Untangling the functions of aspectual distinctions in the Lithuanian imperative against the background of Slavonic

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In general linguistics, the functions of the perfective and the imperfective aspect have been thoroughly investigated in the domain of realis, especially in the past tense. However, there are languages which exhibit this sort of contrast in other domains, for example, in the imperative. The functions of the aspectual grams in the imperative may differ significantly from those documented in the realis. In the present paper, I argue that this is the case in Lithuanian. I build on the studies of the aspectual contrast in the imperative documented for Russian and Slavonic in general. I test whether the functional contrasts found there exist in Lithuanian as well. The results of this pilot study suggest that with regard to the use of the aspectual grams in the imperative, Lithuanian converges to a large extent with the North-Eastern subgroup of Slavonic.

Keywords: imperative, aspect, Russian, Slavonic, Lithuanian

1. Introduction: aspect in the imperative in typology[1]

The goal of this paper is to present and discuss a fragment of Lithuanian grammar which has not yet attracted linguists' attention: the use of perfective and imperfective forms in the imperative. An example in which two aspectual forms are contrasted is (1):

(1) a. *Piešk*   *dramblį.*
         draw.IMP.2SG   elephant.ACC.SG

    b. *Nupiešk*   *dramblį.*
         PFX.draw.IMP.2SG   elephant.ACC.SG
         'Draw an elephant.'[2]

The contrast between (1a) and (1b) cannot be easily rendered in an English translation. The most likely interpretation is the following one. In (a), the addressee is supposed to already be aware of the content of the request, e.g. the request is being repeated. In (b), by contrast, the request is framed as completely new to the addressee. This is signaled by the use of a prefixed (b) and a non-prefixed (a) form of the verb. This particular kind of contrast is subject to inquiry in the present paper.

Before I turn to the Lithuanian system, however, I will present the typological context of the problem, which will help us untangle some seemingly enigmatic issues crucial for understanding the Lithuanian data.

In typology, the studies of the domain of aspect have been mostly concerned with the domain of realis, and the past and present tenses in particular.[3] The two most influential typological studies of aspect—Comrie (1976) and Dahl (1985), as well as the most recent handbook (Binnick 2012) do not discuss the aspectual distinctions beyond assertive speech acts and finite forms. Thus, prototypical aspectual oppositions studied in the typological literature are of the same type as in the following examples:

(2) a. *I read a book.*
    b. *I was reading a book.*

(3) Russian

    a. *Ja*   *čital*   *knigu.*[4]
         I.NOM   read.M.SG[IPFV]   book.ACC
         'I was reading a book.'

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[2] Examples with no source indication are elicited.

[3] There is no universally accepted typological definition of the realis. The use of the terms realis, assertive, declarative, factive varies significantly across the literature. For definitions, see, e.g., Elliott (2000) or Matić and Nikolaeva (2014). I do not discuss this topic in the present paper. We can rely on a working definition: realis forms indicate what the speaker considers to be a known state of affairs.

[4] The Leipzig glossing rules (https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php) are used for all the examples of the present paper except Lithuanian. For Lithuanian, the Salos glossing rules are followed (Nau & Arkadiev 2015). I mark the morpheme boundaries explicitly only in the examples in which these are crucial to understanding the text of the paper.

b. *Ja*   *pročital*   *knigu.*
  I.NOM   read.M.SG[PFV]   book.ACC
  'I read a book.'

Both the English and the Russian sentences refer to events conceived by the speaker as having actually taken place in the past. Therefore, the properties of the event structure which are highlighted by the speaker through the use of specific aspectual forms—roughly, an ongoing process (the imperfective in Russian and the progressive in English) or a completed action (the perfective)—have their foundation in physical reality. Here, the meanings of aspectual grams are particularly transparent: they define a viewpoint on the temporal structure of real events. Beyond the realis domain, it is much less clear what the ideas of completeness or incompleteness—the core aspectual values of telic events—might refer to: technically, no situation beyond the realis can be completed because it has never actually taken place. Therefore, the criteria for choice of a perfective or an imperfective verb form beyond the realis, whenever such an option is at hand, are by no means straightforward. In fact, some languages, including those with a grammaticalized binary viewpoint aspectual opposition (perfective *vs* imperfective) are able to extend this distinction beyond the realis. For example, modern Greek employs aspectual oppositions in its imperative, subjunctive, and future tense forms (Mackridge 1985, 102–124).

In this paper, I focus on aspectual contrasts in the imperative. As Aikhenvald (2010, 125) puts it, "Imperatives are widely believed to be poor in aspectual distinctions compared to other clause types (…) imperatives tend to have fewer aspectual forms and distinctions than non-imperatives." To my knowledge, there are no large-scale sample-based typological studies of the use of aspect in the imperative, and the topic is remarkably underresearched. However, a pilot study (van der Auwera, Malchukov & Schalley 2009) sheds some light on the issue. The paper focuses on the perfective *vs* imperfective opposition in the imperative. There are a few logical possibilities for the interaction between the perfective *vs* imperfective opposition and the imperative: (1) the complete lack of aspectual marking in the imperative, (2) a full distinction between the two aspectual grams, (3) obligatorily perfective imperatives, (4) obligatorily imperfective imperatives. The authors demonstrate that all four possibilities are attested across languages. Type (1) is represented by Yucatec Maya, type (2)—by Russian and other Slavonic, type (3)—by Misantla Totonac, type (4)—by

Egyptian Arabic and most of the rest of Semitic. Type (1) is also typical for Standard Average European, which can be illustrated by Italian examples:

(4) Italian
  a. *comprai*   *del*   *vino*
     buy.PST.PFV.1SG   PRT.M   wine.SG
     'I bought wine'

  b. *compravo*   *il*   *vino*
     buy.IPF.1SG   DEF.M   wine.SG
     'I was buying wine'

  c. *compra*   *il*   *vino!*
     buy.IMP.2SG   DEF.M   wine.SG
     'buy wine.'

For the imperative, only the form as in (c) is possible, which is not marked for aspect. Van der Auwera, Malchukov & Schalley (2009) stress that no claims can be made as to the typological frequency of each of the types and, to my knowledge, the state of affairs has not improved since then.

Aikhenvald (2010) touches very briefly upon the topic of interaction between the imperative and the aspect. According to her, if an aspectual opposition is present in the imperative at all, the most typical one is that between *punctual* vs *continuative*, which can be illustrated by Mbabaram (Australia):

(5) Mbabaram
  a. *nda-g*
     shoot-IMP
     'shoot!'

  b. *nda-ṛu-g*
     shoot-CNT-IMP
     'carry on shooting!' (Aikhenvald 2010, 47)

Importantly, in languages where imperfective and perfective forms in the imperative are possible, their functions may deviate significantly from those exhibited in the indicative. Such deviations and reinterpretations are particularly prominent in, although they are not restricted to, the Slavonic languages, which have been the main focus of the studies of aspectual distinctions in the imperative until now. Most existing in-depth studies of this topic are language-particular (Šatunovskij 2009; Padučeva 2010; Dickey 2020), some include the whole phylum, e.g. von Waldenfels (2012),

and Benacchio (2010; 2013) includes modern Greek beyond Slavonic for comparative purposes. Languages with 'Slavonic-style' aspectual systems such as Georgian and Ossetic, which exhibit aspectual contrasts in their imperative forms, have not been studied in this respect.[5]

In the present paper, I argue that an opposition between the perfective and the imperfective in the imperative can be postulated for Lithuanian as well. My goal is to present its preliminary characteristics, building upon the studies of the corresponding phenomenon in Slavonic languages, especially Russian. It is to be noted that this is a pilot study, which is far from being exhaustive. In Section 2, I provide an overview of the functions of the perfective and the imperfective imperatives in Russian and, more briefly, Slavonic in general. I then use the functions relevant for the Slavonic phylum-internal typology as comparative concepts and test them with Lithuanian (Section 3). In the Conclusion, I summarize the results and outline some future research prospects.

2. Russian and other Slavonic languages

In all Slavonic languages, each verb (with few exceptions) belongs to one of the two aspectual classes: the imperfective or the perfective. Aspectual forms are derived by means of lexical derivation rather than regular inflectional morphology: therefore, the aspectual value of each verbal form is an inherent lexical feature, not unlike the grammatical gender of nouns in many Indo-European or Afro-Asiatic languages. There are two main morphological techniques involved in the creation of aspectual forms. Prefixation—adding a preverb with a primary spatial function to an imperfective verb—typically results in creating a perfective form. The preverb may add an additional meaning component to the original verb or not. Conversely, adding a specific suffix to a perfective verb stem results in the creation of a new imperfective verb. This core strategy may be illustrated by the following Russian examples:

(6) a. *Ja*   *pisal*   *pis'mo.*
      1SG   write.PST.SG.M[IPFV]   letter.ACC.SG
      'I was writing a letter.'

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[5] However, for Georgian, see some observations in Tomelleri & Gäumann (2015).

b. *Ja*   ***za-pisal***   *lekciju.*
1SG   **PFX**-write.PST.SG.M[PFV]   lecture.ACC.SG
'I wrote down notes of the lecture.'

c. *Ja*   ***za-pis-yva-l***   *lekciju.*
1SG   **PFX**-write-**IPFV**-PST.SG.M[IPFV]   lecture.ACC.SG
'I was writing down notes of the lecture.'

These are only tendencies: aspectual values are not predictable from the verbal form and are to be treated as inherent lexicon-bound features of verbs. Beyond that, the South Slavonic languages, Bulgarian and Macedonian in particular, exhibit a parallel system of European-type inflectional aspect in the domain of the past, which interacts with the derivational aspect in complex ways. Unlike the past-restricted inflectional aspect, the grammaticalized derivational aspectual opposition extends to the whole paradigm of a verb (with certain nuances, which I leave out here).

Crucially, all Slavonic languages exhibit the perfective *vs* imperfective opposition in the imperative. This is a well-studied topic. Here, I present a brief summary of the account of the use of aspect in the imperative in Russian by Padučeva (2010) and its extension to the whole Slavonic genus on the basis of Benacchio (2010; 2013; 2018) and von Waldenfels (2012). The studies mentioned here clearly show that the Slavonic languages beyond Russian may be described on the basis of the same principles and oppositions, despite relatively minor differences, which mostly concern the frequency and prominence of different form types, especially in the use of the imperfective imperative. I discuss these differences in the concluding part of this section.[6]

In Russian, the unmarked imperative forms are perfective with telic verbs and imperfective with atelic verbs. The perfective imperatives of telic verbs are used to express simple commands and requests to carry out

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[6] The amount of literature on aspect in the imperative in Slavonic languages, Russian in particular, is large, and presenting an exhaustive overview of it is not my goal here. The reason for choice of these mentioned works and not others is their clear typological orientation and the establishment of functional types which may be viewed as kinds of nodes in a semantic map. Recent studies otherwise quite interesting, such as Dickey (2020) or Šatunovskij (2009), which propose cognitive accounts of the Russian aspect in the imperative, are of little use here, as they can hardly serve as sources of information for a comparative cross-linguistic study.

an action, where the addressee is supposed to be unaware of the speaker's wish in advance. A typical example is:

(7) *otkroj*   *okno!*
     open.IMP.2SG[PFV]   window.ACC.SG
     'Open the window.'

Benacchio (2018) notes that for such uses, the speaker's focus on the concluding stage of the action may be postulated: after all, what matters in practice for the speaker is to make the addressee achieve a certain result or change of the state of affairs. By contrast, the imperfective form of the imperative is the only possibility with inherently atelic verbs:

(8) *spi!*
     sleep.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
     'Sleep!'

The delimitative forms marked by the prefix *po-* are inherently perfective and compatible with both telic and atelic verbs, and they normally do not allow for suffixal imperfectivization as in (6c). The function of such forms is equal across the imperative and the rest of the forms:

(9) a. *po-spi.*
         DELIM-sleep.IMP.2SG[PFV]
         'Have a brief nap.'

     b. *ja*   *po-spal*   *paru*   *časov.*
         I   DELIM-sleep.PST.SG.M[PFV]   couple.ACC.SG   hour.GEN.PL
         'I had a nap for a couple of hours.'

The complexity and the difficulties for a descriptivist, as well as the main differences between the Slavonic languages lie, however, in the domain of the imperfective imperative of telic verbs, the 'marked' member of the opposition. Here, purely aspectual, quasi-aspectual, as well as various pragmatic functions are attested.

First, a purely aspectual function—the habitual one—is at hand:

(10) *otkryvaj*   *okno*   *každoje*
     open.IPFV.IMP.2SG   window.ACC.SG   every.ACC.SG.N
     utro!
     morning.ACC.SG
     'Open the window every morning.'

The group of functions I called pseudo-aspectual consists of several relatively close functions. The Russian imperfective lack them outside the imperative domain, but their connection with the original aspectual function—durative/progressive—is transparent.

One such function is in fact closely related to the progressive meaning of the imperfective aspect, but exhibits additional pragmatic connotations. The imperfective imperative is used in Russian and other East Slavonic (to a lesser extent—outside this group) to mark the focus on the manner of the action rather than the action itself. Benacchio (2010; 2018; 2013) calls this use 'focus on the middle phase', but Gusev (2011) argues against this view, suggesting instead that the real focus is on the very fact that the action takes place rather than on any of its phases. A typical example from Russian is:

(11) *Otkryvajte* *dver'* *medlenno!* *ved'* *ona*
open.IMP.2PL[IPFV] door.ACC.SG slowly PTC she.NOM
skripit, *i* *deti* *mogut*
creak.PRS.3SG and child.NOM.PL can.PRS.3PL
prosnut'sja.
wake_up.INF
'Open the door slowly! It creaks and the children may wake up.'
(Benacchio 2013, 176)

Beyond East Slavonic, the imperfective is rarer and often incompatible with this function.

Another pseudo-aspectual function is *the continuative*, which is, according to Aikhenvald (2010, 126), widely attested for imperfective imperatives cross-linguistically:

(12) *govorite,* *govorite!*[7]
talk.IMP.2PL[IPFV] talk.IMP.2PL[IPFV]
'Keep talking' (Padučeva 2010, 67)

The imperfective imperative exhibits the function defined as 'focus on the initial phase' (Rus. *pristup k dejstviju*, lit. 'onset of the action'). By

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[7] In this example, the continuative function of the imperfective imperative is strengthened by a specific syntactic construction—the reduplicated verb—which bears the continuative function itself.

using an imperfective form, the speaker calls on the addressee to start performing the action:[8]

(13) *govorite,*   *ja*   *vas*   *slušaju.*
      talk.IMP.2PL[IPFV]   1SG.NOM   2PL.ACC   listen.PRS.1SG
      'Please speak, I am listening.'

The next function of the imperfective imperative departs yet further from aspect. Nevertheless, it preserves a certain connection to the domain of temporal structure. The imperfective imperative may be used to form a command/request to immediately perform or start performing an action:

(14) *govorite,*   *kto*   *vy*   *takoj!*
      tell.IMP.2PL[IPFV]   who.NOM   2PL.NOM   such.NOM.SG.M
      'Tell me immediately who you are!'

The latter function may be viewed as the connecting link between the pseudo-aspectual and non-aspectual ones. An important non-aspectual meaning component characteristic of the imperfective imperative in Russian is defined by Padučeva as 'action conditioned by the circumstances'. In this group of uses, the addressee is supposed to be aware, at least to some extent, of the action s/he is supposed to carry out in the given situation. Padučeva provides a highly eloquent example. The following sentence is pronounced by a mugger on the street; it is directed to the person he is attacking:

(15) *vyverni*   *karmany!*
      turn_inside_out.IMP.2SG[PFV]   pockets.PL.ACC
      čto   *ja*   *govorju?*   *vyvoračivaj!*
      what   1SG.NOM   say.PRS.1SG   turn_inside_out.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
      'Turn your pockets inside out (PFV)! You hear me? Come on, do it (IPFV)!'
      (Padučeva 2010, 72)

In this sentence, the mugger first expresses his order using a perfective form. The victim does not obey, so the mugger repeats his order in the imperfective supposing the victim to have heard the order when issued for the first time. In the next sentence, the speaker expects the addressee to take the baby and believes that the addressee shares her expectation:

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[8] However, see, Gusev (2011), where the existence of the 'focus on the initial phase' as a separate function is argued against. The author argues that all the examples in the literature ascribed to this function may be interpreted as marking a command presented as expected by the addressee.

(16) *nu*   *beri*   *že*   *u*   *menja*   *rebënka*
      PTC   take.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   PTC   from   1SG.GEN   baby.ACC.SG
      'Come on, take the baby from me!' (Padučeva 2010, 72)

The meaning of an expected command is strengthened by two discourse particles—*nu* and *že*. Both express the function of marking the proposition as uncontroversial (Panov 2020a).

The domain of expectedness develops a relatively sophisticated system of marking illocutionary functions such as permission or politeness degrees. The permissive function of the imperfective imperative implies that the addressee is already aware of the action s/he intends to carry out:

(17) *za-xodi*
      PFX-come_in.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
      'Come in [after knocking at the door]'.

Regarding the expression of politeness, the situation in Russian, as well as in other Slavonic languages, is rather complex. It is treated in detail in Benacchio (2010; 2018). Both imperfective and perfective imperatives can function with different degrees of politeness. Building upon Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983), Benacchio (2010; 2018) argues that politeness is associated with the imperfective and the perfective indirectly. In fact, there are two strategies of expressing politeness: negative politeness and positive politeness. The former presupposes keeping an interpersonal distance with the addressee, and the latter shortens the distance. In Russian, the imperfective is associated with intimacy, whereas the perfective marks interpersonal distance (formality). Both intimacy and formality may be interpreted as polite or impolite depending on whether the addressee benefits from the action or not. For example, when it is cold outside, the speaker would use a positive politeness strategy inclining the addressee to dress warmly:

(18) *odevajtes'*   *poteplee.*
      dress.IMP.2PL[IPFV]   warmly.COMP
      'Dress up as warmly as possible.'

By contrast, a policeman is being rude by using a distance-shortening imperfective form:

(19) *dokumenty*   *pokazyvajte!*
      document.ACC.PL   show.IMP.2PL[IPFV]
      'Show your documents!'

In such a context, keeping formal distance by using the perfective form is interpreted by the addressee as less violating her/his personal boundaries, thus more polite.

Finally, the imperfective imperative is the default and dominating form in prohibitive contexts, e.g.:

(20) *ne*   *pej,*   *kozlënočkom*
      NEG   drink.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   little_goat.INS.SG
      staneš'.
      become.FUT.2SG[PFV]
      'Don't drink, otherwise you'll become a little goat.' (from a folktale)

However, a perfective prohibitive is also possible. It occurs with the specific function of warning, which is also addressed by linguists as *apprehensive* (Dobrushina 2006), whereby performing the action can be potentially harmful for the addressee. It usually occurs in a construction starting with *smotri* (lit. 'look', i.e. 'stay warned'):

(21) *smotri*   *ne*   *podskol'znis'!*
      look.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   NEG   slip.IMP.2SG[PFV]
      'Be careful, don't slip!'

Bulygina and Smelëv (1999) argue that in addition, in this type of constructions, the action is depicted as being beyond the speaker's control. This component can be prominent to a larger or smaller extent.

Summing up, the Russian imperfective imperative marks a call for a (i) habitual action, (ii) focus on the manner/process (iii) single action with a focus on the initial phase, (iv) continuation of an action, (v) immediate action, (vi) action expected by the addressee, including permission (vii). It is also used to mark commands with positive politeness shortening the social distance between speech act participants (viii) and it is the default form in prohibitive contexts (ix). By contrast, the perfective imperative is (i-a) the default form in commands and requests when the focus is on the whole action, intended to be completed. It also marks negative politeness by stressing the interpersonal distance between the speaker and the addressee (ii-a) and is used in prohibitives denoting warnings (iii-a).

Other Slavonic languages exhibit a high degree of convergence with Russian with regard to the use of perfective and imperfective imperatives. Benacchio's (2010; 2018) qualitative research as well as Waldenfels' (2012) corpus-based quantitative study have demonstrated that the main

classification contexts established for Russian are valid for the whole of the Slavonic branch. Geographically, the main split within the Slavonic corresponds to Dickey's (2000) East-West split. In the case of imperative, the East Slavonic languages, which form a clear cluster and behave in almost exactly the same way, are remarkable in their extensive use of the imperfective imperative to express positive politeness (intimacy). Slovenian, Czech and Slovak are the most divergent from Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian, exhibiting a relatively low degree of use of the imperfective imperative, whereas Polish and Bulgarian occupy an intermediate position closer to the East Slavonic cluster (von Waldenfels 2012, 150). Contexts in which the languages of the Western group do not allow imperfective forms are mostly permissives and politeness formulas such as 'Please come in', in which the East Slavonic prefers a positive (familiar) politeness strategy unacceptable in the Western group. Another context in which East Slavonic languages form a cluster and are opposed to the Western group (which converges with the non-Slavonic modern Greek in this respect) is the use of the imperfective when the focus is on the manner of the action.

It is to be kept in mind that the contexts of occurrence of the imperfective and the perfective imperative presented above do not reflect all the subtleties of their actual usage. Rather, these are substance-based functional comparative concepts (Haspelmath 2010) relevant for capturing differences between genealogically related and/or structurally close languages. In the next section, I apply the same comparative concepts to a non-Slavonic language—Lithuanian—which, however, exhibits a large extent of structural affinity with Slavonic. Previously, a similar procedure in accounting for the same domain was applied to Modern Greek (Benacchio 2013).

3. Lithuanian

I will now use the above sketch of the functioning of the perfective and imperfective imperatives in Russian and Slavonic and apply its principles to Lithuanian. My claim is that all the functional distinctions relevant to Slavonic turn out to play a role in Lithuanian as well.

Before I turn to the imperative, I must briefly present the problem of the perfective and the imperfective in Lithuanian in general. Although arguments have been expressed against accounting for Lithuanian aspect

in terms of a perfective *vs* imperfective grammatical opposition (Arkadiev 2011), both the traditional description (Ambrazas 2006) and a paper in the current issue (Holvoet, Daugavet & Žeimantienė 2021) insist on its validity. In the latter work, the authors argue that not unlike the Slavonic languages, Baltic exhibits two grammaticalized lexical aspectual classes. What is different in Baltic in comparison to Slavonic is the degree of grammaticalization (higher in Slavonic), the number of biaspectual verbs (higher in Baltic), and the productivity of secondary imperfectivization (more productive in Slavonic). In Lithuanian, the main diagnostics for perfective *vs* imperfective verbs are progressive contexts—in the present, the past, and the future. Among the telic verbs, only the imperfective ones allow for progressive readings. The following examples consider the verb 'read' in transitive constructions, which may be considered canonical telic contexts.

(22) *O   dabar   aš   skaitau   knygą.*
      and   now   I.NOM   read.PRS.1SG[IPFV]   book.SG.ACC
      'And now, I am reading a book.' (LKT)

When perfective forms are marked as present, they are interpreted as either habitual or historical present:

(23) *Tik   tą   perskaitau,   ką*
      only   that.ACC   PFX.read.PRS.1PL[PFV]   what.ACC
      būtinai   reikia.
      necessary   be_needed.PRS.3
      'I only read (entirely) what is compulsory.' (LKT)

(24) *Šios   dienos   aš   laukiau   dvidešimt*
      this.GEN.SG.F   day.GEN.SG   I.NOM   wait.PST.1SG   twenty
      metų.   Ir   po   tiek   laukimo
      years.GEN.PL   and   after   so_many   waiting.GEN.SG
      metų   aš   perskaitau   šį
      years.GEN.PL   I.NOM   PFX.read.PRS.1SG[PFV]   this.ACC.SG.M
      sakinį.
      sentence.ACC.SG
      'I had waited for this day for twenty years, and after so many years of waiting I read this sentence'. (LKT)

Unlike in the present sense, in the past (and future) tenses, the perfective forms of telic verbs only allow for the interpretation of attaining a limit:

(25) *Aš   já   perskaičiau*
      I.NOM   she.ACC.SG   PFX.read.PST.1SG[PFV]
      'I read it (a book)' / *'I was reading/finishing reading a book'/*'I read
      books regularly/repeatedly'

Therefore, in Lithuanian, unlike in Slavonic, there are no formal restrictions on the occurrence of the perfective and the imperfective within the verbal paradigm, but the use of the perfective in certain tense forms imposes restrictions on the semantic interpretation of these forms.

In the following, I will call 'imperfective' those forms which allow for a progressive reading in the simple (non-habitual) past tense, for example *piešti* 'be in the process of drawing', 'draw regularly/repeatedly'. I will call 'perfective' those forms which do not allow for progressive or habitual readings in the same tense forms, such as *nupiešti* 'draw (completely)'. The corresponding uses of the two forms can be illustrated by the following examples:

(26) *Teta,   aš   tave   nupiešiau.*
      aunt.VOC.SG   I.NOM   you.ACC.SG   PFX.draw.PST.1SG[PFV]
      'Aunt, I have drawn you.' (LKT)

(27) *Aš   ilgai   piešiau   ir   nupiešiau*
      I.NOM   long   draw.PST.1SG[IPFV]   and   PFX.draw.1SG[PFV]
      namą.
      house.ACC.SG
      'After a long process of drawing, I drew a house.' (LKT)

Importantly, this definition is also applicable to inherently atelic verbs marked with the delimitative *pa-* preverb—a particular group within the system of aspect marking in Lithuanian. These can be uncontroversially classified as perfective:

(28) *Aš   pasėdėjau   prie   židinio*
      I.NOM   PFX.sit.PST.1SG by   fireplace.GEN.SG
      valandėlę
      hour.DIM.ACC.SG
      'I sat for about an hour in front of the fireplace.'

I call 'biaspectual' those verbs which are unable to receive progressive readings in the simple past tense but are able to have them in the present tense. The most prominent group of such verbs are, no doubt, the prefixed motion verbs. Consider the example:

(29) *Kai   aš   išėjau,   pradėjo   lyti.*
     when   I.NOM   PFX.go_out.PST.1SG   begin.PST.3   rain.INF
     'When I went out, it started to rain.' / '*When I was going out, it
     started to rain.'

(30) *Aš   išeinu   iš   Ekonomikos*
     I.NOM   PFX.go_out.PRS.1SG   from   economics
     komiteto   narių.
     committee.GEN   members.GEN.PL
     'I am leaving the economics committee.' (LKT)

In order to trigger a progressive reading in the past tense, such verbs require a special periphrastic participial construction (31a), which rarely occurs in colloquial speech. Alternatively, in colloquial use, a Slavonic-style secondary imperfectivization by means of the iterative suffix *-inė-* is involved (31b), which is viewed as unacceptable in the standard language.[9]

(31) a. *Kai   aš   buvau   beišeinąs...*
       when   I.NOM   be.PST.1SG   CNT.PFX.go.PRS.PA.NOM.SG.M

     b. *Kai   aš   išeidinėjau...*
       when   I.NOM   PFX.go.ITER.PST.1SG
       'When I was going out...'

Some frequently used forms of this type are various prefixed derivations of the root *ei-* 'go, walk' such as *už-eiti* 'come over', *at-eiti* 'arrive, come', *pri-eiti* 'come close', the parallel forms of other motion verbs such as *važiuoti* 'move with a vehicle' or *bėgti* 'run', caused-motion verbs such as *padėti* 'put down', *įdėti* 'put in', *atnešti* 'bring', *išnešti* 'take away', or phase verbs *baigti* 'finish' or *pradėti* 'start'. In the present study, I largely leave biaspectual verbs out of consideration. In the imperative form of such verbs, the PFV-IPFV opposition is most often neutralized. Thus, there is only one way to say 'come in' in terms of the use of aspect:

(32) *Užeik.*
     PFX.go.IMP.2SG
     'Come in.'

By contrast, verbs exhibiting clearly identifiable aspectual pairs exhibit a PFV–IPFV opposition in the imperative as well, as seen in (1), here repeated as (33):

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[9] http://www.vlkk.lt/konsultacijos/1159-priesagos-ineti-dineti

(33) a. *Piešk   dramblį.*
      draw.IMP.2SG   elephant.ACC.SG
      'Start drawing an elephant.' [The hearer is already aware of the speaker's wish.]

    b. *Nupiešk   dramblį.*
      PFX.draw.IMP.2SG   elephant.ACC.SG
      'Draw an elephant.'

In what follows, I will focus on cases such as (33). It is important to note that the 'perfective' and the 'imperfective' defined for Lithuanian within the present study are not necessarily to be understood as language-particular structural (descriptive) categories. After all, the decision whether a certain category 'is there' or 'is not there' in a language is the arbitrary decision of a grammarian. In fact, we do not have enough evidence to ascribe a reality status (e.g. a cognitive one) to either 'comparative concepts' or 'descriptive categories' understood as in Haspelmath (2010). Van der Auwera and Sahoo (2015) argue that both are ultimately 'linguist-specific' and represent, first and foremost, convenient descriptive generalizations. Therefore, the structural status of the perfective and the imperfective within Lithuanian does not matter to us here. Here, the perfective and the imperfective are comparative concepts which apply cross-linguistically within the set of languages under investigation (and not beyond)—Slavonic and Lithuanian. The imperfective and the perfective aspects of Slavonic, albeit structurally different from those of Lithuanian, exhibit the same reading restrictions in the past tense (if one equates the Russian simple past with the Lithuanian simple past), see the Russian translations of the Lithuanian examples (26–27):

(34) *Tëtja,   ja   tebja   narisoval.*
     aunt.NOM.SG   I.NOM   you.ACC.SG   PFX.draw.PST.SG.M[PFV]
     'Aunt, I have drawn you.'

(35) *Ja   dolgo   risoval   i*
     I.NOM   long   draw.PST.SG.M[IPFV]   and
     narisoval   dom.
     PFX.draw.PST.SG.M[PFV]   house.ACC.SG
     'After a long process of drawing, I drew a house.'

I will argue that semantic restrictions on the interpretation of perfective and imperfective forms are also characteristic of the Lithuanian imperative. In the framework of this paper, I will restrict myself to a trivial task

which, however, reveals quite a lot about the nature of the aspectual opposition of the Lithuanian imperative, namely, I will check whether the specific functions established previously for Russian and Slavonic are also contrasted in Lithuanian imperative forms. I will use the Roman numbers of the functions in Slavonic listed in the conclusion to the previous section.

As in Russian and Slavonic in general (i-a), the default form of the non-prohibitive imperative of telic verbs in Lithuanian, when the context is a request or a command with the focus on the final stage of the action or, as Gusev (2011) puts it, the action as a whole, is the perfective one. This is the unmarked form:

(36) *Parašyk/*Rašyk*   *man*   *kai*
      PFX.write.IMP.2SG[PFV]/*write.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   1SG.DAT   when
      atskrisi.
      PFX.fly.FUT.2SG
      'Text me as soon as you land.'

By contrast, the prohibitive imperative (viii) is by default imperfective:

(37) *Negerk*   *šitų*   *sulčių.*
      NEG.drink.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   this.GEN.PL   juice.GEN.PL
      'Don't drink this juice.'

In the same manner as in Russian, warnings, especially those in which the action is presented as being beyond the subject's control (iii-a), allow for the use of perfective forms. Such forms are distinctively colloquial:

(38) *Ramiau.*   *Neišgerk*   *visko.*
      quietly.COMP   NEG.PFX.drink.IMP.2SG[PFV]   all.GEN
      'Steady now. Don't drink all [the glass] [immediately].' (LKT)

As in Slavonic, the imperfective forms in the positive imperative are the marked ones. Similarly, their uses may be classified as those related to the primary aspectual uses and those exhibiting only indirect connection to them. The Lithuanian imperfective imperative is used in habitual contexts (function i in Slavonic). Perfective forms are ungrammatical here:

(39) *Rašyk*   */*parašyk*   *man*   *kasdien.*
      write.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   /*PFX.write.IMP.2SG[PFV]   1SG.DAT   every_day
      'Write/text me every day.'

When the speaker's attention is on the manner of an action rather than the action itself, the imperfective form is the default one, as in type (ii) of Slavonic. This use is especially prominent in colloquial language:

(40) *Skaityk*   *garsiai.*
      read.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   aloud
      'Read aloud.' (LKT)

By contrast, a parallel perfective form (*perskaityk*) is perceived as more neutral, whereby the whole situation of reading something loudly is presented as new to the addressee.

Focus on the initial phase of the action (iii) or a call to start performing the action is also expressed by imperfective forms. In the following example, the deictic pronoun *tas* indicates that the addressee already is aware of the action s/he is expected to carry out, namely, eating the beans:

(41) *Tu*   *valgyk.*   *Valgyk*   *tas*
      you.NOM   eat.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   eat.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   this.ACC.PL.F
      pupeles!
      bean.ACC.PL
      'You eat! Eat those beans.' (LKT)

By contrast, its simple perfective counterpart is used whenever the action is framed as unexpected and important as a whole:

(42) *Viską*   *paimk*   *ir*   *suvalgyk.*
      all.ACC.SG   PFX.take.IMP.2SG[PFV]   and   PFX.eat.IMP.2SG[PFV]
      'Take everything and eat it.' (LKT)

A delimitative perfective *pa*-form of the same verb is also widely used. As in the case of the simple perfective, the action is framed as new to the hearer. The use of this form normally correlates with the use of Genitive object, which indicates a partial affectedness of the object referent:

(43) *Pavalgyk*   *sriubos!*
      PFX.eat.IMP.2SG[PFV]   soup.GEN.SG
      'Have some soup!'

The Slavonic function iv of the imperfective—a call to continue an action—is expressed in Lithuanian through the imperfective imperative as well. This function can be additionally highlighted by repeating a verb:

(44) *Rašyk,*   *rašyk.*
      write.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   write.IMP.2SG[IPFV].
      'Continue writing your article, I don't need you now.' (LKT)

The meaning of a command to perform the action immediately (v) is equally present among the functions of the imperfective imperative:

(45) *Greičiau   valgyk!*
    quickly.COMP   eat.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
    'Eat faster [right now]!' (LKT)

Again, a delimitative perfective form (*pavalgyk*) would be appropriate in the case when the meal is not yet served and is not present in front of the addressee's face.

Functions lacking direct connection to the aspectual ones are also comparable to those of Slavonic. The function of a command or request expected by the addressee under the given circumstances (vi) is clearly the domain of the imperfective imperative. Imagine two persons planning to make a phone call to a third person to discuss some important issue, but before they call her, they have to agree between themselves about their common opinion regarding the issue. Once they come to an agreement, one of them says to the other:

(46) *Dabar   skambink   jai!*
    now   call.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   she.DAT
    'Go ahead, call her (on the phone)!'

In the situation just described, both the speaker and the addressee are aware of their common intention to call the third person, therefore, an imperfective form is used. If the suggestion to call her were a new idea, the imperfective would be unacceptable, simply rude, or would be interpretable as a call for immediate action. Rather, the perfective imperative would be used:

(47) *Paskambink   jai   dabar.*
    PFX.call.IMP.2SG[PFV]   she.DAT   now
    'Why don't you call her now?'

It is important to note that in (46), both the IPFV and the PFV are acceptable, the IPFV being the preferred one. In (47), by contrast, the IPFV is ungrammatical.

Consider also a parallel example from the corpus, in which the supposed awareness of the addressee of the content of the request is stressed by the discourse-marker-like use of the verb *sakau* 'I say':

(48) *Sakau,   va,   imk   šitu*
    say.PRS.1SG   here   take.IMP.2SG   this.INS.SG.M

numeriu   *skambink.*
number.INS.SG   call.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
'Come on, call this number' (LKT)

Not surprisingly, the imperfective is used in the related permissive function (vii) as well, as in the following constructed dialogue:

(49) — *Tu*   *tą*   *duoną*   *nevalgysi*
        2SG.NOM   this.ACC.SG   bread.ACC.SG   NEG.eat.FUT.2SG

jau?
already

    — *Ne*   *ne*   *ne*   ***valgyk***   *valgyk*
        no   no   no   eat.IMP.2SG[IPFV]   eat.IMP.2SG[IPFV]

imk   *jau.*
take.IMP.2SG   already
'Will you be eating more of this bread?— No, no, feel free to take it.'

Finally, positive politeness, i.e., short interpersonal distance under the condition of the addressee benefiting from performing the action (viii) is normally marked by imperfective imperative forms. This function, however, is more difficult to observe in Lithuanian than in Slavonic. Most politeness contexts analyzed by Benacchio (2010; 2018) deal with discourse formulas such as 'come in' or 'please sit down', which contain motion verbs. The latter, however, are most often biaspectual in Lithuanian. Thus, the Lithuanian verbal form in similar contexts is often aspect-neutral:

(50) *Prašau*   *užeikite.*
     please   come_in.IMP.2PL[BIASP]
     'Please come in.'

However, the verb 'sit down' does occur in two aspectual variants—*sėsti(-s)* [BIASP] and *atsisėsti*[PFV].[10] The former form is used in the contexts of positive politeness rather than the latter. For instance, a visitor is likely to start feeling more comfortable if an official says:

(51) *Prašau*   *sėskite.*
     please   sit.IMP.2PL[BIASP]
     'Please feel free to sit down.'

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[10] For the use of the reflexive marker in perfective verbs in Lithuanian, see Panov (2020b).

By contrast, the form *atsisėskite*[PFV] sounds like an order, and the visitor is likely to become worried: by using it, the official stresses her/his power position. The contrast between *sėskite* and *atsisėskite*, however, is quite subtle, and both forms can be perceived as polite or impolite depending on factors such as intonation or even extralinguistic factors, e.g. the speaker's facial expression.

The use of the perfective as the marker of negative politeness strategy, whenever stressing social distance is likely to be interpreted as non-violation of personal boundaries, may be seen from the following pair of examples:

(52) a. *Rodykite*   *teises!*
    show.IMP.2PL[IPFV]   license.ACC.PL

   b. *Parodykite*   *teises.*
    PFX.show.IMP.2PL[PFV]   license.ACC.PL
    'Show me your driver's license'

In a situation when a driver is stopped by the police after having violated traffic rules and ordered to show her driver license, (52a) is perceived as rude, if not humiliating, whereas the (52b) is neutral.

Finally, some remarks on atelic verbs are necessary. The atelic verbs of Lithuanian— states and processes—are inherently imperfective and lack uncontroversial perfective correlates. Therefore, the aspectual contrasts discussed for the telic verbs above are largely neutralized for atelic verbs. For instance, there is only one way to say 'sleep' or 'stay sitting':

(53) a. *Miegok.*
    sleep.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
    'Sleep.'

   b. *Sėdėk.*
    stay_seated.IMP.2SG[IPFV]
    'Stay sitting.'

However, as mentioned earlier, these verbs are normally able to construct *pa*-delimitative (inherently perfective) forms. While the use of *pa*-limitatives, as the use of *po*-delimitatives in Russian, is little (if at all) different in the imperative and the indicative, in some cases the contrast between an atelic verb and its delimitative counterpart is able to have a politeness effect, where the delimitative form is interpreted as more friendly. In the situation of a visitor waiting in a queue in a state institution, the following utterances may be produced by the official:

(54) a. *Laukite*   *čia.*
wait.IMP.2PL[IPFV]   here
'Wait here.'

   b. *Palaukite*   *čia.*
PFX.wait.IMP.2PL[PFV]   here
'Please wait here.'

Nevertheless, the original delimitative function is still present in (54b). The politeness effect might be perceived as a pragmatic context-driven extension of it. After all, the official automatically seems nicer if the time of expectation is framed as limited. By contrast, in (54a) the visitor is made to understand that it may take a long time.

Summing up, the Lithuanian perfective *vs* imperfective opposition is valid in the imperative. Moreover, the functions of both grams are very close if not identical to those previously established for the Eastern cluster of Slavonic languages. As in the case of the grammaticalization of a binary aspectual opposition in the past tense, however, Lithuanian, unlike Slavonic, exhibits a significant number of cases in which the opposition is neutralized.

4. Concluding remarks and prospects

In this paper, after overviewing the functions of the perfective and the imperfective imperative in Russian and Slavonic, I tested the contexts relevant for the function distinguishing the two imperative types on a non-Slavonic language—Lithuanian. The main result achieved is that not only the contexts relevant for the endogenetic typology of Slavonic are also relevant for Lithuanian, but it is also clear that Lithuanian patterns with the Eastern rather than Western cluster of Slavonic languages, if one accepts the conclusions of Benacchio (2010; 2013; 2018) and von Waldenfels (2012).

There is a chance that the perfective *vs* imperfective opposition in the Lithuanian imperative has its own relevant contexts which are not found in Slavonic. However, I estimate this chance as relatively low building on my own subjective everyday observations of Lithuanian speech. Also, one should keep in mind that the contexts established for Slavonic are based on cross-linguistic, although phylum-bound, and not language-particular data. At the same time, different Slavonic languages, albeit genealogically

related, are situated in different areal clusters, and language contact effects play a big role in defining the structural profile of each Slavonic language (Seržant 2021). Therefore, one can assume that the contexts established as relevant for Slavonic reflect at least a part of the universal cross-linguistic variation, and one should not underestimate the cross-linguistic relevance of the research on Slavonic. It should be stressed again, however, that as a typological topic, the perfective *vs* imperfective imperative opposition is almost *terra incognita*, and the only linguistic genus relatively well researched in this respect is the Slavonic languages. Last but not least, this is due to the lack of relevant descriptive data: the functional dimension of the aspectual opposition in the imperative is largely ignored in grammars of languages which exhibit such an opposition (e.g., Georgian).

The present piece of research is not the first one applying the relevant criteria designed for Slavonic to a language of another genus. As it turns out, Modern Greek, whose perfective *vs* imperfective opposition is morphologically quite different from that of Slavonic, exhibits usage patterns quite similar to those of the 'Western' cluster of Slavonic in its imperative forms (Benacchio 2013). This is not surprising given its geographical affinity to South Slavonic languages. It is also particularly revealing in comparison to its ancestral language—Ancient Greek—in which, contrary to Modern Greek, the imperfective imperative was the most frequently used unmarked form, and the functions of the perfective imperative remain partly obscure even to present-day researchers (Keersmaekers & Van Hal 2016).

On the other hand, Georgian—the only non-Slavonic language with 'Slavonic-type' aspect based on derivation involving spatial preverbs I have found relevant data on—exhibits the opposition between the perfective and the imperfective in the prohibitive. Semantically, it has much in common with the corresponding opposition in Russian and Lithuanian: the imperfective form marks a general prohibition, whereas the perfective form is more concrete in its function and serves to warn the addressee. The use of the perfective in Georgian, however, is more generalized than in Russian, and is classified by Tomelleri and Gäumann (2015) as a 'preventive'. It serves to prevent the addressee from performing any kind of action in the future, whereas the imperfective form implies an action already in progress or about to be performed:

(55) Georgian
    a.   *nu*   *c'er*
        PROH   write[IPFV]
        'Don't write (now).'
    b.   *nu*   *da-c'er*
        PROH   PFX-write[PFV]
        'Don't write (in the future).'

In this light, it must not appear surprising that the pattern of use of the imperfective and the perfective imperative in Lithuanian, wherever this opposition is at play, converges to a large extent with that of East Slavonic: long-term extensive language contact between the Lithuanian (as well as Baltic in general) and the East Slavonic idioms is well-established (Wiemer 2003; Wiemer, Seržant & Erker 2014). This situation is parallel to that described for Modern Greek.

This paper has included one more language—Lithuanian—in the typological research on the functions of the perfective and the imperfective in imperative forms. I have also presented new descriptive data which will be relevant for a future comprehensive grammar of Lithuanian. The investigation of this typological topic is only in its beginning, but currently available data on the patterns of Slavonic, Greek, Lithuanian and Georgian are a legitimate point of departure for future research. I also leave aside a larger circum-Baltic areal context. A parallel investigation of Latvian, Estonian and Finnish could be very revealing. In the case of Estonian and Finnish, the patterns found in the imperative are particularly interesting, as the core strategy of the grammatical marking of perfective *vs* imperfective opposition in these languages is formally quite different from that found in Baltic and Slavonic: it is realized through case marking alternations of the direct object. A possible convergence of the use of aspect in the imperative between structurally different Estonian and Finnish, on the one hand, and Baltic or Slavonic on the other could be a strong argument in favor of an areal nature of this feature.

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Abbreviations

ACC — accusative, BIASP — biaspectual, CNT — continuative, COMP — comparative, DAT — dative, DEF — definite, DELIM — delimitative, DIM — diminutive, F — feminine, FUT — future, GEN — genitive, IMP — imperative, INF — infinitive, INS — instrumental, IPF — imperfect, IPFV — imperfective, ITER — iterative, M — masculine, N — neuter, NEG — negation, NOM — nominative, PA — active participle, PFX — prefix, PFV — perfective, PL — plural, PROH — prohibitive, PRS — present, PRT — partitive, PST — past, PTC — particle, SG — singular, VOC — vocative

Sources

LKT = Lietuvių kalbos tekstynas (The Lithuanian corpus) http://tekstynas.vdu.lt/tekstynas/

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