOM.SG
 ‘... a tanker of 274 m in length overall **has been docked** before.’

These dedicated passive perfects illustrated in (4) are, however, marginal. It appears, therefore, that the passive perfect has not developed a dedicated type of marking even though the formal means to differentiate it from its source construction are available. It is hard not to see this hesitant development of the passive perfect in connection with the situation of the active perfect, which, in a similar way, has not yet cut its links with the corresponding subjective resultative.

2.2. The future and narrativity

In their article “Future tense and narrativity” **Nicole Nau** and **Birutė Spraunienė** pose the question of whether a narrative future can be singled out in Baltic. The Baltic future is an outlier in the context of neighbouring Germanic, Fennic and Slavonic, where dedicated future forms, if available, are limited in scope and future marking is not completely emancipated from the present. Baltic has dedicated futures covering most of the domain of future time reference and little beyond that. A narrative future in Baltic would therefore be qualitatively different from analogous forms in Slavonic, where narrative functions of the perfective future historically derive from perfective presents. The authors carry out a careful analysis of the various futures occurring in Lithuanian and Latvian and set apart proleptic (imaginative) and inceptive uses of futures (referring to actions either intended or initiated and expected to develop further) from uses that are purely narrative in the sense that they serve as text-structuring and grounding devices. The latter could be illustrated with an example characteristic of Latvian, with the future of *atnākt* ‘come’ announcing a new episode with a new actor:

- (5) Latvian (from a folk tale, cited in Nau & Spraunienė)
Otrā *rītā* *atnāks* *velns*
 other.LOC.SG morning.LOC.SG PFX.COME.FUT.3 devil.NOM.SG
pie rijkura *un* *teiks*:
 to kiln_heater.GEN.SG and say.FUT.3
 ‘The next morning, the devil **came** to the kiln heater and **said**: [...]’

Such futures could have developed from the proleptic or inceptive use and then have been assigned a purely textual function, perhaps as a means of marking stronger foregrounding than could be achieved with the relatively neutral narrative present.

2.3. Verbal aspect

Three studies in the volume deal with problems of verbal aspect. The first is **Axel Holvoet, Anna Daugavet and Vaiva Žeimantienė**'s article "Perfective Presents in Lithuanian". As the formal means of aspectual differentiation in Baltic are derivational, the domain of verbal aspect is comprehensive, extending as it does over the whole tense system and including participles, infinitives and modally marked forms like irrealis and imperative. Analysing the functioning of verbal aspect in the various domains of the verbal system is a task for the future. The present tense is singled out in this article because of its strategic position at the intersection of tense and aspect. When the boundedness introduced by verbal prefixes leads to the inability of prefixed verbs to occur in progressive use (i. e. in situations where reference time is included in event time), they are ousted from one of the central functions of the present tense; in a subsequent process of generalisation, perfective verbs can then be ousted from all present-tense functions, which has basically occurred in part of the Slavonic languages. In Baltic, on the other hand, perfective presents still cover a wide functional domain. The 'paradox' of the perfective present has recently drawn attention in a cross-linguistic context as well, cf. de Wit (2017).

The article in this volume offers a partial portrait of the Lithuanian perfective present, taking into account both grammatical and narrative functions as well as semantically and pragmatically specialised, constructionalised uses. Apart from that, however, the article also puts the case for verbal aspect in Baltic. The question of aspect in Baltic has always been viewed in the context of Slavonic aspect, with which it is structurally related as both are based on prefixation. This has also led to Russian being used as a benchmark in evaluating the grammatical character of Baltic verbal aspect, which is misleading. In this article it is argued that Baltic and Slavonic aspect both represent what Dahl calls 'grammaticalised lexical classes', though the degree of grammaticalisation is decidedly lower

in Baltic. In Lithuanian, we can still, in many respects, see the process of grammaticalisation going on. Motion verbs with bounding prefixes are by default perfective, but can still be coerced into progressive use in the present tense, as shown in (6); but many other verbs with bounding prefixes are already barred from progressive use, as shown in (7), where the perfectivised verb would be impossible:

- (6) Lithuanian (from Holvoet, Daugavet & Žeimantienė)
- | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Jis</i> | <i>jau</i> | <i>at-eina,</i> | — | <i>parodžiau</i> |
| 3.NOM.SG.M | already | PFX-come.PRS.3 | | point.PST.1SG |
| <i>ranka</i> | <i>į</i> | <i>kitą</i> | <i>aikštės</i> | <i>pusę.</i> |
| hand.INS.SG | at | other.ACC.SG | square.GEN.SG | end.ACC.SG |
- “‘There he’s coming already”, I pointed with my hand at the other end of the square.’
- (7) *Šiuo metu* *organizuojame* **su-organizuojame*
right_now organise.PRS.1PL PFX-organise.PRS.1PL
akcija,
action.ACC.SG
[*kurios metu renkame drabužėlius nepasiturinčioms šeimoms.*]
‘Right now we are organising an action [consisting in collecting clothes for underprivileged families.]’

A corollary of the conclusion that Baltic does have verbal aspect, be it less grammaticalised than in Slavonic, is that further research work is needed to gain more insight into how such weakly grammaticalised aspect systems function. This entails further work on the use of aspectually marked tense forms in Baltic with the aim of establishing how aspect and tense interact in various domains. This research should, of course, extend to the converbs, whose central uses are concerned with relative location in time. And finally, a separate subdomain of this research programme comprises the atemporal verbal forms, i. e. the forms that at least in part of their uses refer to states-of-affairs without location in time: infinitives, imperatives and conditionals. A first and important step in this direction is **Vladimir Panov**’s article “Untangling the functions of aspectual distinctions in the Lithuanian imperative against the background of Slavonic.” The subject matter of this article belongs to a relatively underinvestigated domain of aspectology for reasons connected with the morphology of aspect. While in Slavonic and Baltic the derivational exponence of aspect creates an aspectual opposition extending to infinitives, imperatives etc.,

aspect, when inflectional, may be restricted to part of the verbal system, cf. the restriction of aspect to the past tense forms in Latin and Romance. Panov's exploration into aspectual usage in the Lithuanian imperative leads him to the preliminary conclusion that its usage types are basically similar to those observed in Slavonic, particularly in East Slavonic. Aspectual usage types in the imperative can be divided into those that directly follow from the semantic differences between the aspects, and secondary, discourse-oriented functions whose connection with the basic aspect functions is probably indirect and difficult to account for. The first case could be illustrated with the opposition between the prohibitive imperfective imperative and the perfective negated imperative in warnings:

- (8) Lithuanian (from Panov)

<i>Ne-gerk</i>	<i>šitų</i>	<i>sulčių!</i>
NEG-drink.IMP.2SG	this.GEN.PL	juice[PL].GEN

'Don't drink this juice!'

- (9) *Ramiau.* *Ne-iš-gerk* *visko.*
 more_quietly NEG-PFV-drink.IMP.2SG everything.GEN
 'Steady now! Don't drink up everything!'

But while such functions derive from aspectual semantics, Lithuanian aspectual usage in the imperative shows a series of non-trivial correspondences with Slavonic, especially Russian, that are not motivated by purely aspectual features but are closely related to discourse structure, e.g., the use of imperfective imperatives in situations where the type of action to be undertaken is already known to speaker and addressee:

- (10) Lithuanian (from Panov)

<i>Dabar</i>	<i>skambink</i>	<i>jai</i>
now	call.IMP.2SG	3.DAT.SG.F

'Go ahead, call her (on the phone).'

- (11) *Pa-skambink* *jai* *dabar!*
 PFV-call.IMP.2SG 3.DAT.SG.F now
 'Give her a ring (on the phone).'

As the author points out, more work is necessary on Lithuanian's sister language Latvian and on neighbouring Estonian; but the data of Baltic and the Circum-Baltic area should also be compared to those of other languages displaying aspectual distinctions in the imperative and other atemporal forms, such as Modern Greek and Georgian.

A further subdomain of aspectuality is dealt with in **Kirill Kozhanov's** article “Pluractionality in Lithuanian: a tale of two suffixes.” It presents a comparative analysis, based on data from the Lithuanian web corpus, of Lithuanian iterative verbs with the suffix *-(d)inė-* and the habitual past tense with the suffix *-dav-*. The first belong to the domain of verbal derivation while the latter belong to verbal inflection. As the author's analysis shows, the differences between the two forms are such as one would expect to occur between inflection and derivation with regard to generality, predictability of meaning etc. The basic semantic difference is that pluractionality is situation-internal in the case of *-(d)inė-* and situation-external in the case of *-dav-*. It turns out, however, that the functional domains of the two formations are not quite mutually exclusive and there is a grey zone between them. This can be seen in (12), where a habitual past is coordinated with two iteratives in *-inė-* in apparently largely similar functions:

- (12) Lithuanian (from Kozhanov)
- | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Ji</i> | <i>dirbo</i> | <i>nepavargdama</i> — | <i>papirkinėjo</i> |
| 3.NOM.SG.F | work.PST.3 | tirelessly | bribe.ITER.PST.3 |
| <i>sargybinius,</i> | <i>įsiteikdavo</i> | | <i>jiems,</i> |
| guard.ACC.PL | ingratiate_oneself.HAB.PST.3 | | 3.DAT.PL.M |
| <i>juos</i> | <i>apgaudinėjo.</i> | | |
| 3.ACC.PL.M | deceive.ITER.PST.3 | | |
- ‘She worked tirelessly—she bribed the guards, ingratiated herself with them, tricked them.’

2.4. Mood

The domain of mood is represented by one article: **Axel Holvoet, Liina Lindström, Anna Daugavet and Asta Laugalienė's** study “Irrealis in Baltic and Baltic Fennic”. The study focuses on complementation and poses the question to what extent, and in what functions, the two Baltic languages Lithuanian and Latvian and the two Baltic-Fennic languages Estonian and Finnish use irrealis as a complementising strategy (or, as the authors put it, ‘complementising mood’), i.e. as a means of marking the type of complementation involved. Lithuanian consistently uses irrealis in complements of desiderative verbs (‘want’) and verbs denoting directive acts (‘order, tell’), a strategy well known from Slavonic. Latvian does this rather inconsistently: with *lai*, the desiderative complementiser, both moods occur:

- (13) Latvian (from Holvoet, Lindström, Daugavet & Laugalienė)
Es gribu, lai tu to
 I want.PRS.1SG that you this
zini / zinātu.
 know.PRS.2SG/know.IRR
 ‘I want you to know this.’

It is possible that the difference has to do with expectations as to the realisation of the event described in the complement clause, but this is difficult to substantiate as such expectations are difficult to measure. At any rate, the way Latvian departs here from a pattern of irrealis use common to Lithuanian and Northern Slavonic (East Slavonic, Polish) is striking, so that the areal context must be taken into account. The article investigates irrealis use in four domains of clausal complementation: propositional, desiderative, apprehensional and evaluative. The picture that emerges is complex and it would be premature to formulate clear-cut conclusions, but the results for desiderative complements are striking. Finnish, with very little irrealis use, and Lithuanian, with 100% irrealis use, are at the extremes, while in Latvian and Estonian the values for realis are closer to each other. In Estonian irrealis clearly predominates, but there is evidence that this state of affairs might be recent; whereas the situation in Old Latvian still awaits research. Areal convergence involving Estonian and Latvian might have been a factor behind changes in both languages, but only a diachronic investigation could bring more clarity.

2.5. Evidentiality and related phenomena

The domain of evidentiality and mirativity is represented by **Axel Holvoet** and **Gina Kavaliūnaitė**’s article “The Lithuanian mirative present and its history”. The article deals with a construction in which the main sentential predicate is expressed by a present active participle with the prefix *be-* (whose basic function is continuative but which has many other functions besides), used without an auxiliary. It is described in the grammars as expressing surprise:

- (14) Lithuanian (from Holvoet & Kavaliūnaitė)
 [Žiūriu ir negaliu patikėt –]
ant neštuvų be-gulįs anas
 on stretcher[PL].GEN CNT-lie.PRS.NOM.SG.M that.NOM.SG.M

mano *bendrakeleivis* [...]

my travel.companion.NOM.SG

‘[I look and cannot believe my eyes]—it’s that travel companion of

mine who is lying on the stretcher [...].’ (Gasparas Aleksa, 2001, c11)

Lithuanian grammars now assign forms like (14) to the domain of evidentiality. They conform to the formal features of the Baltic evidential, which is marked by the use of participles instead of finite verb forms. But the form in (14) has been described as specifically mirative, and it also stands apart by the obligatory presence of the prefix *be-*. Old Lithuanian yields no conclusive evidence as to the origin of this construction, but the authors draw attention to two factors that might have contributed to it. One was presentative constructions with *štai* ‘behold’ in which *be-* + present active participle was originally a postnominal modifier but could have been subsequently reanalysed as main sentential predicate; the other was the use of *be-* + present active participle in progressive forms, which are known to refer to non-canonical situations when used beyond their basic progressive function. The authors’ suggestion is that the Lithuanian ‘*be-* + present active participle’ construction is an instance of a specifically mirative gram standing apart from the evidential system, with a grammaticalisation path of its own (in line with DeLancey’s 1997 view of mirativity as a distinct category). But the relationship between the two categories remains an object of controversy (cf. the discussion in Aikhenvald 2004, 195–215), and with regard to Lithuanian as well the matter deserves further research.

3. Outlook

The research results presented in this volume would not have been achieved without the growing number of corpora and other digital resources available for the Baltic languages: the internet corpora accessible through Sketch Engine, the TriMCo dialect corpus for South-Eastern Lithuanian, the Lithuanian-Latvian parallel corpus, the online resources for Old Lithuanian and Old Latvian, and many more. New research tools will also afford increasing access to non-standard language varieties, as illustrated in Kaplan’s pioneering article on the perfect in colloquial Lithuanian. In due time, research endeavours exploiting the new technological possibilities will presumably lead to the creation of comprehensive

corpus-based grammars of the Baltic languages reflecting their variation across registers. In order to enable adequate use of the linguistic data thus obtained, more theoretically and typologically informed research work on many aspects of Baltic grammar remains to be done. Hopefully the present volume, and its predecessors, will have contributed to it. If so, it will have done so as much by raising new research questions as by providing answers to older ones.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACC — accusative, CNT — continuative, DAT — dative, F — feminine, FUT — future, GEN — genitive, HAB — habitual, IMP — imperative, INS — instrumental, IRR — irrealis, ITER — iterative, LOC — locative, M — masculine, NEG — negative, NOM — nominative, PA — active participle, PFV — perfective, PFX — prefix, PL — plural, PP — passive participle, PRS — present, PST — past, RFL — reflexive, SG — singular

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