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OBLIQUE ANTICAUSATIVE IN LITHUANIAN. A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

1. Introduction

Lithuanian exhibits structures with accusative functioning as a subject. They include mainly two semantic groups: a highly productive¹ group denoting physical inconveniences and a non-productive group denoting natural force and phenomena. The aim of this article is to analyse this structure, to introduce the concept of *oblique*² *anticausative* and to show that the accusative marking in these constructions is of old origin. This labelling, in my opinion, enables us to connect these two semantic groups and moreover connect them to related structures with a subject-like accusative in other Indo-European languages. Furthermore, it might help in explaining the historical development of these structures in the respective languages. This connection of oblique subject constructions with anticausative has already been done in Old Norse (Sandal 2011; Ottósson 2013) and in other IE languages (Cennamo et al. fc.).

In previous research, I have investigated the case-marking of body parts in the *pain verb constructions* where both accusative and nominative are found (cf. Bjarnadóttir fc. a; b). In these articles I have put forward a hypothesis that nominative is the original case-marking with *pain specific verbs* e. g. *skaudėti* and *sopėti* while accusative is original with the *derived pain verbs* e. g. *gelti* ‘sting, bite’ and *durti* ‘stab, stick’, which has influenced the case-marking of the former. The focus in this article is on constructions which I have referred to as *derived pain constructions* in the above mentioned articles only in a wider context and not limited to the expression of pain.

¹ In this article, productivity is understood to be a function of type frequency, (semantic) coherence and the inverse correlation between the two (Barðdal 2008, 34–52).

² This is labelled *oblique anticausative* because of the oblique case-marking, i. e. non-nominative, on the argument functioning as a subject in the anticausative construction.

This topic has been addressed in a few recent work, in relation to, as for example Ambrazas (2006, 119–120) and Piccini (2008). They both argue for the old origin of the accusative case-marking. Our theories are compatible in some regard, however, diverge concerning several issues as they do not distinguish between the originally transitive verbs and intransitive verbs found with accusative functioning as a subject.

Similar constructions were already described in Delbrück (1900, 29–33). He refers to them as subjectless sentences and discusses the relation between the accusative-marking in these sentences and transitive or originally causative verbs as in e. g. Latin *me decet* ‘it pleases me’ as the verb *decet* originally meant ‘decorate’.

The article is structured as follows: The next section is dedicated to the description of anticausatives, their expression in Lithuanian and the presentation of the *oblique anticausative*. Section 3 provides an analysis on the occurrences of the *oblique anticausative* constructions, their semantic groups and a cross-linguistic comparison. In section 4, the similarities and differences of the use of *oblique anticausatives* in Lithuanian and Icelandic are discussed and likewise the constructions with *oblique anticausative* are compared with anticausative constructions with nominative subjects in section 5. This is followed by summary and conclusion in section 6.

2. Anticausative

The concept “anticausative” was first introduced in 1969 by Nedjalkov and Sil’nickij from the Leningrad Typology Group and was at first mainly used within Russian linguistics. In recent years, the anticausative has become more established, first within typology by Comrie (1985) and Haspelmath (1987), within IE linguistics by Kulikov (1998; 2001) and later also in the generative literature, e. g. Alexiadou et al. (2006), Schäfer (2008). Other terms used for the same structure are inchoative (Levin 1993; Folli 2002), decausative (Geniušienė 1987) and spontaneous (Shibatani 1985).

Anticausative is an intransitive use of a transitive verb where the surface subject is promoted from an object position. Thus the object of the transitive construction becomes the subject of the intransitive construction. A widely used example is:

He/she broke the glass (causative) vs. *the glass broke* (anticausative).

The following definition of anticausative is given by Haspelmath (1987, 5): “An anticausative is the marked member of a privative morphological transitive/inactive alternation.” This definition is incomplete as he himself points

out because this could indicate that the anticausative is simply a derived intransitive. He defines the semantics of anticausative verbs as describing a change of state or a non-agentive activity where “[...] the verb meaning excludes a causing agent and presents the situation as occurring spontaneously.” (Haspelmath 1993, 90). Semantically, passive and anticausative are very similar but there are however obvious differences. The following explanation of that difference is given by Ottósson (2013, 329): “The anticausative is semantically characterised by the absence of an agentive participant. This is in contrast to the passive, where the agent is present in the semantic representation although sometimes left unexpressed.” On this crucial semantic difference between passive and anticausative Comrie (1985, 326) has the following explanation: “Passive and anticausative differ in that, even where the former has no agentive phrase, the existence of some person or thing bringing about the situation is implied, whereas the anticausative is consistent with the situation coming about spontaneously.” Haspelmath proposes a universal scale of “decreasing likelihood of spontaneous occurrence” (Haspelmath 1993) (see below). Verbs describing natural forces like freezing, melting and drying do not need an external instigator and happen spontaneously while events like splitting, breaking, closing and opening are more likely to occur through causation:

freeze > dry > melt > > open > break > close > split (spontaneous) (less spontaneous)

(adapted from Haspelmath (1993, 103))

The causative and anticausative coding is not randomly distributed but related to this spontaneity scale. The more spontaneous event the verbs describe the less structurally marked coding on the anticausative member of the alternation. The less spontaneous event, on the other hand, the more marked is the anticausative (*idem*). Croft (1990, 60) reaches the same results: “the more typically the change of state requires an external agent, the more likely the causative type will be unmarked”.

In my theory on anticausative, I assume that anticausative verbs must participate in the causative alternation,³ but that the anticausative use of the

³I assume, however, that not every anticausative verb has to be synchronically derived from an attested transitive verb (see also Ottósson 2013, 330). Anticausatives might

verb does not have to be overtly marked.⁴ I furthermore take anticausatives to be structures with only one argument, functioning as a subject and bearing the semantic role of a theme or a patient. Moreover, they are formed with aspectually dynamic verbs, scoring high on the transitivity scale by Hopper, Thompson (1980) and the event described in the construction comes about without the implication of a cause triggering the respective event.

With the term “subject” I refer to the terminology of Dixon (1979) i. e. in the causative construction to “A” the more agentive of the two arguments of a transitive predicate or in the anticausative construction to “S” the single argument of an intransitive predicate. This allows for the subject to be non-canonically marked i. e. not in nominative.

2.2 Anticausative marking in Lithuanian

Anticausative is expressed in various ways in Lithuanian:

1. With a productive morphological causative: *-(d)in-ti*, *-(d)y-ti* : *degti/deginti*: ‘burn’ (intr)/burn (tr) *pabusti/pabudinti* ‘wake up’/ ‘wake someone up’ where the causative is marked and derived from the anticausative.⁵
2. With an even more productive reflexive marker *-si-*: *atsidaryti/atidaryti* ‘open’ (intr)/‘open’ (tr), where the anticausative verb is the marked one and derived from the causative verb.⁶
3. With root vowel change or an apophonic marker where the intransitive (anticausative) shows the zero grade of vocalic ablaut: *kilti/kelti* : ‘rise/raise’ A subgroup exists where the intransitive/anticausative member of the pair forms its present tense by *-n-* infixation or *-st-* suffixation:

lack an active counterpart. This is especially relevant when working on older stages of languages or dead language, as we can never be sure that the transitive counterpart is really missing or just not attested

⁴Notice that Haspelmath (1993) uses the term “anticausative” to refer to intransitives that are morphologically marked and have a non-marked transitive counterpart, derived from a transitive one. In contrast and in line with much of the current literature on this issue (see e. g. Heidinger 2010) I use this term here in a broader sense to refer to any anticausative verb, marked or not.

⁵This group is a peculiarity of the Baltic languages (Latv. has *-(d)ināt*) among European languages (cf. Rackevičienė 2005).

⁶Crosslinguistically, it is very common to use the same morpheme for true reflexives and anticausatives, both in IE languages (cf. Geniušienė 1987, 258) as well as in non-IE languages (cf. Haspelmath 1987, 24; and Haspelmath 1990, 36). English is odd in this sense and does not have this group (Ottósson 2013).

dribti ‘fall’ (PRS. 3 *dri-m-ba*) ~ *drėbti* ‘drop’ (PRS. 3 *drebia*)
linkti ‘bow’ (PRS. 3 *link-st-a*) ~ *lenkti* ‘bend’ (PRS. 3 *lenkia*)

For a more detailed descriptions on anticausative in Lithuanian the reader is referred to Paulauskienė 1979, 22–55; Geniušienė 1987; Toops 1994; Ambrazas 1997, 223–234; Petit 1999, 78–103; Rackevičienė 2005; Arkadijev 2013.

2.3 Oblique Anticausatives

I would like to propose that a new group of anticausatives should be added for Lithuanian. I will refer to them as *oblique anticausatives* and their main characteristic is the case preservation of the second argument. This has been suggested for Old Norse (Sandal 2011; Ottósson 2013; Cennamo et al. fc.). Ottósson refers to them as “*Impersonal*” *detransitives* and he claims them to be unique to Old Norse (Ottósson 2013, 368). Cennamo et al. (fc.) argue, however, that this phenomenon can be found in other Indo-European languages. The verb retains the same morphological form and yet there is a morphosyntactic change in the whole construction which lies not in the verb but in the noun, which preserves the object case after it has been promoted to the subject function, i. e. the case of the internal argument is preserved when the external argument is deleted. Thus, the sole remaining argument has oblique case, accusative.⁷ In (1) we have the transitive variant with the causer in nominative and the patient in accusative, whereas in (2), the intransitive, anticausative variant, the sole argument is in the accusative.

1. Šaltis gelia koj-as.
 Cold-NOM bite-PRS. 3 leg-ACC. PL
 ‘The cold is biting the hands.
 (<http://www.valstietis.lt/ezwebin/print/?node=5924>)
2. Koj-as gelia.
 Leg-ACC. PL hurt/freeze-PRS. 3
 ‘The leg are hurting/freezing.’

(DLKŽ s. v.)

Malchukov (2008) refers to such constructions as transimpersonals and argues that they have played an important role in the rise of split intransitive patterns.

In generative accounts these accusative marked arguments are usually referred to as “fate accusatives” (Sigurðsson 2006) and this exception to

⁷ For Lithuanian, only accusative is possible. For Old Norse accusative is the most common case but dative and in very rarely genitive also occur.

Burzio's generalizations⁸ is not considered “real anticausative” because an external causer is implied and the ‘by itself’ test cannot be applied to these sentences.⁹ Kibort (2004, 14) refers to identical structures in Polish as *adversity impersonals*.

3. Semantic Fields – Comparative Analysis

In this section two semantic fields in Lithuanian will be examined, first verbs related to bodily states or physical conditions and thereafter verbs denoting meteorological phenomena or forces of nature. The main language of comparison will be Old Icelandic and moreover some Slavic languages will be added (mainly Czech with examples from Fried 2004). Not included here but worth noticing in this context are comparable constructions in Middle Dutch (cf. Burridge 1990; 1996); the accusative experiencer in Hittite, which is verb-specific and limited to a small number of verbs with a highly affected patient-like experiencers, namely verbs of illness like *irmaliya-* and *istarak-* ‘be(come) ill’ (Patri 2007, 97; Luraghi 2010); and accusative subjects in Avestan (Danesi fc.) and finally the so-called “extended accusative” (cf. Moravcsik 1978; Cennamo 2009; 2011; Cennamo et al. fc.) in Late Latin.

The main database used for this study is the electronic online version of “Lietuvių kalbos žodynas” (referred to as LKŽ^e). LKŽ is the most comprehensive dictionary of the Lithuanian language. It comprises 20 volumes, published between 1941 and 2002, containing half a million entries. It contains a wide range of material which in many cases reflects dialectal use.

3.1 Physical Ailments

Accusative marking on the argument functioning as a subject is crosslinguistically common in this semantic sphere. It almost exclusively includes physical discomfort such as *pain, itching, feeling of hunger and thirst, nausea, heat and cold*.

Lithuanian has numerous verbs denoting pain:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 3. | Višą dieną | galv-ą | gėlė. |
| | All day-ACC | head-ACC | hurt-PST. 3 |
| | ‘The head was hurting the whole day.’ | | |

(LKŽ^e s. v.¹⁰)

⁸ In generative linguistics, Burzio's generalization is the observation that “A verb which lacks an external argument fails to assign accusative case.” (Burzio 1986, 178–179, 184).

⁹ Where you can add ‘by itself’ to the sentence.

¹⁰ The abbreviation s. v. means *sub verbo* or under the word. Unless otherwise indicated the word it refers to is the verb in the example.

4. **Šon-a** duria.
Side-ACC hurt-PRS. 3
'The side is hurting'

(DLKŽ s. v.)

5. Labai **dant-į** diegia.
A_lot tooth-ACC hurt-PRS. 3
'The tooth hurts a lot.'

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

I have labelled these verbs *derived pain verbs* (Bjarnadóttir fc. b). The original meaning of all these verbs is very different from the expression of pain; they denote an activity, accomplishment or achievement, *gelti* has the meaning to 'sting, to bite', *durti* 'stab, to stick' and *diegti* 'plant, drill' and are transitive and dynamic and score high on the transitivity scale (Hopper, Thompson 1980) whereas the verb in the anticausative construction, denoting the feeling of pain, is very low on the transitivity scale (see table 1):

Table 1. **Verbs denoting pain, in their original transitive meaning and in their intransitive metaphorical meaning**

Verb	Transitive meaning	Intransitive meaning
<i>badyti, durti, smaigyti, verti</i>	'prick, butt, poke, stick'	'ache'
<i>diegti, daigyti, daigstyti</i>	'plant, dig down'	'ache' (a strong sudden pain)
<i>gelti</i>	'bite, sting'	'ache alot'
<i>griežti, raižyti, skelti</i>	'cut, cleave, split'	'ache alot'
<i>plėšti</i>	'tear'	'ache'

When no body part is included the person experiencing the pain is marked with accusative as in:

6. Diegia **mane** visą.
Hurt-PRS. 3 I-ACC all-ACC
'I'm aching all over'

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

In (6) it is the person enduring the pain that is marked in accusative. This structure expresses a state in which the whole body is affected and not localised in a body part.

Accusative marking of body parts is also found with verbs like *skaudėti* and *sopėti* that do not participate in the anticausative alternation. Moreover, their original meaning is ‘ache, hurt’ and for that reason I have labelled them *pain specific verbs*. In Bjarndóttir (fc. a) it is argued that, for this group of verbs, the original case-marking of the body part is nominative. This assumption is based on an empirical study on dialects and on old texts where nominative marking dominates. In the standard language, however, the accepted case-marking is accusative (7) while nominative is found in most dialects and prevalent in old texts (8).

7. Man skauda **galv-ą.**
 I-DAT hurt-PRS. 3 head-ACC
 ‘My head is hurting.’
8. Man skauda **galv-a.**
 I-DAT hurt-PRS. 3 head-NOM
 ‘My head is hurting.’

In Bjarndóttir (fc. b) I explain the accusative case-marking of body parts with the pain specific verbs by means of extension. The accusative case-marking of body parts in the highly productive *derived pain construction* is extended into the *pain specific construction*. Nominative is even found on rare occasion with the *derived pain verb*.

9. Nugėlė **koj-os.**
 Hurt/sting-PST.3 leg-NOM.PL
 ‘The legs got hurt/frozen.’

(LKŽ^ě s. v.)

Another large and productive group of verbs denoting dermatological ailment e. g. skin rashes, belongs also to this semantic group. They usually occur in structures without a nominative argument.

10. Man nukėlė spuogais **liežuv-į.**
 I-DAT raise-PST. 3 spot-INS. PL tongue-ACC
 ‘Spots have appeared on my tongue.’

(DLKG 608)

In (10) the dative marks the possessor/experiencer and accusative the affected body part. The cause or what is affecting it, the most agent-like argument appears in the instrumental case. In (11) the dative experiencer/possessor is lacking:

11. **Vis-ą** **burn-ą** išmètė spaugais.
 All-ACC mouth-ACC throw-PST. 3 spot-INS. PL
 ‘The whole mouth was covered with spots.’
 (LKŽ^e s. v.)

In (12–14) it is the person affected by the spots that is marked with accusative and the body part is lacking as in (6).

12. **Mane** kartais išmuša raudonomis dėmėmis.
 I-ACC sometimes gush out-PRS. 3 red spot-INS. PL.
 ‘I sometimes get red spots on the body.’
 (DLKG 608)

13. **Vaik-ą** išbėrė raudonais spuogeliais.
 Child-ACC erupt-PST. 3 red-INS. PL spot-INS. PL
 ‘The child (’s body) was erupted in red spots.’
 (DLKG 608)

14. **Vis-ą kūn-ą** nuvertė tokiais buburais.
 All body-ACC turn-PST. 3 such spots-INS. PL
 ‘The whole body was covered with these spots.’
 (LKŽ^e s. v.)

Even constructions without the instrumental case marked agent-like argument as in (15) can be found:

15. **Vis-ą veid-ą** vargšei mergaitei apibėrė.
 All face-ACC poor girl-DAT cover-PST. 3
 ‘The whole face of the poor girl was covered.’
 (LKŽ^e s. v.)

These constructions are also possible with nominative, which then alternates with the instrumental case.

16. **Vaiką** beria spuogai.
 Child-ACC cover-PRS. 3 spot-NOM. PL
 ‘The child is covered with spots.’
 (NS s. v.)

Contrary to the *pain verb constructions* exemplified in (3–8) these constructions report a telic, resultant state, involving an affected entity and *not* a process or a durative state. They do however also participate in the anticausative alternation and show a metaphoric change in the meaning (see table 2).

Table 2. **Verbs denoting dermatological ailments, in their original transitive meaning and in their intransitive metaphorical meaning**

Verb	Transitive meaning	Intransitive meaning
<i>išmušti</i>	‘knock out’	‘become covered with’
<i>išberti</i>	‘erupt, break out’	‘become covered with’
<i>išmesti</i>	‘throw away’	‘become covered with’
<i>nuversti</i>	‘turn’	‘become covered with’
<i>nukelti</i>	‘raise’	‘become covered with’

In addition, there are expressions with accusative marked affected human entities, not including a body part. They comprise verbs denoting e. g. *disgust* or *nausea*:

17. Aš negaliu riebiai valgyt, **mane** purtina.
 I cannot fatty eat I-ACC disgust-PRS. 3
 ‘I cannot eat fat, it disgusts me.’

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

18. Abu nėštumus **mane** pykino maždaug tris mėn.
 Both pregnancy I-ACC feel sick-PST. 3 approximately three months
 ‘During both pregnancies I was feeling sick for approximately three months.’

(www.supermama.lt/forumas/lofiversion/index.php/t608710.html)

19. **Muni** baisiai troškina.
 I-ACC awfully to_be_thirsty-PRS. 3
 ‘I am awfully thirsty.’

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

Here the *detransitivation* and *metaphorization* process is also at work (see table 3).

Table 3. **Verbs denoting physical inconveniences with their original transitive meaning and their derived intransitive meaning**

Verb	Transitive meaning	Intransitive meaning
<i>purrinti, purtyti</i>	‘shake’	‘be disgusted’
<i>pykinti</i>	‘vex, annoy’	‘nauseate’
<i>troškinti</i>	‘dry’	‘be thirsty’

Constructions with accusative functioning as a subject and verbs denoting physical discomfort are relatively widespread crosslinguistically. In German,

e. g. *ekeln* ‘nauseate’, *schauern* ‘shiver’, *frösteln* ‘shiver’, *friern* ‘freeze’, *hungern* ‘hunger’, *dürsten* ‘hunger’; Russian *menja znobit* ‘I feel chilly, feverish’, *menja lixoradit* ‘I have a fever’, *menja mutit* ‘I feel sick’ [« X stirs me up »], *menja rvët* ‘I vomit’ [« X rends me »] *menja tošnit* ‘I feel sick’.

This is common in Modern and Old Icelandic. In Old Icelandic verbs of physical discomfort with accusative subject include: *hungra* ‘be hungry’, *kala* ‘suffer frostbites’, *saka* ‘be hurt’, *skaða* ‘be hurt’, *stinga* ‘feel pain’ *sundla* ‘become dizzy’, *svim(r)a* ‘become dizzy’, *syfja* ‘become sleepy’, *velgja* ‘feel nausea’, *verkja/virkja* ‘ache’, *þyrsta* ‘feel thirsty’ (Jónsson, Eythórsson 2011, 223).

Most of them, however, do not show the anticausative alternation and their original semantics are that of pain or whatever physical discomfort they express. Exception are *saka* ‘be hurt’, *skaða* ‘be hurt’, *stinga* ‘feel pain’ which are *derived pain verbs* with the anticausative alternation and different original semantics. In the transitive construction the meaning *saka* is ‘fight, blame, accuse’ (Goth. *sakan* ‘strive, rebuke’):

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|
| 20. | unz ek (...) | ok saka | yðr | of þessi mál. |
| | and I-NOM (...) | and blame-PRS. 1 | you-ACC | for this case. |
| | ‘and I blame you for this.’ | | | |

(Sandal 2011)

The meaning in the anticausative construction is ‘be hurt’:

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|------|---------|
| 21. | og mun þig | ekki | saka |
| | and will you-ACC | not | be_hurt |
| | ‘and you will not be hurt’ | | |

(Jónsson, Eythórsson 2011, 224)

The verb *stinga* in a transitive construction has the meaning ‘sting’:

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 22. | hann | hafði stungit | Einar | eitt knífslag. |
| | he-NOM | had stung | Einar-ACC | one hit with a knife |
| | ‘He had stung Einar with a knife’ | | | |

(Sandal 2011)

In the anticausative construction it has the meaning to ‘feel pain’ and the experiencer is marked with accusative:

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 23. | stingr mik | í hjartat. |
| | sting | I- ACC in heart |
| | ‘I feel pain in my heart.’ | |

(Sandal 2011)

There are more anticausative constructions denoting physical inconveniences:

24. Sár Gríms varð illa, ok blés upp **fótinn.**
 wound Grímur-GEN became bad and swell up foot-ACC
 ‘Grimur’s wound became so bad and the foot swelled up.’

(Viðarsson 2005)

In (24) we have a typical derived verb *blása* ‘blow’ is originally a transitive verb (NOM-ACC) but in anticausative construction gets the meaning ‘swell, be swollen’ and the body part marked with accusative. The same with the verb *knýta* ‘tie’ in (25) where in the anticausative construction the verbs means ‘knotted up, become crooked’.

25. knýtti **hrygginn.**
 tie back-ACC
 ‘the back knotted up, became crooked.’

(Sandal 2011)

In Czech (cf. Fried 2004) similar constructions with accusative can be found.

26. když **ženu** bolí k dietěti. Old Czech
 when woman-ACC hurt-PRS. 3 to child-DAT
 ‘when a woman is going through labour pains.’

(Fried 2004, 97)

27. Položilo **mě.** Moravian dialect
 Put down-PPL. SG. N I-ACC
 ‘I felt ill.’

(Fried 2004, 97)

28. Záblo **mě.** Standard Mod. Czech
 freeze-PPL. SG. N I-ACC
 ‘I was freezing’

(Fried 2004, 97)

According to Fried, constructions of this type are rarely found in Standard Czech but are attested in dialects and old texts. The frequently used standard construction in (29), including an experiencer marked with accusative and an obligatory locative marked body part, is a restricted variant of this agent-demoting construction (Fried 2004, 97).

29. Bolelo **mě** v krku. Standard Mod. Czech
 Hurt I-ACC in throat
 'I had a sore throat.'

(Fried 2004, 93)

The opposite has happened in Lithuanian where this construction is very productive so where in Czech this construction becomes more restrictive in Lithuanian it spread less restrictive.

3.2 Natural forces

Another, crosslinguistically common semantic sphere with accusative marking on the subject-like argument, is force of nature. This group includes verbs denoting meteorological and natural phenomena, somehow affecting the accusative marked argument. This argument is usually inanimate as in (30) but can also be animate (31):

30. **Malk-as** **vis-as** apdrėbė, apšalo.
 Wood-ACC. PL all-ACC. PL cover-PST. 3 freeze-PST. 3
 'All the wood was covered with snow and got frozen.'

(NS s. v.)

31. **Mane** kiaurai perlijo.
 I-ACC totally rain-PST. 3
 'I got totally drenched in the rain.'

(NS s. v.)

The subject needs however not be affected but can also be an inactive participant as in (32) an example from Old Lithuanian.

32. **Kruš-ą** bera.
 Hail-ACC pour-PRS. 3
 'The hail pours down.'

(S. Daukantas writings in LKŽ^e s. v.)

3.1.1 Verbs related to snow and ice

The verbs in this group describe the process of freezing or melting or the state of being covered with snow.

33. Kol parvažiavau, apdribo **mane vis-ą, vis-us** mano **drabuži-us**.
 While I went home cover-PST. 3 I-ACC all-ACC all-ACC my clothes-ACC. PL
 'While I was on my way home, I and all my clothes got covered with snow.'

(NS s. v.)

In (33) we have an affected human and the verb *apdribti* has the meaning ‘cover with snow’ so here the original meaning is intact and no metaphor involved in the process. This is also the case in (34) and (35).

34. Visai susnigo **arkli-us**, kol grįžo šeimininkas.
 Completely cover-PST. 3 horse-ACC. PL while return the landlord
 ‘The horses got completely covered with snow while the landlord was on his way home.’
 (NS s. v.)

35. Jau **lang-ą** šąla.
 Already window-ACC freeze-PRS. 3
 ‘The window is already freezing.’
 (LKŽ^e s. v.)

On the other hand examples (36) and (37) require a metaphorical reading. The verb *sutraukti* (36) has the meaning ‘draw, pull’ but in within this construction it means ‘freeze’ and *leisti* (37) means to ‘let, allow’ but in this construction it has the meaning ‘melt’.

36. Sutraukė kiek **tą up-ę**, tai vaikai ir duodasi su rogutėmis.
 Freeze-PST. 3 slightly that river-ACC so children play with sleighs
 ‘The river got slightly frozen enough so the kids are sleighing.’
 (LKŽ^e s. v.)

37. Nuo laukų jau leidžia **snieg-ą**.
 From fields already loose-PRS. 3 snow-ACC
 ‘The snow is already melting from the fields.’
 (NS s. v.)

Similar constructions are found in Icelandic. Examples (38) and (39) do not show metaphorization. The verb *fenna* has the meaning ‘cover with snow’ and the verb *frjósa* (39) ‘freeze’.

38. Fennti **fé**.
 Cover_with_snow-PST. 3 sheep-ACC. PL
 ‘The sheep were covered with snow.’
 (Viðarsson 2005)

39. fraus **sjóinn** umbergis landit, svá at ríða mátti...
 Freeze-PST. 3 sea-ACC around land so to ride could
 ‘The sea froze around the country so one could ride...’
 (Viðarsson 2005)

Examples (40) and (41) on the other hand require a metaphorical reading and (41) is a cognate construction to the Lithuanian construction in (37) with exactly the same metaphor and meaning.

40. Aldrei festi **snæ** utan og sunnan á haugi Þorgríms.
 Never get_stuck-PST. 3 snow-ACC outside and south on the grave of T.
 ‘Snow never got a grip outside or south of Thorgrimur’s grave.’
 (Viðarsson 2005)
41. Þegar ísa leysti.
 When ice-ACC. PL loose-PST. 3
 ‘When the ice melted.’
 (Viðarsson 2005)

3.1.2 Verbs related to rain and water

This group includes verbs describing the process of flooding and being filled and soaked with water.

42. Vél supylé **šien-ą,** o buvo jau beveik sausas.
 Again soak-PST. 3 hay-ACC but was already almost dry
 ‘The hay got soaked again when it was almost already dry.’
 (NS s. v.)
43. Ėmė leisti, ir užplūdo **keli-ą.**
 Take-PST. 3 loose-INF and flood-PST. 3 road-ACC
 ‘It began to melt and the road got flooded.’
 (NS s. v.)
44. Prilijo **piln-ą griov-į** vandens.
 Rain-PST. 3 full ditch-ACC water-GEN
 ‘The ditch was completely filled with water.’
 (DLKG 607)

Similar constructions exist in Icelandic:

45. **Stóra læki** stemmd uppi.
 Big brook-ACC. PL fill-PST. 3 up
 ‘Big brooks became filled up.’
 (Viðarsson 2005)
46. Þá fyllti **gröfina** vatns.
 then fill-PST. 3 grave-ACC water-GEN
 ‘then the grave became filled with water.’
 (Viðarsson 2005)

Similar constructions can also be found in e. g. Czech dialects as in (47).

47. Byla velikúcná voda, podmývalo **břehy**. Moravian dialect
 Be big water wash off-PPL. SG. N river bank- ACC. PL
 ‘There was flooding, the river banks got washed off.’

(Fried 2004, 96)

3.1.3 Verbs related to wind and currents

This group includes verbs related to the motion due to air or water currents. When something drifts, rocks or is shaken. The movement is not restricted to natural forces as we see in (48).

48. Vežime **ligon-ę** labai kratė.
 Carriage-LOC patient-ACC much shake-PST. 3
 ‘The patient was severely shaken in the carriage.’

(DLKG 607)

49. **Plaust-ą** smarkiai supo.
 Raft-ACC heavily rock-PST. 3
 ‘The raft was rocking heavily.’

(NS s. v.)

50. Pakilus vėjui, valtyje **mus** pradėjo mėtyti ten ir atgal.
 Rise wind in_boat we-ACC start-PST. 3 throw-INF back and forth
 ‘When the wind rose, we were being thrown from one side to another.’

(Holvoet, Judžentis 2005, 163)

Similar constructions also exist in Icelandic, worth noticing is that (50) is a cognate construction to (51).

51. **Þá** velkti lengi úti á hafi.
 They-ACC toss-PST. 3 long out in ocean
 ‘They were in rough seas for a long time.’

(Eiríks saga Rauða from Jónsson, Eythórssón 2011, 526)

52. **Bátinn** rak að landi.
 Boat-ACC drift-PST. 3 to shore
 ‘The boat drifted to the shore.’

A cognate construction to this is Bavarian German:

53. Es trieb **den Kahn** an den Strand
 It drove the boat-ACC to the shore
 ‘The boat drifted to the shore.’

(Cennamo et al. fc.)

Observe that example (53) has developed from an earlier construction without the expletive *es* ‘it’ a development that occurred in the history of German with all predicates without a nominative argument (Cennamo et al. fc.). A similar construction is found in Polish (54) and Russian (55):

54. Wyrzuciło **łódkę** na brzeg.
 Threw_out boat-ACC onto shore
 ‘The boat got thrown onto the shore.’

(Kibort 2004, 14)

55. **Lodku** uneslo vniz po tečeniju.
 Boat-ACC drifted-away down on stream
 ‘The boat drifted down the stream.’

(Cennamo et al. fc.)

3.1.5 Verbs related to change of state/natural process

Here we have example like (56) and (57) describing the curdling process of milk. In Lithuanian the verb *traukti* ‘draw, pull’ is used metaphorically to describe this process while in Icelandic the verb *ysta* whose original meaning derived from the noun *ostur* ‘cheese’.

56. **Pien-ą** traukia.
 Milk-ACC curdle-PRS. 3
 ‘The milk curdles.’

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

57. **Mjólkina** ystir.
 Milk-ACC curdle-PRS. 3
 ‘The milk curdles.’

(Jónsson 1998)

4. Oblique anticausative in Lithuanian vs. Icelandic

As can be seen from the examples in section 3, Lithuanian and Icelandic show many similarities and this is especially obvious in the semantic group expressing natural force and phenomena. Similar metaphors are used and both languages show the possibility, albeit more rare, to use the oblique anticausative without a metaphoric reading. This group might indicate the earliest state of affairs since it is not productive in neither of the languages.

In Lithuanian oblique anticausative is only possible with accusative while in Icelandic both accusative and dative are possible.¹¹

¹¹ Even genitive is possible in Icelandic but that is very rare:

Pess gat í bréfinu.

It-GEN mentioned in letter ‘It was mentioned in the letter.’ (Barðdal fc.)

61. **Duob-ę** užpylė smėliu.
 Pit-ACC fill_by_pouring. PST. 3 sand-INS
 ‘The pit got filled up with sand.’

(Wiemer, Bjarnadóttir 2014, 350)

(65) is ungrammatical because the transitive verb *to fill* requires here an animate agent as can be seen in (67). In (68) is possible because this construction describes an uncontrolled process, natural force (rain).

62. Verkamennirnir fylltu skurðinn (af) sandi. Icelandic
 Worker-NOM. PL fill-PST. 3 pit-ACC (of) sand-DAT
 ‘The workers filled up the pit with sand.’

63. **Skurðinn** fyllti (af) vatni.
 Pit-ACC fill-PST. 3 (of) water-DAT
 ‘The pit got filled up with water.’

I consider (66) to be a secondary construction in Lithuanian due to the productivity of this construction. This productivity is however limited to the semantic field of physical inconveniences but this might however result in a less restrictive construction even outside that semantic field.

A common tendency in the history of both languages is the replacement of nominative for oblique subjects:

64. a. **Vindinn** lægði. Icelandic
 Wind-ACC become_still-PST. 3

- b. **Vindurinn** lægði.
 Wind-NOM become-still-PST. 3
 ‘The wind became still.’

65. a. Jau **lang-ą** šąla. Lithuanian
 Already window-ACC freeze. PRS. 3
 ‘The window is already freezing.’

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

- b. **Up-ė** šąla.
 River-NOM freeze-PRS. 3
 ‘The river is freezing.’

(LKŽ^e s. v.)

This is especially obvious in the group of natural forces where the affected entity is inanimate. Other oblique subject construction stay intact and no loss of case-marking in neither of the languages is detectable.

5. Oblique anticausatives vs. anticausatives with nominative subjects

Anticausative constructions usually include a nominative marked argument but above I have described a new group of anticausatives where the oblique case is preserved in the anticausative construction. In the following, I intend to demonstrate the difference between a ‘normal’ anticausative construction with a nominative marked argument and an oblique anticausative construction.

There is one significant difference between anticausatives with nominative subjects and oblique anticausatives. Anticausatives with nominative subject are used in contexts where there is no external causation implied, whereas for oblique anticausatives this is not quite the case. It is, at least, a possibility to interpret that there is some external causer – something implied but not expressed. The causer is always understood as an unspecified non-human, inanimate uncontrolled force or phenomenon.

Another difference, related to the one described above, is the metaphoric reading of the verbs involved. The verb meaning in the causative/transitive construction is very different from its meaning in the anticausative construction the Lithuanian *derived pain verbs* with their original meanings as *gelti* ‘bite, sting’, *durti* ‘stab, stick’, *diegti* ‘plant, to drill, implement’ in the causative/transitive construction and denoting pain in the anticausative construction. This was, nevertheless, not always the case with the verbs in the group denoting natural force and phenomena.

Verbs denoting natural phenomena e. g. weather verbs are according to Haspelmath’s “scale of likelihood of spontaneous occurrence” (Haspelmath 1993, 103) the most spontaneous verbs and usually no external causer is needed. They are, however, often used in oblique anticausative constructions and predominantly with a metaphoric reading of the verb, as we saw in section 5.2, in both languages. This metaphoric use of verbs is applied as if to entail an external causer. Employing verbs that are agentive and dynamic carries an implication of an external causer. The use of the accusative case further emphasizes the patientive role of and lack of control of the subject, affected by this unknown inanimate force. This is reflected in the two semantic groups we are dealing in this article; the natural force or phenomena and physical inconveniences and is especially true with beliefs from earlier times. Illnesses and bodily states were similar to meteorological phenomena

or natural forces which are of cause beyond the human control and the causation is unclear.

This is nicely portrayed in Burridge's description on the non-canonically marked body parts in Old Dutch: "Illness was usually linked to the supernatural – either demonological influences or the wrath of celestial powers (where diseases were believed to be sent as retribution for sins and indiscretions). It could be argued that this fact is nicely reflected in the syntax. The absence of an expected nominative subject and the use instead of an oblique case captures the passive role of body and person in processes and states believed to be controlled by outside forces." (Burridge 1990, 35).

6. Summary and Conclusion

This article has focused on the accusative marking of arguments functioning as a subject in Lithuanian. The concept of oblique anticausative was introduced as a common denominator of the structures investigated in this article. This term has already been used for Old Norse (Sandal 2011; Ottósson 2013) to describe an anticausative variant where the nominative agentive subject is "suppressed" and the original object preserves its oblique case when promoted to the subject functioning position. I consider this term useful in explaining this kind of accusative marking in Lithuanian. It expresses an uncontrolled, non-agentive nature of an event, usually brought about by natural force. Moreover, a comparison, in particular with similar constructions in Old Icelandic, was conducted. This comparison revealed striking similarities, especially within the semantic group denoting natural force and phenomena. It is suggested based on the similarities that the oblique anticausative is of an old origin. In the comparison with Old Icelandic the most striking similarities between the languages are restricted to constructions denoting natural force or meteorological phenomena. This is due to the fact that this oblique anticausative construction in this semantic sphere is no longer productive in neither of the languages and therefore I consider this group reflects the older state of affairs. The comparison of the semantic group of verbs denoting physical inconveniences reveals different development in the two languages. This construction has become unproductive in Icelandic, displaying only few examples and the same for Czech where this construction has become very restrictive, while it is very productive in Lithuanian and therefore much less restrictive.

NETIESIOGINIS LIETUVIŲ KALBOS ANTIKAUZATYVAS. LYGINAMASIS POŽIŪRIS

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos lietuvių kalbos konstrukcijos su subjekto akuzatyvu. Išsamiai palyginus su senosios islandų kalbos duomenimis, atskleista reikšmingų panašumų ne-produktyvioje gamtos jėgų ir meteorologinių reiškinių semantinėje grupėje. Kitoje, fiziologinių nepatogumų, semantinėje grupėje (lietuvių kalboje labai produktyvioje) pastebimi individualios raidos požymiai. Nagrinėjamosios konstrukcijos vadinamos netiesioginiais antikauzatyvais, kadangi juose matomas „paprastiems“ antikauzatyvams būdingas kaitos modelis, tačiau išsaugomas netiesioginis linksnis – taip išreiškiama nevaldoma, neagentinė įvykio, paprastai sukkelto gamtos jėgos, prigimtis.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACC – accusative

DAT – dative

GEN – genitive

fc– forthcoming

IE – Indo-European

INF – infinitive

INS – instrumental

LOC– locative

N – neuter

NOM – nominative

PL – plural

PPL – past participle

PRS – present

PST – past

SG – singular

s. v. – sub verbo

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