

## Lithuanian Past Simple Tenses and Their Equivalents in English

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**Abstract.** The paper provides the analysis of Lithuanian simple past tenses, their meanings and equivalents in English. Grammatical forms determine two simple past tenses of the verb in Lithuanian: the past simple tense and the past frequentative tense. The past frequentative tense distinguishes Lithuanian from all other Indo-European languages. The specialists of historical comparative linguistics emphasize its exclusiveness, novelty, however, the origin and the ground for the overall usage is left aside. Thus, the problem of the past frequentative tense is fully covered in the paper. Moreover, some linguists suggest that there are three tenses in Lithuanian: past, present and future. They claim that there is no past frequentative tense and that its incorporation in the paradigm of tenses in Lithuanian is supported by tradition only. Furthermore, they declare that the opposition between the past simple and the past frequentative tense is the one of aspect but not of tense and claim that the past frequentative tense expresses some special meaning of iterativeness related to imperfective aspect (which is the meaning of aspect but not tense). Thus, the analysis attempts to prove that the past frequentative tense has to be included into the paradigm of tenses. The paper also focuses on the use and meanings of Lithuanian simple past tenses and provides the equivalents of them in English.

**Key words:** *paradigm of tenses, past simple tense, past frequentative tense, aspect, iterativeness.*

### Introduction

There are two past simple tenses in Lithuanian: *the past simple* and *the past frequentative* tense which possess one common meaning: they are used to express actions which took place before the moment of speech; however, they are distinguished by the main meaning of the relation to the moment of speech: the past *simple* tense may express an action which is close by its meaning to the reference time (whether it is the present moment or a past action). Thus, the past simple tense possesses the *perfective* and even the *plusquamperfective* meaning. The past *frequentative* tense, on the other hand, does not possess those meanings. It is used to express the meaning of a repeated or a more general action of a more distant past. Moreover, in respect to a repeated action, it is in opposition to the past simple tense. The opposition depends on the aspect and it is distinct when the both members of the opposition are marked, when the verb of the past tense is of the perfective aspect (*parašė — parašydavo*). A result and the meaning of one time are indicated in the form of the perfective aspect. In case the verb of the past simple tense is of the imperfective aspect, it is an unmarked member in the pair of the aspects, i.e. there is no special index indicating the duration of the action; meanwhile, the member of the perfective aspect is a marked one (*rašė — parašė*). According to the principle of privative oppositions, the meaning of an unmarked member possesses a broader meaning than it is of a marked one. Hence, the unmarked member may possess the meaning of the marked one, i.e. a single time past action, a repeated action or a more general action and, thus, it may approach the past frequentative tense.

Therefore, the object of the article is Lithuanian simple past tenses. The aim of the paper is to define the meanings of Lithuanian simple past tenses and determine their equivalents in English.

The method of contrastive analysis (Akhmanova, 1972; Lado, 1976; Hawkins, 1986) is applied in the research. Since the focus is on the paradigms of Lithuanian simple tenses and their meanings, the contrastive analysis of Lithuanian and English enables emphasizing the features of the investigative language which could not be determined without the comparison.

### The Past Simple Tenses of Lithuanian and Their Equivalents in English

As it has already been indicated, there are two past simple tenses in Lithuanian: *the past simple tense* (*darė — padarė*) and *the past frequentative tense* (*darydavo — padarydavo*). Specialists of comparative historical grammar have determined that the past frequentative tense is specific to only one Indo-European language i.e. Lithuanian. Whereas, dialectologists note that it was not used in all the areas of Lithuania. That is why it was not mentioned in the first historical Lithuanian grammar by Kazlauskas (Kazlauskas, 1968, pp.336–365). However, before that Otrebski attached the past frequentative tense to the paradigm of simple tenses. Yet, he suggested the suffix *-dav-* was derived from formation suffixes *-av-* of iterative verbs with the ‘squeezed’ *-d-* (Otrebski, 1956, p.223).

Since the past frequentative tense is found only in the Lithuanian language, it was not overanalysed by the specialists of historical grammar. It was only stated that its origin was not clear and that it was not used in all the dialects of Lithuanian (Zinkevičius, 1966, pp.356–359; 1981, pp.115–117). It is natural since comparative historical grammar was interested only in the development of forms and the forms of this Lithuanian tense could not be compared to adequate forms of other languages. The past frequentative tense, without any doubt, belongs to the paradigm of tenses and the roots of its origin should be searched for in Lithuanian in consideration of the semantics of the forms expressing past.

The first writings of Lithuanian are not very old; the first Lithuanian book “Katekizmas” by Mažvydas was printed in 1547. Mažvydas was Samogitian i.e. from the area of Lithuania where, according to dialectologists, the past frequentative was not used. However, the past frequentative tense was used in the first printed Lithuanian book: *Maksla šito tevai iusu trakšdava turėti./ Ale to negaleia ne vienu budu gauti* (Mažvydas, 1974, p.99). Hence, it can be claimed that the form of the past frequentative tense was recognized in all the areas of Lithuania.

Nonetheless, some linguists refer to the first Lithuanian grammar by Kleinas and claim the past frequentative tense is derived from the past simple tense by replacing the last syllable with *-davo-* (Holvoet, 2004, p.124; 153–154). Only Kleinas did not distinguish grammatical meaning of a repeated action of the formation of iterative verbs (Kleinas, 1653; 1654). Provided the meaning of the past frequentative tense is of the same level as the meaning of iterative verbs, then the latter could not obtain the form of the past frequentative tense. However, the form of the past frequentative tense is applied to both iterative and non-iterative verbs, e.g. *šoko — šokdavo* (*jumped — used to jump*), *šokinėjo — šokinėdavo* (*was jumping — used to jump*).

Though, Sapūnas and Šulcas (Sapūnas and Šulcas, 1673) indicated the *first preterit* (the past simple tense) and the *second preterit* (the past frequentative tense) in their grammar. Unfortunately, later it was not distinguished between the meaning of a tense and word formation. The essential distinction between the iterativeness of word formation and the iterativeness of grammatical tense is the regularity of the latter (all the verbs obtain the form of the past frequentative tense) and the establishment in the language (Gudavičius, 2007, p.24).

Jablonskis also indicated the past tense and the past frequentative tense in his grammar (Kriaušaitis, 1901). He distinguished the same grammatical value of the past simple and the past frequentative tense and contrasted them on the basis of a single time and the repetition in the past (Jablonskis, Avižonis, 1919, p.56). He indicated the same opposition in his later grammar as well (Rygiškių Jono Lietuvių kalbos gramatika, 1922). Consequently, the opposition remained in all the grammars till 1971. Paulauskienė claims that traditional grammar quite well defines the past simple tense as the tense expressing a single action in the past and the past frequentative tense as the tense expressing a repetitive action in the past, since only verbs of progressive aspect which are not marked in respect of a single time may be used both in the context of a single action and in the context of a repeated action (Paulauskienė, 1983, pp.266–267; 1994, pp.326–332).

Lithuanian grammar (Ulvydas, 1971) provides the following definition of the past simple tense: the past simple tense is determined as the tense which expresses an action that took place in the past i.e. before the moment of speech; it also determines a definite action and at the same time indicates that it happened only once in the past. This meaning distinguishes the past simple tense from the past frequentative tense (Ulvydas, 1971, p.96). This definition has been criticized since the past simple tense is also used to express an action which repeatedly took place in the past

and, thus, cannot be determined as a past single action tense (Girdenis and Žulys, 1973, p.210). Consequently, the authors of Lithuanian school grammars defined the past simple tense as a past tense and the past frequentative tense as a repeated past tense (Gedvilas, Kadžytė and Kuzavinis, 1982, p.137).

However, neither a distinct opposition of perfective and progressive (imperfective) aspect in the past nor the general nature of the past frequentative tense was considered. The past frequentative tense cannot be used in some past situations because of the indicated number of times the action has been performed, e.g.: *Vakar jis man skambino tris kartus// Yesterday he called me three times.* \*In the provided example only the past simple tense can be used.

However, in the opposition of aspects *ėjo* (*went*)/ *nuėjo* (*have/ has gone*) the marked number is *nuėjo* (*have/ has gone*) and the prefix provides the verb with the perfective aspect and with the meaning of a single time action. Unfortunately, aspect is indicated in grammars as rather a semantic but not a grammatical category. Thus, the past simple tense is defined as a past tense and the past frequentative tense is defined as a past iterative tense in all Lithuanian grammars (Амбразас, 1985, pp.212–213; Ambrazas, 1994, p.298; 1996, p.298; 1997, p.298; 2005, p.298; 2006, p.246).

Moreover, the past frequentative tense is distinguished from the past simple tense not only by the iterative meaning but also by the distance from the moment of speech, thus, it cannot possess a perfective meaning. The past frequentative tense cannot be used in the following example: *Aš jau šiandien daug kartų valgiau // Today I have eaten many times.*

It is important to distinguish the aspectual opposition between the past simple and the past frequentative tense. However, it is not accurate to define the past frequentative tense only as a version of the past simple tense (Ambrazas, 1994, p.694; Ambrazas in Morkūnas, 1999, p.694) or to attribute it to the aspect and deny it as a tense (Holvoet, 2004, p.153).

### **The Use of the Past Simple Tense and its Equivalent in English**

The forms of the tense are used to express the actions that took place in the past, i.e. before the time of speech. Generally, every tense has got one basic meaning, e.g. the form of the present simple tense is used to express an action which takes place at the present moment, the form of the past simple tense is used to express a non-repeated action in the past, the form of the past frequentative tense is used to express a repetitive action in the past, while the forms of the future simple tense are used to express an action in the future. The basic meanings of tenses do not depend on lexical meanings of verbs. However, they denote the relation of the action and the moment of speech (*absolute*) or the moment of some other action (*relative*) (Ambrazas, 2006, p.241). Such usage of tenses of verbs is referred to as *objective* and is characteristic to scientific

\*Examples following no reference have been created by the author of the article to illustrate a particular point in the text.

texts, also to spoken language when the accuracy of thought which is meant to be expressed is significant. The forms of verbs used objectively do not express any additional nuances, e.g.: *Aš tave myliu nuo tos dienos, kai tave pirmą kartą pamaciau ten, Aukštjuose. (Simonaitytė)// I have been in love with you since the day I saw you there in Aukštujai.*

However, tense forms of verbs may be used differently: in some contexts the forms of present tenses may express some future or past actions, and the forms of past tenses may express present and even future actions. The usage of tense forms of verbs when the meanings of the forms of tenses do not correspond to the meanings of the actions they express to the moment of speech is conditionally named *subjective*, e.g.: *O vagystės šiais laikais ilgai nepalėpsi. Tai ne kirvi — imetei į šulinį ir suuosk!*

There are no specific forms of tenses to express the subjective meaning of them. The shift in meaning of a tense is usually related to the imaginary moment of speech which can be shifted to the past or to the future. Thus, past actions may be expressed by the forms of the present tense; meanwhile, future actions may be expressed by the forms of the present or even the past tense. Consider:

*Suradau ir tą vokietį. Ant stalo kiaušiniene čirška, dukterys vokiškai erzeliuoja, partapijonu skambina. Gyvenimas! O pats ponas tas, su tokiais ūsais, kerta net ausys lapsi. Išdėsčiau, išklosčiau, kad taip ir taip. (Venclova)*

The use of tenses in the figurative meaning is a stylistic device which is the basis for the vividness of a language. Thus, the speaker is allowed to use (without the contradiction to the laws of a language) tenses in their subjective or objective meanings.

The meaning of a tense fades away when the figurative function of a tense form is emphasized. Hence, present, past or future tenses may be used to express actions which relate to the moment of speech equally. Consider:

*Tupikiui vis seilės bėgo, kažį ko negera širdis... Įsileidęs alaus atsigėrė. Kaipgi nepradės galuotis, vėmti, plėšytis širdim! Kris ant žemės, kris į lovą, šaltis krečia, virpa, dreba, o čia vidurius varsto... Merga parvedė motiną. Ta suvirino žolienės. (Žemaitė)*

There are three different tenses used in the example above: the past simple tense (*bėgo, atsigėrė, parvedė, suvirino*), the future tense (*nepradės, kris*) and the present tense (*krečia, virpa, dreba, varsto*). They are all used to express some actions and states in the past situation; thus, the forms of the past simple tense are used in their objective meaning while the forms of the future and the present tenses are used in their subjective meanings.

Furthermore, the tenses in the subjective meaning may very easily be interchanged with the tenses in the objective meaning. Such situations are observed in fairytales. Consider:

*Raganos jau aiškiai išgirdo Povilėljį, pasiuto, išsipūtė baisingiausiai ir bėga į trobą pasižiūrėti. Žiūri — tik Onelės galva, skara užgobta. Išbėgo į kiemą ir graužia medį. Jos nežinojo, kuriam medy Povilėlis sėdi, ir pradėjo graužti nuo krašto. Povilėlis tik juokiasi. Graužė, graužė raganos, medis jau vos besilaiko: ir nuvirto, o Povilėlio nēr. Pradėjo graužt antra.*

*Graužė, graužė įdūkusios. Povilėlis mato, kad jau nebejuokai: medis siūbuoja, lūžta. (Lithuanian folklore)*

The present tense (*bėga, žiūri, graužia, juokiasi, besilaiko, nēr, mato, siūbuoja, lūžta*) is used in its subjective meaning in the past situation, which is expressed by the past simple tense in its objective meaning (*išgirdo, pasiuto, išsipūtė, išbėgo, nežinojo, pradėjo, graužė, graužė, nuvirto, pradėjo, graužė, graužė*), in the example above. It is demonstrated well enough, how the tenses in objective meaning alternate with the tenses in subjective meaning. Tenses which are used in the subjective meaning provide the language with more vividness and figurative style.

Although there is objective as well as subjective usage of the past simple tense distinguished in Lithuanian, the analysis will cover only the objective meaning of the past tenses, since the subjective usage is more related to stylistic usage and modality than to the expression of time of an action.

While analysing the objective usage of the past simple tense *non-contact (isolated)* and *contact (unisolated)* past simple tenses are distinguished. *Contact* past simple tense is used to express the action which took place in a recent past and denotes the result of the action which is still relevant at the moment of speech or at any other moment.

The examples of Lithuanian *contact* past simple tense below and their equivalents in English demonstrate that the equivalent of the past simple tense is the present perfect tense. The perfect form of the present tense is referred to the past which is in relation to the present. The present perfect tense is used to refer to events which took place in the past but the results of the actions are relevant at the present (*a past time-frame that connects with the present*) in English (Sinclair, 1990, p.251, Carter and McCarthy, 2006, pp.598; 613–616). Hence, the present perfect tense is used to express the meanings of the examples of Lithuanian *contact* past simple tense; the result but not the time of the action is relevant, e.g.:

*Koks tu kerštingas pasidarei, Pranciškau. (Mykolaitis-Putinas) // Pranciskus, you have become very vindictive.*

*Toks netikėtas pagyrimas visą ją sujaudino. (Žemaitė) // Such an unexpected compliment has moved her.*

*Žydras dangus apsipylė tūkstančiais mirgančių žvaigždelių. (Žemaitė) // Thousands of twinkling stars have covered the blue sky.*

All the examples of Lithuanian *contact* past simple tense above include only the verbs of perfective aspect.

Mostly verbs which possess the perfective meaning (result is relevant) can obtain the meaning of *contact* past simple tense in Lithuanian. The meaning and its nuances depend on the context and is especially noticed in the context where a character or situation is being described. According to the situation, two nuances of the meaning are distinguished: perfective and plusquamperfective meaning.

A past action expressed by the *non-contact* past simple tense is related neither to the present moment nor to some other action. Thus, the tense denotes an isolated action and may be used to express a distant or not very distant past

action. The non-contact past tense may also be referred to as a narrative tense since it is often used to narrate past events which are in no relation to the present situation. Verbs of imperfective aspect are typical to the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning in Lithuanian; however, verbs of the perfective aspect may also be used to express the tense.

### The Equivalents of the Past Simple Tense of the Non-contact Meaning

As it is observed in the examples below, verbs of both *perfective* and *imperfective* aspect are used to express the tense and have the equivalents of past tenses in English. The past simple and the past continuous tense are used to express the meanings of Lithuanian past simple tense of the non-contact meaning. Thus, contrary to the examples of the past simple tense of the contact meaning and their equivalents, the time when the action took place and the fact that the action happened at some time in the past and has no relation to the present is relevant. Consider:

*Balys atsimena kaip šiandien. Buvo vėjuotas rudens vakaras. Visa šeimyna triūsėsi pirkioje. Piemenukas žibino balanas, motina verpė, o tėvas ir juodu su broliu suko virves. Staiga kieme sulojo šuva ir į pirkia įsiveržė keletas vyrų. (Mykolaitis-Putinas)// Balys remembers all as if it was today. It was a windy night. All the family was bustling about in the house. The shepherd was burning some sapwood, his mother was spinning the yarn and he with his brother and father were making ropes. Suddenly the dog started barking and some men broke into the house.*

*Tik po ilgoko laiko senis pakilo, vėl uždegė užgesusį rūkiklį ir nuėmė nuo avilio šiaudinę kepurę. Dūzgė pavargusios bitės, tuščiomis grįždamos iš laukų, laipiojo ant senio rankų, o jis kilnojo pilnus rėmus, šluostė, tvarkė. (Venclova)// Only after a while the old man got up, lit the dead smoke again and took a straw hat off the hive. Tired bees were buzzing while coming back empty from the fields, they were climbing up on the hands of the old man while he was moving the full frames, wiping and arranging them.*

The verbs of perfective aspect expressing the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning have the equivalent of the past simple tense in English; however, the verbs of imperfective meaning expressing the past simple tense of the same (non-contact meaning) may have as their English equivalent both the past continuous and the past simple tense. The past continuous tense is used to refer to continuous actions where the focus is on the duration:

*Nepažįstamasis, galva lingavo, į juos žiūrėdamas iš savo pušės, lyg rodės, jų pasigailėdamas. Pagaliau, atsidusęs, tarė patylomis, lyg patsai sau: –Ne kiekvienam tenai prieiti! ... (Lazdynų Pelėda)// The stranger was looking at them and nodding his head; it seemed he was sorry for them. Finally, he sighed and said silently, as if talking to himself, ‘Not every man can reach that place!..*

The non-contact meaning of the past action is characteristic to all forms of simple past tenses of the verbs of *imperfective* aspect in Lithuanian. The forms of simple tenses of the verbs of *perfective aspect* possess isolated meaning only if the lexical contents of the verb or the context of the situation does not foreground the perfective meaning of the action.

All the forms of the past simple tense of the verbs of *perfective aspect* possess the non-contact meaning when they express simultaneous past actions, e.g.: *Daktaras išžeidė ir nutilo.// The doctor got offended and hushed.*

The verbs of the *perfective* aspect are not used to refer to the actions where the focus is on duration, thus, they cannot possess the past continuous tense as the equivalent in English. Consider:

*Nors jaučiau nekaip, bet atsikėlęs apsitaisiau ir išėjau miestan pažiūrėti, koks oras. (Baltušis)*

*Although I was not feeling well, I got up, dressed and went into the city to check the weather.*

*Pašilenkėm ir smėlyje pamatėm tikrai kažką panašų į raides. (Mieželaitis)// We bent and saw some kind of letters in the sand.*

The examples of Lithuanian past simple tense above have only one equivalent in English: the past simple tense.

All the forms of the past simple tense of the verbs of *perfective aspect* possess the non-contact meaning when they express isolated past actions in Lithuanian. Consider:

*Staiga prapliupo čiułbėti paukščiai, ir laukymė užliejo rausva šviesa. Patekėjo saulė. (Ivanauskaitė)// Suddenly birds started singing and the field was flooded with reddish light. The sun has risen.*

*Temo. Darėsi šalta. Paukščiai ir jų paukštyčiai sumigo. Užgriuvo naktis. (Ivanauskaitė)// It was dimming and chilling. Birds and their birdies have fallen asleep. The night has come.*

The examples of the past simple tense with the verbs of perfective aspect which are used to express isolated past actions in Lithuanian possess the past simple tense as their English equivalent, e.g.:

*Troleibusas sustojo. Moteris išlipo laukan. Ūmai ją išpylė prakaitas. (Ivanauskaitė)// A trolleybus stopped. A woman got off. Suddenly she was all in sweat.*

*Vika atlošė galvą. Jos ilgu kaklu perbėgo keli mėšlungiai. Liūdesys augo. Moteris vėl atsisėdo ant paties krėslo kraštelio ir pajuto, kaip susidurskė kojine. (Ivanauskaitė)// Vika reclined her head. Several spasms ran up her neck. Sadness was growing up. Once again she sat down on the very edge of an armchair and felt that she snagged her stocking.*

The past simple tense of the non-contact meaning expressing a general past action which was relevant at some time in the past possesses the past simple tense as its equivalent in English. However, the past continuous tense may also be used as the equivalent in this case. As it has already been noted, the past continuous tense is used when the focus is on duration. Consider: *Iš vamzdžio plonu, ilgu kaspinu driekėsi aitrus dūmas. (Cvirka)// A thin bitter smoke was spreading from the pipe.*

The past simple tense with the general meaning expresses an action which is unlimited in its state or actions, they are more or less permanent phenomena of nature or human's life in Lithuanian. Moreover, only the verbs of *imperfective aspect* are used there. Consider:

*Kaip baltas audeklas tęsėsi tarp žaliuojančių laukų, pievų ir girių lygus ir platus plentas, margais akmenėliais išbarsty-*

tas. (Biliūnas)// A wide highway was stretching between green fields, meadows and forests. It was like white fabric scattered with speckled pebles.

Kažkur čiurleno šaltinis. (Tilvytis)// A spring was rippling somewhere.

The past simple tense of the non-contact meaning expressing more or less consistent states and lasting actions has the equivalent of the past continuous tense in English. As it has already been noted, the past continuous tense is used when the focus is on the duration of the action, when we refer to continued states in English. However, the past simple tense may also be used since the past continuous tense is limited in some cases (there are verbs which do not obtain a continuous form). Consider:

Žmonės buvo padidintais norais ir padidintu nepasitenkimu. (Vaižgantas)// The people were with exaggerated wishes and exaggerated dissatisfaction.

Buvo rytas, giedras, ramus ir malonus... (Biliūnas)// It was a cloudless, quiet and nice morning.

As it is evident from the examples above, the most frequent equivalent of the past simple tense is the past continuous tense in English. The focus is on duration but not the time of an action. When the verb *būti* (to be) is used in the Lithuanian examples, the past simple tense is the equivalent in English (the verb *to be* does not possess the continuous form in English).

The past simple tense which expresses a repetitive action always obtains a general meaning in Lithuanian; the verbs of *imperfective aspect* are used there, e.g.:

Baisiai savęs gailėjausi. Pravirkau. Verčiau ir verčiau. (Ivanauskaitė)// I was so sorry for myself. I started crying. I was crying and crying.

Bėgiojo vienas pas kitą, šnibždėjos, stovinėjo pavartėse, priemenių duryse, prie šulinių ir narstė jaunosios Pečiūrienės kaulelius. (Vienuolis)// They were all running one after other, whispering, standing at the gates, doors, wells and all were gossiping about Pečiūrienė.

The above examples of the past simple tense have the equivalents of the past continuous tense in English. However, the past simple tense is used when the verbs in English cannot possess the continuous form or when the duration of the action is expressed semantically. Consider:

Kur tik jis pasisuko, visur girdėjai: — Mykoliuk šen, Mykoliuk ten. (Vaižgantas)// Wherever he went, one could hear: Mykoliukas here, Mykoliukas there.

Jis už visus anksčiausiai kėlė, vėliausiai gulė už visus... (Mieželaitis)// He was the first one to wake up and the last one to go to bed.

General meaning is also specific to the past simple tense which expresses phenomena in a broad sense which usually take place in different locations and on different periods of time in Lithuanian. Furthermore, only the verbs of *imperfective aspect* are used to express the meaning. Consider:

Laimė tiems, kurie turėjo pieningesnę karvę. Iš atliekamo pieno moterys suko sviestą, spaudė sūrį, jei gerai dėjo vištos, rinko tuziną ar visą puslapį kiaušinių ir vežė viską į Kėdaičius. (Mykolaitis-Putinas)// Happy were those who had a

milky cow. Women used to make butter and cheese from the spare milk and if hens were good at laying eggs they used to collect and take them to Kėdainiai.

Senis Rytis žvejojo jūroje žuvis, jo pati adė tinklus, gamino šeimynai valgį ir, dukrelės padedama, ruošėsi apie namus. (Vienuolis)// Old man Rytis was fishing in the sea, his wife was mending nets, cooking for the family, and doing the chores with the help of her daughter.

The above examples of the past simple tense have the equivalents of the past simple tense, the past continuous tense and *used to* in English.

The past simple tense is also used to express past actions characteristic to one species during its period of existence; only the verbs of *imperfective aspect* are used there, e.g.:

Aplink sodą eglės žaliavo. (Jablonskis)// Fir trees were growing green around the garden.

O šaltis spiginte spigino. (Balčikonis)// It was freezing cold.

The examples above again have the equivalent of the past continuous tense in English.

Sometimes the past simple tense of general meaning is used to express the ability of an agent to perform an action; the verbs of *imperfective aspect* are used there. Consider:

Penkiolikos metų buvo, o taip dailiai šieną piovė, oi-oi-oi!.. (Lazdynų Pelėda)// He was only fifteen still he could cut/ was able to cut grass so well.

Jis skaitė, rašė jau gana gerai. (Tilvytis)// He could read and write quite well.

The examples above have the equivalents of the past simple tense in English (the modal verb *can* is usual in such contexts).

Thus, the analysis of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning in Lithuanian has demonstrated that verbs of both perfective and imperfective aspect are used to express the meaning. However, the verbs of imperfective aspect are more frequent. The equivalents of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning expressed by the verbs of perfective aspect are the present perfect and the past simple tense. Moreover, the equivalents of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning expressed by the verbs of imperfective aspect are the past simple tense, the past continuous tense and *used to* in English.

### The Equivalents of the Past Simple Tense of the Perfective Meaning

The forms of the past simple tense possess perfective meaning when the result of the tense they express is related to the moment of speech or some other present moment. Moreover, all the verbs of Lithuanian past simple tenses of the *perfective aspect* below are of *perfective aspect* only. Consider:

Nebepažintum tų laikų — taip visa čia pakito. (Mieželaitis)// You wouldn't recognize the times since everything has changed a lot here.

Atsigavo Rapolas. Dabar savo pareigas vėl pradėjo eiti kaip reikiant. (Vaižgantas)// Rapolas has recovered and started his duties properly.

*Staiga supratau, kad tave myliu. (Ivanauskaitė)// I suddenly have realized that I love you.*

As it has already been noted, the most suitable equivalent of the past simple tense of the perfective meaning is the present perfect tense in English.

Although the majority of the examples of the past simple tense of the perfective meaning possess verbs of *perfective aspect*, verbs of *imperfective aspect* could be used in the past tenses of the perfective meaning in Lithuanian as well. The examples below have the present perfect tense as their equivalent in English:

*Ir aš ten gyvenau trejus metus, ir laimę ten radau.// I have also lived there for three years and have found my fortune.*

*Garsus, bet nesveikas rašytojas tai irgi sakė, tik vietoj trijų parų minėjo amžinybę. (Šerelytė)// A famous but ill writer has also said that, except he has mentioned eternity but not three days.*

The analysis of the examples of the past simple tense of the perfective meaning of Lithuanian and their equivalents in English demonstrates that the equivalent of Lithuanian past simple tense of the perfective meaning is the present perfect tense in English. The past simple tense of the perfective meaning in Lithuanian and the present perfect tense in English possess the same meaning: the result of the action expressed is relevant at the moment of speech or any other present action or situation, i.e. past with present relevance or past involving the present.

### **The Equivalents of the Past Simple Tense of the Plusquamperfective Meaning**

The forms of the past simple tense possess the plusquamperfective meaning when the result of the tense they express is related to some other past action or past situation. Thus, the forms of the past simple tense with the plusquamperfective meaning are often used with other forms of past tenses. The examples below demonstrate that the equivalents of the past simple tense of Lithuanian are these tenses of English: the past perfect and the past simple tense. The past perfect tense expresses and emphasizes the result of the action; the time of the action is not relevant. Moreover, it signifies an action the result of which was relevant at some moment in the past, thus the past perfect refers to a time-frame leading up to a point in the past (Carter and McCarty, 2006, p.619).

The verbs of both perfective and imperfective aspect are used to express the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning. Consider the examples of the tense with the verbs of *perfective aspect* below which possess the only equivalent in English: the past perfect tense:

*Tačiau akys pritvino ašaru, jos jau papsėjo ant pagalvio krašto ir grindų.// However, the eyes had become full of tears which started dropping on the pillow and the floor.*

*Šeštadienio vakarą Petras, grįžęs su dėde namo, rado netikėtą svečių: atvažiavo brolis (Mykolaitis-Putinas)// Saturday night Petras came home and found an unexpected guest: his brother Vincas had arrived.*

*Bent kartą jis pats mums tai papasakojo. (Biliūnas)// At least once he had told us this story.*

As it has already been noted, verbs of *imperfective aspect* are used in the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning in Lithuanian as well. The examples below possess both the past perfect and the past simple tense as their English equivalents. Consider:

*Visai kitokia buvo Veronika pirmiau. (Vienuolis)// Before Veronika was completely different.*

*Priskaičius vietą, kurioje vargšė mergelė aprašo, kaip mirė jos motina, skausmas suspaudė man širdį, o akys pasruvo ašaromis. (Šatrijos Ragana)// Having read the place where the poor girl describes how her mother had died, pain clenched my heart and tears started running from my eyes.*

*Ištisais mėnesiais nejudėdamas, stovėjo vienas, tirštai pilkas dangus. (Vaižgantas)// For months the sky had remained thick and grey.*

*Visa ta diena buvo ypatingai nervinanti. (Vienuolis)// All the day was extremely nerve-racking.*

The forms of the past simple tense of Lithuanian are also used to express an action with the plusquamperfective meaning with no relation to other forms of past tenses because the past simple tense may express actions the result of which does not exist at the moment of speech, is not relevant and for this reason is per se attributed to the past. The past situation (when the result of the action was relevant) is perceived from the context.

The examples of the past simple tense of Lithuanian below have the equivalents of the past perfect (or past perfect continuous when the focus is on duration of the action) and the past simple tenses in English. Moreover, verbs of both perfective and imperfective aspect can be used to express the meaning. Consider the examples with the verbs of *perfective aspect*:

*Užmiršo Rapolas savo pareigas. Nebeėmė savo bizūno. (Vaižgantas)// Rapolas had forgotten his duties. He stopped taking his whip.*

*Juozui nepigiai atiteko tos dovanos: kuo tik galvos nepadėjo, gelbėdamas ponaičius skęstant. (Lazdynų Pelėda)// Juozas didn't receive those presents for free, he had almost lost his life while saving the drowning masters.*

Consider the examples of Lithuanian past simple tense of plusquamperfective meaning with the verbs of *imperfective aspect*:

*Stebėtina man pasirodė, kad taip nebranginau mamatės, tiek laiko kasdien praleisdama be jos. (Šatrijos Ragana)// It was surprising how I hadn't been appreciating my mother, how much time I had been spending without her.*

*Ta įkibusi mintis, tas pasiilgimas ar ištroškimas, pavadin-kime, kaip sau norite, meile ar kitaip, nors nė per akies mirksnį nenyko, tačiau nebekliudė. (Vaižgantas)// That obsessive idea, that feeling of nostalgia or even desire, you may call it love or whatever, although it had never gone, it was not bothering me that much anymore.*

The example below and its equivalent in English demonstrate that the past simple tense maybe be the equivalent of the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning in English. In this case the abilities of a person are expressed and thus the modal verb *could* is being used.

*Nemokėjo senis nei rašyti nei skaityti; o gaila, nes jo pastebėjimai gal būtų atnešę nemaža naudos kokiam mokslininkui. (Lazdynų Pelėda) // The old man could neither write nor read: it was very unfortunate because his ideas could have brought much benefit to some scientist.*

The analysis of the examples of Lithuanian past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning and their equivalents in English demonstrates that a broader context is required to express the meaning of the past perfect tense in English as well as in Lithuanian. Moreover, the most appropriate and suitable equivalent of the Lithuanian past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning is the past perfect tense in English. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning with the verbs of perfective aspect have the only equivalent in English, i.e. the past perfect tense; however, the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning with the verbs of imperfective aspect maybe possess the past simple and the past perfect tense as its equivalents in English.

### The Use of the Past Frequentative Tense and its Equivalents in English

As it has already been indicated, the past frequentative tense is typical only to Lithuanian. It distinguishes Lithuanian from all other Indo-European languages. The specialists of historical comparative linguistics emphasize its exclusiveness, novelty, however, the origin and the ground for the overall usage is left aside. The first grammars of Prussian Lithuania approached the tense differently: Kleinas differentiated the forms with the suffix *-dav-* as formation iteratives, meanwhile, Sapūnas included the past frequentative tense into the paradigm of tenses. Therefore, Sapūnas and Šulcas distinguished repetition expressed by the grammatical suffix *-dav-* from formation iteratives (Sapūnas ir Šulcas, 1673). They noticed that both iterative and habitual verbs obtained the same form (e.g. *šoko* — *šokinėdavo*, *šokinėjo* — *šokinėdavo*). Supposing that the iterative meaning is of the same level as the one of formation, theoretically it would not be possible to add two iterative suffixes to the same verb. After all, authors of grammars of the time knew classical Greek and Latin very well and were aware that there occurred extra meanings of a tense in the complex system of tenses and that there was more than only a simple relation between the action and the moment of speech. For example, there is the opposition of tense as well as the opposition of aspect between *Present* and *Aoristus* in the old Greek language.

The fact is that having stated that the past frequentative tense is a new tense in Lithuanian, the factors and terms for its origin and the ground for the overall usage are left aside. The question *Why the past frequentative tense was founded in the Lithuanian language?* has not been answered yet. The origin of the suffix *-dav-* has been studied; however, the functional necessity of the past frequentative tense related to aspect was explained only by Paulauskienė (1970, p.74; 1994, pp.328–332; 2003, pp.75–81). Unfortunately, the interpretation was neither corroborated nor negated. Whereas, the antithesis *parašė* — *parašydavo* is considered the antithesis of aspects not tenses in the newest academic publication *Studies in Lithuanian Grammar*

2 (Holvoet, 2004, pp.141–142) where the theory of Dambriūnas (1975, pp.171–179) is being referred to. It can be considered as a theoretical mistake which is probably supported by the review of the Lithuanian grammar by Girdenis and Žulys (1973, p.210). The relation of the past frequentative tense with aspect and the moment of speech is not considered here and it is claimed that past tenses are not defined properly in Lithuanian grammars as the forms of the past simple tense may express a repeated action as well.

Indeed, only verbs of imperfective aspect can be used in the repeated context as the meaning of one time is not indicated in them. Therefore, the forms of the past simple tense may be synonymous to the forms of the past frequentative tense in the case of imperfective aspect. The both forms can be interchanged if the action of distant past is being expressed: *Gausiau tada žemę derėdavo* (=derėjo), *giris kugždėdavo* (=kugždėjo) *žvėrių, paukščių ir žmonės tvirtesni, veiklesni būdavo* (=buvo) (Krėvė-Mickevičius).

However, verb forms of the perfective aspect of the past simple and the past frequentative tenses cannot be synonymous as both of them are marked: the meaning of one time is denoted in the past simple tense, whereas, the meaning of repetition is denoted in the past frequentative tense. The meaning of one time is indicated by a prefix while the meaning of repetition is indicated by the suffix *-dav-*. Consider:

*Pritilo laukai, pritilo kaimai (...) tik tylių tilvikų pulkai kartais pakildavo iš žiemkenčiais sužaliavusių dirvų ir, liūdnai patrimitavę, vėl tylomis nusileisdavo žemėn savo dūmų dūmoti (Vienuolis).*

The following example demonstrates that there is not only the opposition of aspects in the antithesis *parašė* — *parašydavo*: *Aš šiandien jau daug kartų valgiau.*

It is not possible to change the iterative verb of the past simple tense (*valgiau*) by the verb in the past frequentative tense (*valgydavau*) in the example above.

Generalizing meaning is characteristic to the past frequentative tense but it is also characteristic to other tenses. Thus, they can be used as synonyms with the neutralization of the opposition of aspects in certain contexts (e.g. *Jis visada taip daro/ padaro* ir *Jis visada taip darydavo/ padarydavo*).

However, it may be stated that only formation iteratives can have the meaning of aspect when their formation iterative meaning fades. There is a synonymy in the following examples: *Dabar jis perrašo darbą iš naujo. Dabar jis perrašinėja darbą iš naujo; perrašo — perrašinėja* may form the opposition of aspects: *Jau perrašė darbą* (perfective aspect); *Kai mes nuėjom, jis dar perrašinėjo darbą* (imperfective aspect).

The forms of the past frequentative tense are used to express a repeated action in the past. Consider:

*Ji visuomet kietai miegodavo. Netgi dienos metu, dirbdama darbą, užsnūsdavo laukuose, linus raujant ar daržus ravint, nugriūdavo kur nors lysveje ir užmigdavo. (Cvirka) // She always used to sleep well. She used to fall asleep in the*

fields even at the daytime during work. Even while grubbing up flax she would fall anywhere in the fields and sleep.

Turiu pasakyti, kad mano motina nors niekados blogo žodžio ant ponų nepasakydavo, bet malonės didelės neturėdavo. (Biliūnas)// I have to tell you that my mother never used to say anything wrong about the masters, still no one used to appreciate her.

Kasdien apeidavau vienuolyno mūrus, nors iš tolo norėjau tave pamatyti. (Grušas)// I used to come round the monastery every day as I wanted to see you even from afar.

The equivalents of the past frequentative tense in the examples above are *used to* and *would* in English. *Used to* and *would* possess the meaning of a repeated action in the past, the only distinction between them is that *used to* may describe past states and situations. Moreover, with *would* the past time-frame is to be established, which is often accomplished by a previous presence of *used to* (Carter and McCarthy, 2006, p.610; p.663).

The past frequentative tense has a general meaning when it denotes that the action in the past was repeated an indefinite number of times in Lithuanian. In the cases like that it refers to repeated actions which do not last long, e.g.:

Ten, kur jis pasirodydavo, nušvisdavo žemė, po jos koju tirpdavo sniegas, pražysdavo gėlės ir trumpėdavo kalnų perėjos. (Vienuolis)// Everywhere he went the land used to light up, the snow would melt away, the flowers would bloom, the passes in the mountains would become shorter.

Garsus buvo bajoras... Visus primidavo, visus žaliu vynu girdydavo, valgydindavo, nieko neatstumdavo, nieko nenuskriausdavo — nei didelio, nei mažo, nei vaiko, nei vargdienis našlaitelės... (Krėvė-Mickevičius)// The lord was famous... He used to welcome, wine and dine everyone. No one was turned away or disadvantaged.

The above examples of the past frequentative tense again have the equivalents of the past simple tense, *used to* and *would* in English. They all may possess the same meaning: repeated past actions or states.

The past frequentative tense may have a more or less general meaning in Lithuanian. The least general meaning is possessed but the past frequentative tense when it indicates the action taking place in some particular short time in the past. Consider:

Visiškai lengvai galima buvo pastebėti, kaip virpėjo jo pirštai, neramiai klajojo žvilgsnis, o žodžiai jo gerklėje užspringdavo. (Tilvytis)// One could easily notice his trembling fingers and wandering look, even his words would choke up.

Ten pokšėjo kirviai, čiuožė obliai ir lygiais tarpais pasigirdavo vienodi, stiprūs dūžiai. (Avyžius)// There was a sound of axes and planes heard; and sometimes a sound of smooth powerful beats could be heard.

Aš atsimenu, kad mane vesdavo šokti, kviesdavo prie stalo, vėl vesdavo šokti, kol visai pasilpau. (Tilvytis)//

I remember they used to invite me for a dance then again asked to the table, then again for a dance, till I lost all my energy

The past simple tense (the repetition is expressed by the adverb *sometimes* in this particular context), *used to* and

*would* are the equivalents of the examples of the past frequentative tense above.

The most general meaning is possessed by the past frequentative tense when it indicates the action taking place in some particular long period in the past:

Kas silpnas, tas miške arba visai nedygdavo, arba išdygęs tuojau išnykdavo, užleidęs vietą stipresniam žaliūkui. (Vienuolis)// The weak ones either did not sprout in the forest at all or immediately died after.

The English equivalent of the past frequentative tense in this case is the past simple tense.

The forms of the past frequentative are not used in riddles, proverbs, sayings or aphorisms. However, the past frequentative tense is used to express isolated past actions which have a relation with neither present nor any other actions in the past, e.g.:

Juos matydavo žingsniuojančius (tiksliau pasakius — dičkis žingsniuodavo, o mažasis biznodavo risčiuke) į upės pusę, kur dunksojo išsprogdinto geležinkelio tilto griaučiai. Nusileidę į paupį, kareiviai užsirangydavo ant mūrinio tilto polių, susėsdavo nukarę kojas ir ilgai taip sėdėdavo susiglaudę, sužiurę į plačius, ramius vandenis. (Cvirka)// They were often seen pacing (the big one would always march and the small one would always jog) in the direction of the river where the wrecks of the broken railway bridge were. At the river the hikers would climb on the pilings of the masonry bridge, would swing their legs and would sit there for long shoulder to shoulder looking into the water.

The equivalents of the past frequentative tense are *would* and the past simple tense in English.

Therefore, the most corresponding and suitable English equivalents of the past frequentative tense are *used to*, *would* and the past simple tense. Lexical means are used to express the full meaning of the past frequentative tense in English as well.

Whereas, the examples of the past simple tense have the equivalents of the past simple, past continuous, past perfect and even present perfect tenses in English. The most suitable and frequent equivalents of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning are the past simple tense (with the verbs of both perfective and imperfective aspect) and the past continuous tense (with the verbs of imperfective aspect) in English. As it has already been emphasized, the past continuous tense is used to refer to continuous actions where the focus is on the duration. The past simple tense, however, is used to refer to more general actions and events. The verbs of the perfective aspect are not used to refer to the actions where the focus is on the duration; thus, the examples of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning with the verbs of the perfective aspect do not have the equivalent of the past continuous tense in English. The past simple tense of the non-contact meaning which is used to express repeated past actions is synonymous to the past frequentative tense; therefore, *used to* and *would* may be their equivalents in English as well.

Moreover, the equivalent of the past simple tense of the perfective meaning is the present perfect tense in English; meanwhile, the equivalent of the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning is the past perfect tense.

## Conclusions

1. The results of the analysis demonstrate that Lithuanian past simple tense possesses all the meanings of all English past tenses. It has the meaning of:

- Single or repeated actions which occurred at some past time prior to the present moment. It corresponds with the meaning of English past simple tense which is English equivalent of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning (both imperfective and perfective verbs may be used);
- A past action which has current relevance. It corresponds with the meaning of English present perfect tense which is English equivalent of the past simple tense of the perfective meaning;
- A continuous action in the past. It corresponds with the meaning of English past continuous tense which is English equivalent of the past simple tense of the non-contact meaning (verbs of imperfective aspect are used);
- A past action which happened before some specific time in the past. It corresponds with the meanings of English past perfect tense (and the past perfect continuous tense when the focus is on the duration of the action) which is English equivalent of the past simple tense of the plusquamperfective meaning.

2. The past frequentative tense belongs to the paradigm of simple tenses in Lithuanian. Although it is important to distinguish the aspectual opposition between the past simple tense and the past frequentative tense, the past frequentative tense cannot be defined as a version of the past simple tense and denied as a tense.

3. The equivalents of the past frequentative tense in English are:

- *Used to* which is used to refer to past repetitive actions;
- *Would* which is also used to refer to repeated actions in the past (however, *would* requires an already established past time frame);
- *The past simple tense* which is used for habitual actions in the past.

4. The analysis of Lithuanian simple past tenses has demonstrated that it is necessary to relate them to aspect: imperfective forms of the past simple tense are employed to express both single and repeated actions.

The forms of the past simple tense which express repeated actions are synonymous to the forms of the past frequentative tense.

The forms of the past simple tense with the verbs of perfective aspect possess the meaning of a single time.

The past frequentative tense with the verbs of perfective meaning is used to express perfective repetitive actions.

5. The meaning of the past frequentative tense cannot be considered a simple iterative because:

- Both perfective and imperfective verbs possess the form of the past frequentative tense. Therefore, one

word cannot possess two separate affixes of the same level (e.g. a word cannot possess two separate case inflections at the same time);

- The relation of the past frequentative tense to the moment of speech (the past frequentative tense cannot express a past action of a non-distant past);
- There are contexts where the past frequentative tense cannot be replaced by the past simple tense.

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Saulė Petronienė

#### Lietuvių kalbos būtieji vientisiniai laikai ir jų atitikmenys anglų kalboje

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojami lietuvių kalbos vientisiniai būtieji laikai: būtasis kartinis ir būtasis dažninis. Abiems šiems laikams bendra tai, kad jie reiškia veiksmą, vykusį prieš kalbamąjį momentą, o skiria juos pagrindinė santykio su kalbamuoju momentu reikšmė: būtasis kartinis laikas gali reikšti labai artimą veiksmą atskaitos momentui: ar tai būtų dabartis, ar kitas praeities veiksmas. Taigi būtasis kartinis laikas turi ir perfekto, ir pliuskvamperfekto reikšmes. Šių reikšmių neturi būtasis dažninis laikas. Jis reiškia tolesnės praeities kartojamą veiksmą, kurio atžvilgiu jis sudaro opoziciją būtajam kartiniam laikui. Apžvelgiama lietuvių kalbos vientisinių būtyjų laikų nustatymo istorija ir apibrėžimo formavimasis. Taip pat atliekama vientisinio būtojo kartinio laiko semantikos analizė. Būtasis dažninis laikas, kaip rodo atlikta analizė, yra laiko, o ne žodžių darybos ar veiklo forma: jo forma negali reikšti artimos praeities veiksmo, jis neturi kontakto su kalbamuoju momentu, o su kartų skaičiavimu jo reikšmė nesuderinama. Būtojo dažninio laiko kilmė ir reikšmė susijusi su įvykio veikslu. Vienas kartas suvokiamas kaip baigtinis veiksmas, rezultatas. Ir tik įvykio veiklo veiksmažodžių būtojo dažninio laiko formos nepakeičiamos būtoju kartiniu laiku. Straipsnyje taip pat pateikiami naracinio, perfektinės ir pliuskvamperfektinės reikšmių būtojo kartinio laiko bei būtojo dažninio laiko atitikmenys anglų kalboje.

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