

Phasal and proximative complementation: Lithuanian *baigti*

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The article deals with Lithuanian constructions based on the verb *baigti* ‘finish’. They have traditionally been dealt with in the context of phasal complementation. In this article it is argued that the verb *baigti* actually underlies two different types of constructions: in addition to phasal constructions with imperfective infinitives there are also proximative constructions with perfective infinitives. The proximative construction refers to an imminent event viewed as the outcome of a (basically unexpressed) process that is in its final phase at the moment of speaking (or some reference time not coinciding with the moment of speaking). The Lithuanian proximative construction with *baigti*, which has no counterpart in Latvian, has probably evolved from the phasal construction; it has a number of properties that hark back to its phasal origin and are not necessarily characteristic of proximatives in general. The article gives a characterization of the proximative construction with *baigti*, analyses its interaction with different aspectual classes, and discusses its relation to another gram-type, the so-called avertive. It is also pointed out that, in view of the existence of a distinct proximative complementation type, combinations of *baigti* with perfective infinitives should no longer be adduced as evidence against the existence of aspectual oppositions in the Lithuanian verb.

Keywords: Lithuanian, complementation, phasal construction, proximative construction, avertive construction, verbal aspect, aspectual class

0. Introduction¹

This article deals with a hitherto unnoticed Lithuanian construction with the complement-taking verb *baigti* ‘finish, cease, stop’. Constructions with this verb have until now been classified with phasal complementation; here I will show that the same verb *baigti* also underlies a proximative construction, i.e. a construction referring to an imminent event. The struc-

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ture of the article is partly determined by the context in which clausal complementation with the verb *baigti* has hitherto been discussed in the literature. As a phasal verb, *baigti* has often been compared with Slavonic phasal verbs, which can occur only with imperfective infinitives, and the view has been expressed that, just as its Slavonic counterparts, it should be expected to take only imperfective verbs as its complements. Actually, *baigti* frequently occurs with infinitives of verbs considered to be perfective, and this fact has been adduced as evidence against the existence of an aspectual opposition in the Lithuanian verb. The mode of exposition adopted in this article will therefore be as follows. In the first part of the article, I give some basic information on phasal complementation in Lithuanian (1.1), and I briefly discuss the relationship between phasal complementation and aspect, pointing out that the Lithuanian system of phasal complementation need not be identical with that of Slavonic (1.2). As, in the subsequent parts of the article, I will claim that Lithuanian *baigti* also underlies a proximative construction containing perfective infinitives, I present my view of Lithuanian verbal aspect, arguing that we are indeed justified in positing an—admittedly weakly grammaticalized—aspectual opposition in Lithuanian (1.3); to conclude this introductory section, I briefly discuss a subtype of phasal complementation with *baigti* also characterized by perfective infinitives but distinct from the proximative complementation type that will be the main topic of the article. In the second part of the article I concentrate on the Lithuanian proximative construction with *baigti* and list its characteristic semantic properties. In the third section I show how the two types of complementation with *baigti*—phasal and proximative—interact with aspectual class. Sections 4 and 5 deal with negatability and the possibility of purely scalar readings of *baigti* respectively. Finally, I give some attention to proximative constructions referring to the past, and to their relationship with avertive constructions.

1. Phasal complementation and aspect in Lithuanian

1.1. Phasal complementation

According to Noonan (2007, 139), “phasal predicates refer to the phase of an act or state: its inception, continuation, or termination”. Setting apart phasal predicates from other types of complement-taking predicates is, as

we will see, slightly more involved than could appear at first sight, but we will first discuss some uncontroversial instances.

Lithuanian verbs expressing phasal predicates include *pradėti* ‘begin, start’, *baigti* ‘finish, cease, stop’ and the near-synonymous *nustoti* and *liautis* ‘cease, stop’. While *pradėti* and *baigti* always take infinitival complements, *nustoti* and *liautis* may take either an infinitival clause or a participial clause (with the past active participle) as their complement:

- (1) *Jon-as pradėjo skaityti roman-q.*
 John-NOM **begin.PST.3** **read.INF** novel-ACC.SG
 ‘John began to read a novel.’
- (2) *On-a liovėsi pirk-usi / pirkti*
 Ann-NOM.SG **cease.PST.3** **buy-PPA.NOM.SG.F** **buy.INF**
knyg-as.
 book-ACC.PL
 ‘Ann stopped buying books.’

It should be noted that *baigti* can have two meanings, one corresponding to English *finish*, the other to English *stop*, or *cease*; in the latter case *baigti* is similar to *liautis* in example (2) (which does not necessarily mean that *liautis* can always be replaced with *baigti*); cf. (3):

- (3) *Labas vakaras pikčiurn-os, gal baigiam*
 good evening grumbler-VOC.PL maybe **finish.PRS.1PL**
pyktis ir einam koki-o al-aus?
be_offended.INF and go.PRS.1PL some-GEN.SG.M beer-GEN.SG
<http://www.calibra-club.lt/forum/viewtopic.php?p=17055>
 ‘Good evening, you grumblers, maybe we could stop quarrelling and go for a beer?’

The difference between *stop* and *finish* is more or less clear: while *stop* refers to the discontinuation of whatever is expressed by the verb at an arbitrary moment, *finish* implies that the discontinuation of the action coincides with the natural completion or exhaustion of some process. As Dixon (2005, 180) puts it, *finish* has object orientation, whereas *cease* and *stop* have subject orientation. In the case of states and activities only arbitrary discontinuation, induced by an act of volition on the part of the subject, is possible, and in this case Lithuanian *baigti* will have to be translated with English ‘stop’. In the case of, say, accomplishment predicates, *baigti* will correspond to ‘finish’ or ‘stop’, as the case may be.

1.2. Phasal complementation and aspect

Lithuanian constructions with phasal verbs have often been mentioned in the literature as evidence against the existence of an aspectual opposition in Baltic. As is known, in Slavonic the ability to co-occur with phasal verbs is a test for imperfectivity, cf.

- (4) *Skończyłem czytać / *przeczytać tę* Polish
 finish.PST.1SG.M read [IPFV]INF / read [PFV].INF this.ACC.SG.F
powieść.
 novel.ACC.SG
 ‘I have finished reading this novel.’

In Lithuanian, phasal verbs and, in particular, the verb *baigti* can also occur with infinitives of verbs considered to be perfective. Brauner (1961) was probably the first to point this out, and it is also mentioned by Dambriūnas (1960, 93), who regards it as a consequence of the fact that the aspectual opposition is not ‘very pronounced’ in Lithuanian when compared to Slavonic. The question was also mentioned, in an areal context, by Anatolij Nepokupnyj (1964, 39–53).² Since then these collocations have been regularly popping up in the literature, with authors either pointing to them as evidence against the existence of an aspectual category in Lithuanian, or against its grammatical character (e.g. Girdenis & Žulys 1973, 208), or downplaying their significance (Galnaitytė 1979, 49). None of these authors, however, has ever bothered to analyse the constructions with perfective infinitives in detail or raised the question whether they really represent the same type of complementation as the constructions with imperfective infinitives. Imperfective and perfective infinitives are obviously assumed to be in free variation. Basically this is also the view expressed in the Lithuanian Academy Grammar (Ulvydas, ed., 1971, 30), which states that verbs referring to the final phase of an action, though normally combining with imperfective infinitives, can also combine with perfective infinitives

² Nepokupnyj adduces data from the Kupiškis dialect and notes that similar constructions have been recorded in Russian dialects spoken in the area, e.g. *končæm* (finish.PRS.1PL) *prijiti* (arrive[PFV].INF) ‘we have almost arrived’. These Russian dialectal constructions are evidently a replica of the Lithuanian ones. Whether the construction with *baigti* and perfective infinitive is known in all Lithuanian dialects or whether there are dialectal restrictions is an interesting question that deserves to be separately investigated.

‘when the idea is to emphasize the actional nuance (*veiksmo atspalvis*) expressed by the prefix’.³

As concerns the claim that combinations of phasal verbs are evidence against the existence of verbal aspect in Lithuanian, it has two implications that should be set apart here. We can formulate them as follows: (i) phasal predicates should have imperfective complements; (ii) if a verb like *baigti* occurs with verbs generally considered to be perfective, then that means that these verbs are not really perfective, and that Lithuanian has no grammatical category of aspect.

It has somehow escaped the notice of authors writing on this subject that, (i) being granted, the situation referred to in (ii) can also have an alternative explanation, viz. that constructions with *baigti* are not always phasal. This is what I will be arguing for in this article: while agreeing that certain constructions with *baigti* are phasal (and will show a general tendency to occur with imperfective infinitives), certain other constructions with *baigti* represent another complementation type which I will call proximative, and these are characterized by the occurrence of perfective infinitives. How I understand imperfective and perfective in the context of the Lithuanian verbal system is a matter on which I will dwell further on.

First, however, we have to settle a few questions concerning phasal complementation. In Slavonic, as we saw, only imperfective infinitives occur with phasal verbs. Let us take an example with ‘begin’:

- (5) *Dzieck-o zaczyna* Polish
 child-NOM.PL **begin.PRS.3SG**
*zasypiać/ *zasnąć.*
fall_asleep.INF [IPFV] / *fall_asleep.INF [PFV]
 ‘The child is beginning to fall asleep.’

In Lithuanian the verb *pradėti* can occur both with *migti*, a simplex generally considered to be imperfective, and *užmigti*, a prefixed verb considered to be perfective. Their distribution is not random, however. We see that *pradeda migti* in (6) reflects one particular situation whereas *užmigti* in (7) is habitual:

³ This formulation is, of course, observationally inadequate: it is not the case that only prefixed verbs can be semantically perfective in Lithuanian: some prefixless verbs, such as *gauti* ‘get’, *likti* ‘stay, remain, be left’ are bi-aspectual and can correspondingly occur in one of the constructions with *baigti* that require perfective infinitives, viz. what we here call the proximative type.

- (6) *Pajut-ęs, kad klausytoj-as pradeda*
 feel-PPA.NOM.SG.M that listener-NOM.SG **start.PRS.3**
migti, žadinu jį..
fall.asleep [IPFV].INF wake.PRS.1SG 3.ACC.SG.M
www.muzikosbarai.lt/index.php?idž291
 ‘When I feel the listener is falling asleep, I wake him up...’
- (7) *Ar ir jūsų vaikam taip buvo?*
Koki-o amži-aus jie vėl pradėjo
 what-GEN.SG.M age-GEN.SG 3.NOM.PL.M again **start.PST.3**
užmigti pat-ys kada nori?
fall.asleep [PFV].INF self-NOM.PL.M when want.PRS.3
<http://www.mamanija.lt/klausimai/33957/>
 ‘Was it the same with your children? At what age did they start again going to sleep of themselves whenever they wanted?’

There is nothing unusual about this. The same distribution is characteristic of present tense forms: *minga* will mean ‘is falling asleep’ as against *visada užminga* ‘always falls asleep’, *dažnai užminga* ‘often falls asleep’:

- (8) *Panelės viena kitai demonstruoja knygų viršelių raizinių figūras ir pozicijas,*
o kit-os jau minga
 and other-NOM.PL.F already **fall.asleep.PRS.3**
laikin-uose. patal-uose.
 temporary-LOC.PL.M bed-LOC.PL
 (from the Lithuanian translation of Bruno Schulz’ *Cinnamon Shops* by Leonija Malakauskienė)
 ‘The girls show each other figures and positions from engravings on bookcovers, others are already falling asleep in their temporary beds.’
- (9) *Šiuo sindrom-u serg-ant-ys žmon-ės*
 this.INS.SG syndrom-INS.SG suffer-PPA-NOM.PL.M people-NOM.PL
dažnai užminga prie automobili-o
 often **fall.asleep.PRS.3** at car-GEN.SG
vair-o
 steering_wheel-GEN.SG
<http://www.ve.lt/naujienos/visuomene/sveikata/nakties-miego-tyrimai---gerai-savijautai-diena-10765/>

‘People suffering from this syndrome often fall asleep at the steering wheel of their cars.’

This pattern differs from such Slavonic languages as Polish or Russian, which would have an imperfective verb in both (8) and (9). But the Lithuanian pattern has a counterpart in English, where the imperfective in (8) corresponds to an English progressive tense while the perfective in (9) corresponds to a simple present. In modern Polish or Russian only imperfective verbs can have a present tense (whether habitual or not), and similarly only imperfective infinitives (whether habitual or not) can occur with phasal verbs like ‘begin’.

The Slavonic languages have made the use of imperfective verbs with phasal verbs into an exceptionless rule, and it is probably the introduction of such exceptionless distributional rules that makes us say that Slavonic aspect has become a highly grammaticalized category.

If allegedly aspectually specialized forms were in free distribution in Lithuanian constructions with phasal verbs, we would be entitled to take this as evidence against the existence of a category of aspect in this language. As things are, we are entitled to say that this is one of the facts showing that Lithuanian aspect is less grammaticalized than Slavonic aspect. While the distributional rule found in Slavonic is positive evidence in favour of aspect, the lack of this rule in Lithuanian is not a very strong piece of evidence against it. It does not tell us anything we didn’t know from elsewhere (e.g. from the use of present tense forms). And even if an investigation would show that the use of *pradedą migti* rather than *pradedą užmigti* (in non-habitual use) is only a strong tendency, not an absolute rule, the difference with regard to Slavonic would still be one of degree.

Finally, a few words should be said about the assumption that phasal verbs can combine only with imperfective verbs. Does this follow from the definition of a phasal construction? Is there empirical evidence for it? As far as the last question is concerned it should be emphasized that phasal constructions are not necessarily uniform in structure, and the constructions for ‘begin’ and ‘finish/stop’ (identical in Slavonic) may differ. This is already evident from examples (1) and (2) above, where we have a past participle for ‘stop’. Noonan (2007, 140) adduces the following examples from Chantyal (Tibeto-Burman):

- (10) *Ram ca-wa thali-i.*
 Ram eat-NZN begin-PERF

‘Ram began to eat.’

(11) *Ram ca-si cfin-ji.*

Ram eat-SEQ finish-PERF

‘Ram finished eating.’

(literally: ‘Ram, having eaten, finished.’)

A certain analogue to the Chantyal sequential form in (11) would be the Lithuanian construction with a past participle in (2). Both in (2) and in (11) the complement appears in a form that in itself conveys anteriority. But how does this anteriority work out in terms of aspect? We can surmise that in languages like Baltic and Slavonic, where aspect is derivational, we will have to make a choice between two aspectually marked forms. Now in (2) this form is naturally imperfective because *liautis* is of the ‘stop’ type: it marks the discontinuation of an activity at an arbitrary moment not connected with any natural boundary. We expect the same for *baigti* in its sense of ‘stop’, that is, in those cases where it combines with an atelic predicate. When the predicate is telic, however, and *baigti* can get the sense of ‘finish’, the necessity of having an imperfective verb is far from obvious. We can imagine three possibilities: (i) we get the sense of ‘stop’, also conveyed by *nustoti* and *liautis*; (ii) we get the sense of ‘finish’, which suggests that the subject regards the action as being in some way completed even though the whole object may not have been processed; and (iii) we get a ‘completive’ sense, that is, it is suggested that the final stage of the processing of the object has been completed.

It seems reasonable to assume that types (ii) and (iii) could be distinguished only through the choice of the aspectual form of the complement. The Slavonic languages do not make use of this possibility and, instead, generalize imperfective infinitives. A consequence is that (4) remains, in a sense, ambiguous: it may be used to convey the information that the book has been completely processed, but this is just a pragmatic inference that can be cancelled. The complete processing of the object can therefore not be linguistically encoded with the aid of a phasal construction in Polish.

Of course it could be argued that this is not necessary because the use of the perfective past tense of a verb (without phasal verb added) does already convey this information. To use a perfective telic verb describing a process having reached its natural, inherent boundary would appear to be redundant. But we should not conclude that what is redundant should

be impossible in language. As we will see, in Lithuanian we sometimes have perfective verbs in constructions that seem to be phasal.

1.3. Aspect in Baltic

The present article is not about verbal aspect in Baltic, but as aspectual notions have been invoked in the literature whenever the properties of Lithuanian phasal constructions with *baigti* were mentioned, it seems appropriate to comment here on the well-foundedness of statements concerning the use of *baigti* with ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ verbs. Whereas hitherto I have referred to these statements using formulations like ‘verbs considered to be (im)perfective’, I will now try to specify in what sense I consider it legitimate to speak, with reference to Lithuanian, of imperfective and perfective verbs *tout court*.

The question of aspect in Baltic has a long history. The notion of aspect having entered Indo-European linguistics from Slavonic scholarship, the Slavonic model of derivational aspect, in which perfectivizing prefixes play a prominent part, has long been held to be a paragon of fully-fledged verbal aspect. In view of the widespread assumption of Balto-Slavonic unity, Baltic was somehow understood to share in this feature. Typological studies of aspect, with such important works as Comrie (1976) and Dahl (1985), have shown that Slavonic aspect is not only typologically rare and areally restricted as far as its (derivational) means of expression are concerned, but also not highly representative of canonical grammatical aspect. Dahl (1985, 89) refers to Slavonic aspect as ‘grammaticalized lexical classes’, and the same formulation applies to Baltic—provided, of course, that we can establish the grammaticalized nature of Baltic aspect. This, however, is an object of controversy. The brunt of the discussion on aspect in Baltic has been to refute the *opinio recepta* viewing Baltic aspect as basically similar to Slavonic. A sizeable number of articles, starting with Safarewicz (1938), are devoted to demonstrating that Lithuanian and Latvian have, in fact, no aspect. To this view I would like to oppose an alternative one to the effect that the aspectually marked lexical classes of Baltic do have a certain degree of grammatical relevance, so that we can characterize Baltic aspect as weakly grammaticalized. Both the degree of grammatical relevance of aspectual differences, and the degree of their generality and obligatoriness, is smaller in Baltic than in Slavonic.

In Baltic, as stated above, aspect rests on ‘grammaticalized lexical classes’. Prefixes introduce different Aktionsarten, e.g. *pa-* in *pa-rašyti* ‘write’ (alongside *rašyti*) could be called completive whereas *su-pykti* ‘get angry’ (alongside *pykti* ‘be angry’) would be inceptive. Part of the prefixed verbs can be called perfective in that they cannot have a present tense with a full array of functions: *parašau* ‘I write’ cannot refer to a homogeneous interval of time including the moment of speaking, and the same goes for *supykstu* ‘I get angry’ (a present tense equivalent would be *pradedu pykti* ‘I’m beginning to get angry’). Such forms have a number of special uses also characteristic of the English simple present: they have habitual meaning, occur in stage directions and sports broadcasts, and as an historical present; they can also be used with negation in potential meaning (as pointed out by Buch 1959).

In many cases only one verb is available rather than a pair of verbs: whereas *pykti* and *su-pykti* clearly differ in terms of aspect, *su-prasti* ‘understand’ does not stand alongside a simplex *prasti* (existing but now obsolete in this sense) and can be used not only in the inceptive sense but also with reference to a state, in which case it obviously will have a normal present tense:

- (12) *Staiga supratau, kas įvyko.*
 suddenly **understand.PST.1SG** what.NOM happen.PST.3
 ‘I suddenly understood what had happened.’
- (13) *Suprantu, kas įvyko.*
 understand.PRS.1SG what.NOM happen.PST.3
 ‘I understand what happened.’

Many Lithuanian prefixed verbs stand outside oppositions in aspect as the meaning they express differs from that expressed by the corresponding simplex, cf. *pripažinti* ‘recognize, acknowledge’ as against *pažinti* ‘know, be acquainted’. Such prefixed verbs will be bi-aspectual as well:

- (14) *Publik-a pagaliau pripažino jo talent-q.*
 public-NOM finally **acknowledge.PST.3** his talent-ACC.SG
 ‘The public finally acknowledged his talent.’
- (15) *Pripažįstu, kad tu buvai*
 acknowledge.PRS.1SG that 1SG.NOM be.PST.2SG
 teis-us.
 right-NOM.SG.M

‘I acknowledge that you were right.’

As the number of bi-aspectual verbs is large in Lithuanian (whereas in Slavonic this is a marginal phenomenon),⁴ aspect is, in terms of generality and obligatoriness, weakly grammaticalized in comparison to Slavonic.

For this reason some authors prefer to deny the existence of verbal aspect in Lithuanian altogether. Arkadiev (2011a) argues that Lithuanian verbs distinguish a large number of Aktionsarten and that a generalizing classification into imperfective and perfective verbs would be unnecessary, possible differences connected with aspectual value being epiphenomenal. I share this view only to a certain extent. It is, of course, correct historically, as it is for Slavonic. For Slavonic it is clear that a ‘perfective : imperfective’ dichotomy was superimposed on the original multiplicity of Aktionsarten when types of grammatical behaviour associated with perfectivity and imperfectivity arose; these include the rules mentioned at the start for constructions with phasal verbs. But I would like to argue that these types of grammatical behaviour have already arisen in Baltic, though they often take the shape of strong tendencies rather than of strict distributional rules. To ignore them would be to miss a generalization. We would, of course, be missing a generalization in a much more obvious way if we tried to capture Slavonic aspect through exhaustive listing of perfective and imperfective Aktionsarten; but the difference is one of degree. Slavonic differs from Baltic (i) in having replaced a number of strong distributional tendencies with exceptionless distributional rules, and (ii) in having extended the lexical basis for aspectual oppositions to a much greater part of the verbal lexicon.

Perfective verbs in Lithuanian comprise:

- accomplishment verbs denoting the reaching, through an incremental process (involving an incremental theme as defined by Dowty 1991), of the inherent boundary of the action, as in *parašyti* ‘write.PFV’ as against *rašyti* ‘write.IPFV’;
- achievement verbs denoting a non-incremental change in state, taken by itself rather than with inclusion of the preparatory phase leading up to it, as in *užmigti* ‘fall asleep.PFV’ as against *migti* ‘fall asleep.IPFV’, *nupirkti* ‘buy.PFV’ as against *pirkti* ‘buy.IPFV’;

⁴ This difference is, of course, due to the fact that secondary imperfectivization by means of suffixes, so characteristic of Slavonic (cf. Polish *wylecieć* [PFV] → *wylat-ywać* [IPFV] ‘fly out’) but only rudimentarily developed in Lithuanian.

- inceptive verbs as against stative verbs, as in *supykti* ‘get angry’ as against *pykti* ‘be angry’;
- complexive or delimitative verbs derived from stative and activity verbs, and denoting an arbitrarily singled-out temporal quantum of a state or activity (not having a natural final boundary), e.g. *pagulėti* ‘lie for some time’, *padirbėti* ‘work for some time’ as against *dirbti* ‘work’ and *gulėti* ‘lie’;
- semelfactive verbs as against state, activity and iterative verbs, as in *žvilgtuoti* ‘cast a look’ as against *žvelgti* ‘look’.

For part of the Aktionsarten listed above, one could argue that an aspectual characteristic would be redundant. The inceptive *supykti* is inherently perfective, and little is gained by specifying it as such in contrast to the inherently imperfective state predicate *pykti*. The fact that *supykstu* ‘I get angry’ can only be habitual could be captured by referring to lexical rather than to grammatical aspect, just as, say, the inability of certain English verbs to form progressive tenses (**is existing*, **is resembling*) is also formulated in terms of lexical rather than grammatical aspect; this point is argued by Sawicki (2000). For accomplishment and achievement predicates, however, I do not think there is a meaningful classification into Aktionsarten that would automatically capture aspectual differences. Arkadiev (2011a) argues that pairs like *rašyti* and *parašyti*, *skaityti* and *perskaityti* actually represent two different Aktionsarten, processual and punctual. I regard this claim as purely terminological and contend that this distinction of Aktionsarten is introduced in order to account for an opposition that is in fact aspectual. The same could be said about pairs of achievement verbs like *migti* : *užmigti* ‘fall asleep’.

Arkadiev (2011a) adduces several arguments against the aspectual interpretation of oppositions like *rašyti* : *parašyti*, *skaityti* : *perskaityti* etc. One of these is that such pairs of verbs are not used in a way conforming with viewpoint aspect; this, however, could also be said of Slavonic aspect. Arkadiev also points out that the opposition between, say, *rašyti* and *parašyti*, *skaityti* and *perskaityti* is never neutralized as it is in Slavonic. This lacking neutralization could be illustrated with the following pair of examples, contrasting Polish and Lithuanian:

- | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|--|--------|
| (16) | <i>Portier</i> | <i>zawsze zamyka</i> / <i>*zamknie</i> | Polish |
| | porter.NOM.SG | always close [IPFV].PRS.3SG / *close [PFV].PRS.3SG | |
| | <i>bram-ę na klucz.</i> | | |
| | gate-ACC.SG on key.ACC.SG | | |

‘The porter always locks the gate.’

- (17) *Durinink-as visada rakina / užrakina* Lith.
 porter-NOM.SG always lock [IPFV].PRS.3/lock [PFV].PRS.3
vart-us.
 gate-ACC.SG
 ‘id.’

In (16) the imperfective *zamykać* takes over the function of the perfective *zamknać*, as it is understood that the gate is completely locked every time; the perfective form would be acceptable only in very specific circumstances. This shows that in some Slavonic languages a close interrelation between the use of temporal and aspectual forms has arisen: a present tense form, whatever its function, is normally derived only from imperfective verbs.⁵ We could imagine an analogical situation arising if, say, the English progressive form were generalized in the present tense to the exclusion of the simple present tense and, instead of *She always falls asleep during my lectures* we could only say *She is always falling asleep during my lectures* (which is, of course, possible as well even now, but with a specific emotive effect, on which cf. Comrie 1976, 37). We could very well imagine such a development, comparable, say, to the replacement of the original present tense with analytic forms and its relegation to the function of subjunctive in modern Armenian, or similar processes in other languages. We would probably not say that English aspect will only at that hypothetical stage have become grammatical, because the grammatical (even though analytical) character of English aspect is not subject to doubt. On the other hand, are we prepared to say that in Russian, Polish etc., where aspect is basically derivational, aspect has become grammatical now that neutralizations of the type described above have occurred? We could decide so by terminological fiat, but probably in no other way. We have no good criteria to establish at what point aspectually marked lexical classes become grammatical aspect. Of course, in Slavonic we have verbs that cannot have a present tense, from which certain participles and converbs cannot be derived, or whose infinitives cannot combine with phasal verbs etc.; here aspect obviously has become grammatically relevant and, in that sense, grammatical. But

⁵ As Wayles Browne pointed out to me, South Slavonic is more like Lithuanian in this respect: in Serbian-Croatian-Bosnian both *Vratar uvijek zatvori* [PFV] *vrata* and *Vratar uvijek zatvara* [IPFV] *vrata* ‘The porter always closes the door’ would be possible.

it would be an exaggeration to say that, for instance, the restriction of the present tense forms of a verb to habitual use in Lithuanian or Latvian is irrelevant to grammar. I therefore posit a difference of degree rather than of principle between Slavonic and Baltic aspect as far as grammaticality is concerned.

1.4. Phasal constructions with perfective infinitives in Lithuanian

A striking feature of the Lithuanian verb *baigti* is its occurrence with perfective infinitives derived from accomplishment verbs. An example would be (18):

- (18) *Puik-us tavo tinklarašt-is, ką tik vis-q*
 great-NOM.SG.M your blog-NOM.SG just all-ACC.SG
baigiau perskaityti, radau tikrai daug
 finish.PST.1SG read[PFV].INF find.PST.1SG really many
įdomi-ų straipsni-ų.
 interesting-GEN.PL article-GEN.PL
<http://www.arvydas.net/startas>
 ‘Your blog is great, I just finished reading it all through, and I really found a lot of interesting articles.’

This construction stands alongside similar constructions with imperfective infinitives:

- (19) *Šiandien baigiau skaityti Jodi Picoult*
 today finish.PST.1SG read[IPFV].INF PN
roman-q
 novel-ACC.SG
 „Kita širdis“.
<http://pazintys.draugas.lt/srautas.cfm?title=Siandien-baigiau-skaityti-Jodi-Picoult-romana-Kita-sirdis-Manau&irasas=1391261>
 ‘Today I finished reading Jodi Picoult’s novel *Change of Heart*.’

Between these two constructions there is, however, a difference. A sentence like (19) will often be interpreted as meaning that the novel had been read in its entirety, but this is no more than a pragmatic inference. Usually a sentence like this will be understood as meaning that the reader

regards his reading as completed (even if he has read only half of the book). It is also possible that the subject does not regard the reading of the novel as completed but has just interrupted it for some time, cf.

- (20) *Priešpiet baigiau skaityti Jodi Picoult roman-q*
 this_morning stop.PST.1SG read.INF PN novel-ACC.SG
ir išėjau pasivaikščioti į sod-q.
 and go_out.PST.1SG walk.INF into garden-ACC.SG
 (construed example)
 ‘This morning I stopped reading Jodi Picoult’s novel and went
 for a walk in the garden.’

But even if the action is considered completed, the exhaustive reading of the whole book does not belong to linguistically encoded meaning. When the perfective infinitive is used, on the other hand, the processing of the book will be understood to have been completed, and the complete reading of the book will also become an (uncancellable) element of linguistically encoded meaning. Of course the pragmatic inference relating to exhaustive processing of the book may be sufficiently entrenched to allow constructions like (19) to perform everyday duty with roughly the same communicative effect as sentences like (18).

In order to characterize constructions like (18) we could perhaps use the term ‘completive’. Completives ‘indicate that something is done thoroughly and to completion’ (Heine & Kuteva 2004, 18). This is a rather vague definition that could apply to several different types of grams, and I use the term just as a convenient label enabling us to refer to the subgroup of phasal constructions illustrated in (18). There is probably no need to set up a distinct type of ‘completive’ constructions apart from phasal complementation. Constructions like (18) are also phasal (unlike the proximative constructions to be discussed below, which considerably diverge from what we would be prepared to call phasal), and the meaning element distinguishing this type from non-completive phasal constructions like (19) is basically contained in the semantics of the perfective infinitive rather than in the construction itself. As suggested above, the notion that phasal verbs can only be combined with imperfective verbs is carried over from Slavonic aspectology. It is no doubt correct with reference to constructions with ‘begin’, but not necessarily with reference to those denoting the final stage of an action.

As we will see further, completive uses of *baigti* with a perfective infinitive are basically restricted to accomplishments. In what respect the completive *baigiau perskaityti* differs from the corresponding perfective form *perskaičiau* ‘I have read through [PFV]’, from which it does not truth-conditionally differ, is not quite clear; perhaps several factors might be involved, such as the dispersion of the action in time and its division into several distinct portions; or the fact that the action has been referred to earlier and its occurrence is presupposed, etc. The restriction to accomplishments suggests that the perfective (completive) variety of the phasal construction refers to the pre-final portion of a completed telic process; about achievement predicates see 3.2 below.

To conclude this section a few words should be said about the aspectual value of *baigti* itself. This verb is bi-aspectual, so that, e.g., sentence (19), which, as it stands, will normally receive a perfective reading in terms of viewpoint aspect, can also receive an imperfective interpretation if the necessary contextual elements are introduced, cf. (21):

- (21) *Šiandien baigiau skaityti Jodi Picoult*
 today finish.PST.1SG read [IPFV].INF PN
roman-q, kai tu man sutrukdei.
 novel-ACC.SG when 2SG.NOM 1SG.DAT disturb.PST.2SG
 ‘Today I was finishing reading Jodi Picoult’s novel when you interrupted me.’

In its perfective meaning, however, *baigti* also has a prefixed, unequivocally perfective counterpart *pabaigti*. Its past tense form *pabaigiau* (PST.1SG) could be substituted for *baigiau* in (18), (19) and (20), but not in (21). Whether this would result in any semantic differences (more specifically, whether in sentences like (19) the perfective form of the phasal verb would be more strongly suggestive of a completive reading) deserves to be investigated. In proximative complementation, however, the perfective *pabaigti* is not used at all, and I will therefore not mention it further.

2. Proximative complementation in Lithuanian

2.1. A definition and an example

The bulk of Lithuanian constructions with *baigti* and perfective infinitives is of a type clearly different from those discussed in 1.4. I will refer to

them as instances of proximative complementation, using a term widely used since Heine (1994), who cites a 1993 publication by Christa König on the African language Maasai as the prime source. Proximatives are said to “define a temporal phase located close to the initial boundary of the situation described by the main verb” (Heine 1994, 36). The term ‘proximative’ seems to have all but ousted another term, of longer standing in the literature, that of ‘prospective aspect’. Comrie (1976, 64) characterizes the prospective aspect (illustrated by, say, *the ship is about to sail*) as describing “present state relative to future state”, more specifically “an imminently future state”. The term ‘proximative’ seems to have no inherent claims to superiority over the older ‘prospective’, and I adopt it only because it has been used in recent publications such as Kuteva (2001) and Heine & Kuteva (2004).

The definition of proximatives given above will have to be elaborated on and made more precise with regard to constructions with proximative complements. We will start from an example:

- (22) *Balkon-ai baigia nukristi,*
 balcony-NOM.PL **finish.PRS.3** **fall [PFV].INF**
sienos suskilinėjusios daug labiau, nei jie matė prieš išvažiuojant.
<http://www.ve.lt/naujienos/klaipeda1/mano-klaipeda/kur-klaipedoje-nuvesti-svecia-995882/komentarai/>, page.2
 ‘The balconies can come down any moment, the walls are cracked much more than they had noticed before departing.’

This construction is certainly not phasal in the usual sense: the falling down of the balconies has not yet started—it is only imminent. Can we, then, describe the construction in (22) as completive? If it is, we should be able to shift it to the future, to refer to the prospective completion of a process. Actually it is possible to form a completive phasal construction referring to the future, with the verb *baigti* also in the future, cf. (23):

- (23) *Jaučiu, kad tuoj baigsiu perskaityti.*
 feel.PRS.1SG that presently **finish.FUT.1SG** **read [PFV].INF**
Jaučiu, kad tokios knygutės neina padėti į šalį.
<http://old.skautai.lt/vt/users.php?id=613&page=28>
 ‘I feel I’ll read through [the book] very soon. I feel it’s impossible to put such a book down.’

In the case of *nukristi*, however, this would yield a deviant sentence:

- (24) **Balkon-ai greitai baigs nukristi.*
 balcony-NOM.PL soon finish.FUT.3 fall_down.INF
 Intended meaning: ‘The balconies will soon be ready with coming down.’

This suggests that (22) is not completive. In fact it is not difficult to see why *qua* completive construction (22) should be problematic. ‘Fall down’ is an achievement that is conceived as having no duration. It is clear that (22) does not refer to the final phase or point of the process of the balconies coming down: what is referred to is the worsening state of disrepair of the balconies which is likely to result, in a not too distant future, in their tumbling down, but that actual event will be a matter of seconds. These are the grounds for saying that (22) is not phasal at all, but proximative.

Constructions like that in (22) are used to refer to an accumulation of events allowing the speaker to state that a certain juncture initiating a new state of affairs is imminent. This accumulation can, but need not, consist in an incremental process affecting the object/intransitive subject.

Beyond this general characterization, there is considerable variation according to the type of predicate occurring in the infinitival complement. I will here use the traditional Vendlerian types (Vendler 1957), but supplemented with distinctions and notions introduced by subsequent authors (Dowty 1979, Rothstein 2004, Croft 2012 etc.) to describe the different possibilities. First I will, in the next section, attempt to define the specific properties of the Lithuanian proximative construction with *baigti* and a perfective infinitive.

Before going on, however, I would like to make the following terminological remark. In Heine’s definition, reference is made to a ‘temporal phase’, and indeed the construction in (22) can be called, in some sense, phasal: this sentence suggests a continually worsening state of disrepair of the balconies likely to lead to their coming down; the speech act is located in the final phase of the process extending in time up to the expected tumbling down of the balconies. There is therefore a broadly defined group of phasal constructions of which the Lithuanian type referred to here as proximatives could be said to be a subtype. But the notion of phasal complementation has a well-established, narrower sense, cf. Noo-

nan's definition quoted above. The type of construction illustrated in (22) uses the final stage of a process as a vantage point to look out towards a future event that will result from the process (though usually not being itself a part of this process). This futuric perspective is not an element of what is usually included in the notion of phasal predicates, which is why I classify the construction with proximatives though it might be viewed as intermediate between phasal and proximative functions. How this question is to be settled notionally and terminologically is a matter for further discussion.

2.2. The Lithuanian proximative with *baigti*: specific properties

Many grams, even if they can roughly be classified with a major gram type widespread across languages, have some idiosyncratic properties that can be traced back to their source construction. This is also the case with the Lithuanian proximative construction with *baigti*. This construction involves two elements: a process (i) leading up to some predictable juncture (ii) initiating a new state of affairs.

The necessary presence of a process going on at the moment of speaking can be seen from the following example containing the verb *atvažiuoti*, which we can describe as an accomplishment:

- (25) *Baigiame atvažiuoti. Jau matosi*
finish.PRS.1PL arrive.INF already see.PRS.3.REFL
sostin-ė — pasakė kaimyn-as ir jis
 capital-NOM.SG say.PST.3 neighbour-NOM.SG and 3.NOM.SG.M
ne-klydo.
 NEG-ERR.PST.3
 inthedark.blogas.lt/po-angelo-sparnu-67.html
 'We will arrive presently. You can already see the capital, said my neighbour, and he was right.'

This sentence is possible because the persons referred to are on their way. If the journey referred to by *atvažiuoti* is completely in the future (a 'punctual' reading, so to speak), the construction cannot be used:

- (26) **Petr-as baigia atvažiuoti į Vilnių.*
 PN-NOM.SG **finish.PRS.3 arrive.INF** in Vilnius
 Intended meaning: 'Peter will soon come to Vilnius.'

However, if the subject is a group of persons journeying successively, the process referred to is conceived as a series of individual events extending back into the past so as to encompass the moment of speaking as well. In (27), the proximative construction indicates that a series of successive departures has already started and will continue to exhaustion—till the departure of the last person, which is the imminent event the whole construction refers to:

- (27) *O šiandien ta pat-i Lietuv-a*
 and today that.NOM.SG.F same-NOM.SG.F Lithuania-NOM
baigia išvažiuoti. Ypač jaunim-as.
 finish.prs.3 depart.inf especially youth-NOM.SG
www.alfa.lt/straipsnis/10567674/kuo-sovietinis-mokinys-skiriasi-nuo-laisvo/?pž5#.UygTWf15P8Q
 ‘And now the whole of Lithuania will soon have emigrated. Especially young people.’

This restriction imposed on the use of the proximative construction is evidently connected with its history: the proximative construction with *baigti* probably evolved from the phasal use of this verb, which is no doubt older and is the only one to occur with the Latvian verb *beigt*, the etymological counterpart of Lithuanian *baigti*. We do not know how the proximative construction arose, but the easiest way to imagine this development is to assume that, first, the phasal construction gave rise to a completive construction (through the introduction of perfective infinitives), after which the (basically preterital) completive construction extended to present tense contexts, where it was reinterpreted as proximative. This reconstruction remains entirely speculative, of course.

The second condition pertains to the situation that is said to be approaching. It cannot consist in a state but must be specified as a juncture leading to a state or activity. If we have a pair of verbs, one denoting a state and the other the inception of that state, only the latter will, in combination with *baigti*, yield a proximative reading; the stative or activity predicate will give the construction a phasal meaning, cf. the following examples with *susipykti* ‘fall out, get offended at each other’ and *pyktis* ‘be at odds with each other’:

- (28) *Baigiam susipykti su žmon-a, nes*
 finish.prs.1PL fall_out.inf with wife-INS.SG because

ji tiki gydytoj-a, o aš — ne.
 3.NOM.SG.F believe.PRS.3 doctor-INS.SG[F] but 1SG.NOM NEG
<http://www.15min.lt/naujiena/aktualu/lietuva/bijai-gripo-klausk-gydytojo-atsakymai-nr-3-56-73954>

‘My wife and I are close to having a quarrel, because she believes in the doctor whereas I don’t.’

(29) *Labas vakaras pikčiurn-os, gal baigiam*

(=3) Good evening grumbler-VOC.PL maybe **finish.PRS.1PL**

pyktis ir einam koki-o al-aus?

be_offended.INF and go.PRS.1PL some-GEN.SG beer-GEN.SG

<http://www.calibra-club.lt/forum/viewtopic.php?p=17055>

‘Good evening, you grumblers, maybe we could stop quarrelling and go for a beer?’

To these two features we could add a third: typically the proximative construction involves a non-volitional interpretation of the event. In (25), the inert continuation of the motion will result in arrival at the goal. In (27) every single act of emigration is, of course, volitional, but the final result is the outcome of the inert continuation of a process once set in motion. In (28), the couple’s slide into a quarrel is a process they do not control. More generally, we can state that between the final stage of the preparatory process which the proximative construction refers to and the imminent juncture there should be no intervening act of volition on the part of the subject.

In the following section I will examine how verbs of different aspectual classes and different aspects behave with regard to the proximative construction. I assume there are four possibilities: when used as a complement of the verb *baigti*, a verb may yield (i) a phasal construction, (ii) a proximative construction, (iii) both a phasal and a proximative construction (i.e. the sentence will be ambiguous between a phasal and a proximative reading), or (iv) no meaningful construction.

As in a number of cases a sentence appeared to be susceptible of two competing readings, a test was carried out involving 35 native informants (undergraduate students and academic teachers at Vilnius University and a few not academically affiliated but philologically trained Lithuanians). They were asked whether the meaning of a sentence with *baigti* could be paraphrased with the verb *nustoti* ‘cease’ or with *pradėti* ‘begin’. It was also possible to accept both readings, or to reject both, e.g.

- (30) *Jis baigia suvokti, kur jis*
 3.NOM.SG.M finish.PRS.3 realize.INF where 3.NOM.SG.M
yra.
 be.PRS.3
 ‘He finish.PRS.3 to realize where he is.’
 (a) $\approx$ *nustoja suvokti* ‘is ceasing to realize’
 (b) $\approx$ *pradedą suvokti* ‘is beginning to realize’
 (c) both

The choice of the second paraphrase (with ‘begin’) was taken to be indicative of a proximative reading.

3. Interaction of *baigti* with different aspectual classes

3.1. Accomplishments

In the case of accomplishments it is rather difficult to set proximative complementation apart from other constructions based on the verb *baigti*. In the case of accomplishments we are dealing with an incremental process whose final phase becomes a vantage point from which an imminent juncture, the reaching of the final boundary of the process, is observed. In this case the preparatory process is the one expressed by the imperfective accomplishment verb (say, *rašyti*), whereas the imminent juncture is expressed by the corresponding perfective verb (say, *parašyti*). This could be illustrated with (31):

- (31) *Šved-as Yngwie Malmsteen [...] jau*
 Swede-NOM.SG PN already
baigia parašyti savo autobiografiją,
 finish.PRS.3 write[PFV].INF REFLPOSS autobiography-ACC
kuri išeis 2013 m. pradžioje.
<https://www.facebook.com/diovima/posts/424433610954210>
 ‘The Swede Yngwie Malmsteen is about to finish his autobiography, which is due to appear early in 2013.’

However, saying that the completion of an action is imminent does not greatly differ from saying that the subject is completing the final phase of an action, which would enable a completive reading; besides, the construction with the perfective infinitive will not be clearly opposed to that with an imperfective infinitive:

- (32) *Autor-ė* *prasitarė,* *kad jau* *baigia*
 authoress-NOM.SG betray.PST.3 that already **finish.PRS.3**
rašyti *ir* *antrąją* *šio*
write [IPFV].INF as well second-ACC.PL.F.DEF this.GEN.SG.M
roman-o *dalį [...]*
 novel-GEN.SG part-ACC.SG
<http://www.vakarinėpalanga.lt/lt/laikrastis/kultura/?id=3525>
 ‘The authoress betrayed that she was finishing writing the second part of this novel as well.’

The difference observed in the case of past tense forms (cf. (18) and (19)) cannot manifest itself here because the final completion of the action (depending on the action not being interrupted) will be equally speculative in both cases. Therefore the present tense of *baigti* with non-iterative accomplishment predicates will be an area of neutralization between completive phasal complementation and proximative complementation. There may be differences in the construal of the situation but they are not objectively verifiable. It is conceivable that it was precisely this possibility of twofold construal characteristic of present tense constructions with *baigti* and accomplishment verbs that provided the link between phasal and proximative complementation: the construction with a perfective infinitive, once carried over from accomplishments to achievements, became unequivocally proximative, and the proximative construction with *baigti* emancipated itself from the phasal one.

3.2. Achievements

The frequent and characteristic occurrence of achievement predicates is the most salient feature of the proximative complement type, setting it clearly apart from phasal complementation. As noted by Dowty (1979, 60), accomplishments are OK as complements of ‘stop’ and ‘finish’ but achievements are bad with both. Achievements may be characterized by preparatory stages leading up to a non-incremental change in state, cf. *he was falling asleep*, *I’m buying a new car* etc. In Slavonic and Baltic, these are expressed by the imperfective counterparts to perfective achievement verbs:

- (33) *Vaik-as* *krenta* *nuo* *kėd-ės*.
 child-NOM.SG **fall.PRS.3** off chair-GEN.SG
 ‘The child is falling off his chair/is about to fall off his chair.’

However, this preparatory stage is probably not conceived of as an autonomous event, but only as the preparatory stage preceding an event. Accomplishments, on the other hand, are fully-fledged events even if they are not brought to completion. This is why it is odd (except for iterative use) to say *He has been falling off his chair* whereas it is perfectly natural to say *He has been making a chair*, *She has been writing a book* etc. In order to express what would be conveyed by *He has been falling off his chair* it is more natural to say *He almost fell off his chair*, which shows the affinity of achievements to proximative predication.

The preparatory process leading up to the achievement referred to by the infinitive is an important element of the proximative construction, though usually it is not a process that could be referred to by a corresponding imperfective verb. This can be seen in (34):

- (34) *Kriminalist-ai* *baigia* *įminti* *žuvusi-o*
 criminalist-NOM.PL **finish.PRS.3** **guess.INF** dead-GEN.SG.M
grybautoj-o *mįsl-ę.*
 mushroom.picker-GEN.SG riddle-ACC.SG
[http://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvos-diena/nelaimes/kriminalistai--baigia-iminti-zuvusio-grybautoj-misle.htm](http://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvos-diena/nelaimes/kriminalistai-baigia-iminti-zuvusio-grybautoj-misle.htm)
 ‘The criminal police are heading toward solving the riddle of the mushroom-picker who was found dead.’

There is, of course, no incremental change here but rather an accumulation of data leading to a breakthrough in the investigation; it is what has been called a ‘non-incremental accomplishment’ (Rothstein 2004, 98–99) or a ‘runup-achievement’ (Croft 2012, 41, 63). To the extent that the accumulation of data could be viewed as an incremental process, it is an accumulation of external evidence that can be clearly set apart from the expected change in state, which affects the consciousness or state of knowledge of the investigators. Thus the phasal aspect is clearly present, but the focus is on the qualitative change that is anticipated and that is extraneous to, though causally connected with, the accumulative or incremental process.

Proximative constructions are close in meaning to the imperfective counterparts of achievements verbs, as they involve the same preparatory stage, but they additionally specify the proximity of the final achievement:

- (35) *Vienu laiku sesijos pirmininkas atsiprašė,*
jog baigia užmigti ir savo vadovavim-q
 that finish.PRS.3 fall_asleep.INF and REFLPOSS presidency-ACC
turi perleisti vicepirminink-ui.
 must.PRS.3 cede.INF vice-chairman-DAT
<http://www.draugas.org/12-29-09tijunelis.html>
 ‘At a certain moment the chairman apologized [saying] that he
 was almost falling asleep and that he had to cede his function to
 the vice-chairman.’

Can *baigė užmigti* have a completive interpretation? If so, there should, if the verb *baigti* is in the past tense, be two competing readings:

- (36) *Vaik-as baigė užmigti.*
 child-NOM.SG finish.PST.3 fall.asleep.INF
 (a) ‘The child has finally gone off to sleep.’
 (b) ‘The child had almost fallen asleep.’

Interpretation (a) is, however, rejected by native informants, whereas (b), though less natural than the corresponding construction with the present tense form *baigia*, is accepted. This would point to the conclusion that the completive subtype of phasal construction is characteristic of accomplishments only.

How will combinations of *baigti* with imperfective achievement verbs be interpreted? In many cases they will not yield a meaningful collocation, e.g. *baigia migti* ‘ceases to fall asleep’ is not a possible construction because ‘being falling asleep’ is not an autonomous event but the phase preceding an event; it would be as odd as ‘to stop not working’ etc. Typical achievement predicates will receive a phasal interpretation only if iterative. This is illustrated by the following pair of examples with *pirkti* ‘buy’ (IPFV) and *nupirkti* ‘buy’ (PFV). The perfective variety occurs in a proximative construction referring to the imminent purchase of the last remaining parcel of land on the Kerch Peninsula; the imperfective *pirkti* occurs in a phasal construction referring to the discontinuation of a series of acts of purchase (which has, in this case, no natural final boundary):

- (37) *Kerč-ės pusiasal-į baigia nupirkti*
 Kerch-GEN peninsula-ACC.SG finish.PRS.3 buy [PFV].INF
Maskvieči-ai.
 Muscovite-NOM.PL

<http://www.supermama.lt/forumas/index.php?showtopic=470028&st=164>

‘Muscovites will soon have bought up the whole Kerch peninsula.’

- (38) *Baig-ę* *pirkti* *nereikaling-us*
finish-PPA.NOM.PL.M **buy [IPFV].INF** unnecessary-ACC.PL.M
daikt-us,
 thing-ACC.PL
atsisakę daugelio pramogų ir pradėję taupyti dabar per mėnesį išleidiame 2 tūkst. litų mažiau.
<http://www.alfa.lt/straipsnis/10305734/#.U25ERvmSwt0>
 ‘Now that we have stopped buying unnecessary things, given up a lot of pleasures and started economizing, we spend 2000 Lt less every month.’

If an achievement verb is bi-aspectual, as in the case of *prarasti* ‘lose’ (the simplex *rasti* has the completely different meaning ‘find’), the verb *baigti* selects the perfective reading and the construction is proximative:

- (39) *Labai prašau padėkit,* *nes jau* *baigiu*
 much please help.IMP.2PL for already **finish.PRS.1SG**
prarasti *vis-as* *vilt-is!*
lose.INF all-ACC.PL.F hope-ACC.PL
http://www.sveikaszmogus.lt/Alergines_ligos1-atsakymas3673
 ‘Please help me, for I have almost given up every hope!’

3.3. Degree achievements

This term was introduced by Dowty (1979, 88–90) to describe predicates like *cool*, *lengthen* etc. As observed by Hay, Kennedy and Levin (1999), they are actually incremental without having a natural boundary, as accomplishments have. The degree of a change can be interpreted as either bounded or unbounded, resulting in telic or atelic behaviour of the verb. With regard to the interpretation of constructions with *baigti*, degree achievements behave differently from typical achievements. As an example we will take the verb *(nu)kristi* ‘fall, decrease’. This verb is also used in another sense, that of ‘come down, tumble down’, as illustrated in example (22); in this sense, *(nu)kristi* is an achievement verb. In the

sense of ‘decrease’ it is a degree achievement. The perfective *nukristi* occurs in a proximative construction if the relevant change is bounded by the introduction of an arbitrary or normative boundary in the form of a prepositional phrase with *iki* ‘until, to’:

- (40) *Minij-a labai sparčiai baigia nukristi*
 GN-NOM very quickly finish.PRS.3 fall [PFV].INF
iki beveik normal-aus lygi-o,
 until almost normal-GEN.SG.M level-GEN.SG
<http://www.ve.lt/naujienos/laisvalaikis/patarimai/zvejams--paskutinis-stintu-valsas-713420/>
 ‘The (water of the) Minija is rapidly falling to an almost normal level.’

When no explicit boundary is introduced, there is always reference to some normative value:

- (41) *Paskutinį mėn[esį] svoris kaip ant mielių augo.*
Taip kaip greit priaugau, taip ir greit
 so as quickly gain_in_weight.PST.1SG so also quickly
baigia nukristi.
 finish.PRS.3 fall [PFV].INF
 ‘Over the last month my weight grew as on yeast. As quickly as I had gained weight, it is now beginning to fall.’
<http://www.mamanija.lt/klausimai/6901/kiem-mazdaug-valandu-miegate-9-ame-nestumo-menesy/rikiavimas/geriausi-atsakymai>

The imperfective *kristi*, on the other hand, will be interpreted as an incremental process that can be interrupted at any arbitrary moment, and the construction with *baigti* will receive the phasal interpretation (this holds for typical achievements as well, but, as shown in (37), these will then get an iterative reading). This was tested on native informants using the following sentence:

- (42) *Doleri-o vert-ė baigia kristi.*
 dollar-GEN.SG value-NOM.SG finish.PRS.3 fall [IPFV].INF

Among 35 informants, 27 understood this as ‘ceases to fall’, but 4 opted for ‘is beginning to fall’ and 4 admitted both readings. While the preference for the phasal reading is clear, it is not clear what should be made of

the 8 divergent answers. In order for an unambiguous proximative reading to obtain we would expect the perfective *nukristi*; if we occasionally find *kristi*, this might be due to a tendency in some speakers to treat *kristi* as a bi-aspectual verb.

3.4. Activities and semelfactives

Activity predicates are precluded from occurring in proximative constructions. Whereas states of a subject can be determined by an incremental or accumulative process leading up to it, activities, which are controlled by human volition, start, as it were, from zero. This restriction is not a property of proximatives as such (we could imagine constructions like *she was about to start dancing*), but is connected rather with the source construction: *baigti* always introduces the notion of a process leading up to the anticipated juncture. Therefore an activity verb combined with *baigti* will always yield a phasal interpretation.

- (43) Nors kai kuri-os balerin-os *baigia*
 although some-NOM.PL.F ballet_dancer-NOM.PL finish.PRS.3
šokti sulauk-usi-os 30 met-ų ...
 dance.INF reach-PPA-NOM.PL.F year-GEN.PL
<http://www.lrytas.lt/-12267062981225414455-p9-buvusias-%C5%BEvaig%C5%BEdes-%C5%A1ildo-praeities-%C5%A1lov%C4%97s-trupiniai.htm>
 ‘Although some ballet dancers stop dancing on reaching the age of thirty...’

Semelfactive verbs like *šoktelėti* ‘jump’, *trūkteletėti* ‘jerk, twist’ etc. do not occur in the proximative construction either, even though they are perfective. The reason is that they either require an act of volition (the *šoktelėti* type), or a some involuntary motor impulse (the *trūkteletėti* type), and in both cases are not the outcome of a process, which is characteristic of the proximative construction.

3.5. State and inceptive state predicates

State predicates seem to be completely excluded in the proximative construction: when a verb can be used only to express a state, to the exclusion of the juncture leading to that state, and another (prefixed) verb

denotes entrance into state, the imperfective predicate selects the phasal meaning and the perfective one selects the proximative reading, as shown in (10), (11).

Some verbs can express either a state or the inception of that state, like *suprasti* ‘understand’, cf. *staiga supratau* (PST.1SG) ‘I suddenly understood’ alongside *suprantu* (PRS.1SG) ‘I understand’. If such a verb occurs with *baigti*, the ingressive reading is normally selected and the construction is proximative:

- (44) *Baigiu* *suprasti* *vyr-ų* *logik-ą*,
 finish.PRS.1SG **understand.INF** man-GEN.PL logic-ACC
ji *labai panaš-i* *į moter-ų* *bent jau*
 3.NOM.SG.F quite similar-NOM.SG.F to woman-GEN.PL at_least
 mano.
 mine
 ‘I am almost beginning to understand men’s logic. It’s quite similar to women’s, at least to mine.’
 http://www.prisimink.lt/lt/diskusijos.forum_zinutes/122096.3?sev=page

The phasal interpretation (‘I am ceasing to understand’) is not completely excluded, but much rarer. In the test with native informants, the proximative reading (‘I am beginning to understand’) was chosen as the only possible one by 30 informants, only one opted for the phasal reading and 4 allowed both. Nearly the same figures emerged for *suvokti* ‘realize’: 31 informants out of 35 chose the proximative reading.

A similar distribution obtains for such bi-aspectual verbs as *pripažinti* ‘recognize’ and *sutikti, pritarti* ‘agree’, which can both denote the initial moment or the permanent state of recognition, agreement etc. In the case of *baigia* ‘finish.PRS.3’ *pritarti* ‘agree.INF’, 26 informants chose the proximative reading, only 4 chose the phasal reading and 5 admitted both.

With some verbs, however, native speakers accept both interpretations—the phasal and the proximative one. An example is *priminti* ‘to remind somebody of something’ or ‘to be reminiscent of’. With *prisiminti* ‘to recall’, which requires an experiencer subject and can also refer both to the moment an association is established in the mind and to the continuing association (*staiga prisiminiau* [PST.1SG] ‘I suddenly remembered’: *vis dar prisimenu* [PRS.1SG] ‘I still remember’), the reading will be consistently proximative:

- (45) *Anksčiau „Žuvėdroje“ šokusi mergina nuo pirmadienio įsiliejo tarp dublerių*
ir baigia prisiminti vis-us element-us.
 and **finish.PRS.3 recall.INF** all-ACC.PL.M element-ACC.PL
<http://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/klaipeda/miesto-pulsas/klaipedos-zuvedra-isskrido-i-sibira-361225/?puslapis=1661#>.
 UxtYuvmSw
 ‘The girl, who has formerly danced with ‘The Seagulls’, has become one of the spare dancers and all the elements [of dancing] are gradually coming back to her.’

On the other hand, with *priminti* ‘remind, be reminiscent’, which takes the stimulus as a subject, both readings are possible. A phasal meaning can be seen in:

- (46) *Internato durys Porfirui lieka atviros ir jis grįžta,*
kai mokykl-a baigia priminti narv-q.
 when school-NOM.SG **finish.PRS.3 remind.INF** cage-ACC.SG
http://megogo.net/lt/films/genres_sport+short+kids
 ‘The doors of the boarding school stay open to Porfiry and he returns when school ceases to remind him of a cage.’

However, native informants also accept the proximative use: when asked to evaluate *Mokykla baigia man priminti narvą* ‘school is ceasing/beginning to remind me of a cage’, 17 informants chose the proximative (‘begin’) reading, 12 opted for the phasal reading (‘cease’) and 6 accepted both.

In a similar fashion, native informants accept two readings in the case of *patikti* ‘to please’, which also takes the stimulus as a subject:

- (47) *Ta mergin-a baigia man patikti.*
 this.NOM.SG.F girl-NOM.SG **finish.PRS.3** 1SG.DAT **please.INF**
 (a) ‘I am ceasing to like this girl’
 (b) ‘I am beginning to like this girl’

Here 13 informants chose the phasal reading, 18 the proximative reading and 4 accepted both. By way of comparison, the informants were also asked to evaluate an example with *atsiminti* ‘recall’, which requires an experiencer in subject position:

- (48) *Jis baigia atsiminti mano vard-q.*
 3.NOM.SG.M **finish.PRS.3** **recall.INF** my name-ACC.SG
 (a) 'he is ceasing to remember my name'
 (b) 'he is beginning to remember my name'

In this case 32 informants chose the proximative reading, only 2 chose the phasal interpretation and one admitted both. This is, perhaps, not a coincidence. After all, no aspectual differences seem to be involved: all verbs mentioned here, whether taking an experiencer or a stimulus subject, may refer both to a state and to its inception. But possibly the stative interpretation is somehow more basic or predominant when the subject is inanimate and has the semantic role of stimulus. However, further research would be necessary to confirm this.

The possibility for some verbs of this group to combine with the verb *baigti* in two constructions that, in a given situation, yield diametrically opposite interpretations ('cease to like' and 'begin to like') may seem surprising, but it should be kept in mind that in a more elaborated code it is usually the verb *nustoti* that is used in the meaning of 'cease'. In a situation like that of example (46), educated speakers of Lithuanian will probably use *nustoja priminti* in the meaning of 'ceases to remind him' and *baigia priminti* in that of 'begins to remind him'. In a more restricted code, where *baigti* also covers the functional domain of *nustoti* 'cease', the extent of ambiguity is probably greater, but the context seems to be a sufficient disambiguator in most instances; and the number of bi-aspectual verbs with which this ambiguity may arise is perhaps not very large. At any rate, this difference between elaborated and restricted code probably had little influence on the outcome of the test. All persons answering it were users of the elaborated code, but this does not seem to have affected their ability to detect the possibility of a phasal reading of *baigti*.

4. Negation

There are certain differences regarding the ease with which the three constructions discussed here can be negated. Negation is quite common and unproblematic in the case of phasal and completive complementation:

- (49) *Suaug-ę žmon-ės dažnai ne-baigia*
 adult-NOM.PL.M person-NOM.PL often **NEG-finish.PRS.3**

skaityti *knyg-ų* *kuri-as* *pradėjo*.
 read [IPFV].INF book-GEN.PL REL-ACC.PL.F begin.PST.3
<http://biblioteka.blogas.lt/kad-vaikai-skaitytu-3.html>
 ‘Adults often do not finish the books they have begun to read.’

- (50) *Gaila, knygos dar ne-baigiau perskaityti,*
 pity book-GEN.SG still NEG-finish.PST.1SG read [PFV].INF
bet netrukus ji jau gulės bibliotekoje—perskaityta.
<http://thetd4you.blogspot.com/2013/04/kai-as-zuvau-lauren-oliver.html>
 ‘Unfortunately I haven’t finished reading the book yet, but it will soon be lying in the library, finished.’

The proximative construction, on the other hand, seems to be only rarely negated: when suggested to native informants, negated proximative constructions tend to be rejected. Still, they are googlable:

- (51) *Dar ne-baigia išnykti mūsų valstyb-ė.*
 still NEG-finish.PRS.3 perish [PFV].INF our State-NOM.SG
Bet sunykimo pavojus auga, ...
http://www.respublika.lt/lt/naujienos/lietuva/kitos_lietuvos_zinios/mstakvilevicius_ir_pasvajosiu_apie_musu_valstybe_ir_ranku_nenuleisiu/print.1
 ‘Our State is not yet close to perishing. But the danger of its demise will increase...’
- (52) *Apie Menas be ribų idėjas, kuri-os dar toli gražu*
 about PN idea-ACC.PL REL-NOM.PL.F yet by_far
ne-baigia išsekti.
 NEG-finish.PRS.3 get.exhausted.INF
<https://lt-lt.facebook.com/MenasBeRibų>
 ‘About the ideas of Arts without Boundaries, which are far from getting exhausted.’

It seems that the negation must be licenced by some phasal or scalar adverbs like *dar* ‘still, yet’ or *toli gražu* ‘by far’. Though perhaps not without provisos, we can say that the proximative construction behaves differently, with respect to negation, from the proximative adverb *beveik* ‘almost’, which (except for specific contexts such as conditional clauses and, of course, for metalinguistic negation) cannot be negated (in sentences with *almost not* the negation is always in the scope of *almost*). The

literature on *almost* has concentrated on past-tense uses of *almost* and their counterfactual entailments (cf. Horn 2011, with literature), whereas little seems to be known about prospective uses as in *has almost reached the top*.⁶ This phasal *almost* seems to lack a polar component (it does not entail *will not reach the top*) but one wonders whether it does not have a phasal one instead, just like the proximative *baigti* discussed here. In the case of *baigti* it seems that a negation, combined with the phasal adverb *dar*, shifts the focus from the imminent juncture to the preparatory process by stating that the final stage of this process, contiguous with a prospective juncture, has not yet been reached. For some reason this effect (i.e. the possibility of negating the phasal component) is not accessible to constructions with the adverb *beveik* ‘almost’.

On the other hand, negated infinitives occasionally occur with proximative *baigti*; this will be discussed in more detail below. Completive constructions with negated infinitives (**finished not reading the book*) would be semantically deviant. Phasal constructions with negated infinitives (*?stopped not reading books*) would be somehow odd pragmatically. But proximative *baigti* can, in principle, combine with negated infinitives. This is rare, however, and part of the instances actually involve lexicalized negation, i.e. verbs that do not have affirmative counterparts or differ radically in meaning from the non-negated counterparts. These include *netekti* ‘lose’ (the affirmative *tekti* ‘fall to sb.’ has completely different meaning and valency) and *neapsikęsti* ‘lose one’s patience’ (no non-negated counterpart). These can both occur with proximative *baigti*:

- (53) *J. M. Barroso* ***baigia*** *netekti* *kantryb-ės*.
 PN **finish.PRS.3** **lose.INF** patience-GEN.SG
<http://lzinios.lt/lzinios/pasaulis/es-kreipsis-i-teisma/126964>
 ‘Mr. Barroso is on the verge of losing his patience.’
- (54) *Venecijieči-ai* *ir* *kit-ų* *istorini-ų* *miest-ų*
 Venetian-NOM.PL and other-GEN.PL historic-GEN.PL city-GEN.PL
gyventoj-ai ***baigia*** ***neapsikęsti*** *su* *ju*
 inhabitant-NOM.PL **finish.PRS.3** **lose** **patience.INF** with their

⁶ Heine’s (1994) proximatives also seem to comprise past-tense constructions with counterfactual entailments, such as *The tree almost fell*. Such uses are not characteristic of the Lithuanian construction with *baigti*, cf. sections 10 and 11.

gyvenam-q erdv-ę akiplėšiškai okupuojanči-ais
 living-ACC.SG space-ACC.SG brazenly occupy.PPRA-INS.PL.M
 turist-ais.
 tourist-INS.PL
<http://www.laikas.lt/lt/info/767/keliavimo-strategija-turistikiausioje-pasaulio-valstybeje-italija-i-dalis/>
 ‘The inhabitants of Venice and other historical cities are getting fed up with the tourists brazenly occupying their vital space.’

The space for ‘true’ negation with the complements of proximative *baigti* is highly restricted for semantic reasons. In the case of accomplishments and achievements the use of a negated infinitive would result in semantic incompatibility. The negation of the future occurrence of an event amounts to the continuation of the present state of affairs; in other words, there is no juncture leading to a new state, which is characteristic for the proximative construction. There is only one instance where negated infinitives do not lead to semantic deviance, and that is predicates denoting the state, or incipient state, of non-existence of an entity existing at the time of speaking. Here we have proximity to a juncture leading to a new state. A negated verb that would fit this frame is *nelikti* ‘not be left’, and actually it does occur in the proximative construction:

- (55) *Tam niekšeli-ui metas nešt*
 that.DAT.SG.M little_bastard-DAT.SG time carry-INF
mės-as, nes futbol-o Lietuv-oje
 body-ACC[PL] because football-GEN.SG Lithuania-LOC
baigia ne-likti.
 finish.PRS.3 NEG-be_left. INF
<http://bendraukime.lrytas.lt/?id=12525815351250473233&view=6&p=1>
 ‘It’s time that little bastard gets out [of this country], because the end of Lithuanian football is near.’

5. Scalar uses

In view of the proximity of phasal/aspectual and scalar meanings, illustrated by adverbs like *already/still* but also by *almost*, the question arises whether the proximative construction with *baigti* can also develop a purely scalar function, i.e. come to mean something like ‘A is almost

as big, bad etc. as B'. There are certainly uses that seem to invite such a reading, cf.

- (56) *Tas berniuk-as jau baigia prilygti*
 that.NOM.SG.M boy-NOM.SG already finish.PRS.3 equal.INF
Šustauskui. Durn-as šposinink-as. Ar toki-u
 PN-DAT silly-NOM.SG.M buffoon-NOM.SG or such-INS.SG.M
apsimeta.
 pretend.PRS.3
<http://ekovizija.lrytas.lt/?id=12891418951287324075&view=9&p=10>
 'That boy is almost as bad as Šustauskas. A silly buffoon. Or he pretends to be one.'

Prilygti, however, is a bi-aspectual verb: it can mean 'attain the state of being equal to' or 'be equal to'. As in similar cases discussed above, the proximative construction selects the inceptive meaning, which yields a processual reading: the subject is understood to be developing in a bad direction so as to be likely to equal, in course of time, the paragon referred to in the sentence. This is the reading native informants consistently attribute to (56). The rise of a purely scalar reading without a processual element would require a purely stative reading for *prilygti*, but this is probably blocked by the consistently phasal interpretation resulting from the combination of *baigti* with a stative verb.

6. Past contexts: proximative and avertive

The proximative constructions with *baigti* are, as mentioned, restricted mainly to the present. But it can also be used in the preterite, referring to a situation in which a certain change in a situation was imminent at some moment in the past, without the actual occurrence of this change in situation being confirmed or denied with hindsight.

- (57) *Per trejus metus, praleistus Sibire, Aliukas pramoko rusiškai, o*
lietuvų kalb-q baigė užmiršti, kaip ir
 Lithuanian language-ACC.SG finish.PST.3 forget.INF like
Lietuv-q.
 Lithuania-ACC
<http://archive.is/GKcy>

‘During the three years spent in Siberia, Aliukas had learnt Russian, but he had almost forgotten the Lithuanian language as he had Lithuania itself.’

For a proximative construction applied to the past one could imagine two types of use: one would be narrative, characterising a situation from a narrative perspective without using knowledge from hindsight; the other would be one in which the speaker characterizes an event as having been just a potential threat or contingency in the past because he is aware that it ultimately did not occur. The third possibility, that of reference being made to an event that was imminent in the past and actually did occur, would normally be ruled out by Gricean maxims—the speaker would normally prefer to make the stronger statement rather than the weaker unless his withholding information is a matter of narrative strategy. The non-narrative use would thus be avertive (on this gram type cf. Kuteva 1998). Proximatives and avertives are often discussed together in the literature (cf. Kuteva 2001). The question therefore arises whether the past tense variety of the proximative complementation construction can be used as an avertive. It is certainly possible to find contexts that are broadly compatible with those in which avertives can be used.

- (58) *Hmmm, jau beveik baigiau pamiršti, kad*
 INTERJ already almost **finish.PRS.1SG** **forget.INF** that
kadaise prisžadėjau dar vien-q straipsneli-o apie
 once promise.PST.1SG one_more-ACC.SG article-GEN.SG on
Steampunk-q dal-į.
 steampunk-ACC.SG part-ACC.SG
Tai kažkaip prisiminiau ir bandysiu šį bei tą sudėlioti.
<http://www.grumlinas.lt/?pg=nmHome&paged=575>
 ‘Hm, I had almost forgotten I had once promised a follow-up to
 the article on Steampunk. But I remembered it somehow and
 will try to put something together.’

Still, the proximative construction with *baigti* has not come anywhere near to a productive strategy of avertive marking. It is the compound forms of the type *buvo beišeinas* (consisting of the present active participle, prefixed with the continuative marker *be-*, and the auxiliary ‘be’; on these forms cf. Arkadiev 2011b), that seem to have specialized in this function. We might risk an explanation for this in terms of volitionality and agentivity. As we saw, the proximative construction with *baigti* is

associated especially with non-agentive and non-volitional events. The avertive of the type *buvo beišeinqs* does not seem to have any preferences in this regard—it occurs with non-volitional achievement verbs as in (59) and with volitional accomplishment verbs as in (60):

- (59) *Palangoje kavinę turintis verslininkas Raimundas Kubilius*
jau buvo be-užmiršt-qs savo
 already **be.PST.3 CNT-forget-PPA.NOM.SG.M** REFLPOSS
skaudži-q istorij-q, tačiau...
 painful-ACC.SG.F history-ACC.SG but
<http://www.sekunde.lt/panevezyje/ukio-naujienu-apzvalga-lapkricio-17-d-dienrasciuose/>
 ‘Businessman Raimundas Kubilius, who owns a café in Palanga, had almost forgotten his painful story, but...’
- (60) *Jau buvau be-atidar-qs automobili-o*
 already **be.PST.1SG CNT-open-PPA.NOM.SG.M** car-GEN.SG
duris, kai mane pašaukė.
 door.ACC[PL] when 1SG.ACC call.PST.3
 ‘I had already almost opened the door of the car when someone called me.’
 (example from Arkadiev 2011b, 53)

This construction can therefore be used for non-realized intention, a situation type not available to the construction with *baigti*. In virtue of its lack of specialization with regard to volitionality this construction is probably more predisposed to function as a grammaticalized avertive.

Owing to the specialization of the compound verb forms of the type *buvo beišeinqs* as an avertive they seem to have developed counterfactual implicatures: they suggest the imminent event did not ultimately take place, and their occurrence in a text invites an immediate rectification introduced by *kai* ‘when (suddenly)...’ or *bet* ‘but’. The construction with *baigti*, on the other hand, has no such implicatures when used in the past: it reflects a narrative perspective from which the ultimate outcome is not known.

7. Concluding remarks

Heine and Kuteva (2004, 133–138) mention the verb ‘finish’ as a source for the meanings ‘after’, ‘already’, ‘completive’, ‘consecutive’ and ‘perfec-

tive'. 'Completive' is, as we have seen, one of the functions of complement-taking *baigti*, but to this we can now add the proximative function, for which Heine and Kuteva (2004, 335) cite four sources: 'come to', 'love', 'near' and 'want'.⁷

Proximatives have been mentioned, together with avertives, in the context of gram-types and auxiliiation (cf. Kuteva 2001). Above I have used the term 'proximative complementation' mainly because *baigti* has another, phasal use and phasal verbs are traditionally described as complement-taking predicates; characterising *baigti* sometimes as a complement-taking verb and sometimes as an auxiliary would immediately raise the question why such a difference should be assumed. If a verb regularly combining with an infinitive does not show unambiguous signs of decategorization (as, say, the English modals do), then the decision whether to describe it as a complement-taking verb or as an auxiliary will probably be, to some extent, arbitrary. Proximative meaning can be roughly classified as temporal and aspectual, and verbs conveying temporal and aspectual meanings are more commonly characterized as auxiliaries. Formal features of auxiliary status are conspicuously absent in the case of proximative *baigti*; even non-negatability (mentioned for proximatives by Heine 1994, 41) does not quite apply here. There seem to be no serious objections against the notion of proximative complementation, unless we integrate it in a more comprehensive notion of phasal complementation.

I hope to have shown that the verb *baigti* enters two types of constructions, one of which, the proximative one, had not been noticed earlier. Phasal *baigti* combines mainly with imperfective infinitives, though in the case of accomplishments the phasal construction has a completive subtype containing perfective infinitives. The proximative complementation type selects perfective complements. If this claim is correct, then sentences with bi-aspectual verbs should be ambiguous between a phasal and a proximative reading, and this is actually borne out by the facts, as illustrated by sentences like (46). The ambiguity of such sentences also shows that phasal and proximative constructions with *baigti* represent two distinct types of complementation rather than two aspects of phasal complementation. Aspect is, however, not the only factor differentiating the

⁷ As a reviewer of this article points out, English *ready*, which can occur in a kind of completive phasal construction (*I'm ready with the editing of the manuscript*), can also acquire proximative meaning (*The balcony is ready to come down*). This would be an analogue to Lithuanian *baigti*.

two types. Moreover, aspectual value does not decide in a mechanical way about the reading of the construction with *baigti*. Non-volitionality is another basic property of the proximative complementation type, and in the case of volitional accomplishment verbs it is impossible to set the proximative complementation type apart from a certain subtype of phasal constructions with perfective infinitive, here described as complete.

As the Lithuanian proximative constructions have been (indirectly) mentioned in the context of verbal aspect, a few final remarks are in order with reference to the question what these constructions tell us about aspect. It appears that these constructions cannot be used as evidence against the existence of aspectual oppositions in Lithuanian, as has been done hitherto. The borderline between the two types of complementation discussed in this article runs roughly along the division between imperfective and perfective aspect, even though we cannot speak of a distributional rule comparable to that on the use of imperfective infinitives with phasal verbs in Slavonic. It is only for accomplishments that it is hard to draw a distinction between phasal-complete and proximative complementation: the distinction becomes vague here. For other aspectual classes the link between aspect and proximative complementation is much more straightforward: it takes a perfective verb to get a proximative reading. This relevance of aspect goes beyond what could be predicted in terms of aspectual class. In some cases two related verbs can belong to different aspectual classes, e.g. inceptive state and state, and aspectual class will determine the proximative or phasal reading of the construction with *baigti*; but in the case of achievements and degree achievements, where it is less clear that the aspectual opposition can be reduced to one of aspectual class, it seems to be quasi-grammatical aspect that differentiates between the phasal and the proximative construction.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACC — accusative, CNT — continuative, DAT — dative, DEF — definite, F — feminine, FUT — future, GEN — genitive, GN — geographical name, IMP — imperative, INF — infinitive, INS — instrumental, INTERJ — interjection, IPFV — imperfective, LOC — locative, M — masculine, NEG — negative, NOM — nominative, NZN — nominalization, PERF — perfect, PFV — perfective, PL — plural, PN — personal name, PPA — past active participle, PPRA — present active participle, PRS — present, PST — past, REFL — reflexive, REFLPOSS — reflexive possessive pronoun, REL — relative pronoun, SEQ — sequential form, SG — singular, VOC — vocative

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