Potential vs use: revisiting evidential participial constructions in Lithuanian

Lithuanian is one of the European languages which are considered to have a grammatical realization of evidentiality, which is expressed by means of evidential constructions (Ambrazas 1994; 2006; Gronemeyer 1997; Holvoet 2001, 2004, 2007; Wiemer 2006; Kehayov 2008). The two participial constructions containing active and passive participles are said to mark (1) reportive and (2) inferential evidentiality, e.g.:

1) *Profesorius pasakė, kad mano priėmimui astronomijos katedros laborantu prieštarauja dekanas X. Jis **pavadinęs** mane „nestropiu" ir **sakęs**, kad aš ne toks jau geras studentas,* ... (CorALit)
'The professor said that the dean was against my appointment as an assistant at the Department of Astronomy. Reportedly, he **called ('call'PST.AP.AGR)** me "negligent" and **said ('say' PST.AP.AGR)** that I was not a good student …'

2) *Vyruko*   ***būta***   *liekno -*   *paspruko*   *pro*   *kaminą.* (CCLL)
guy.GEN   be.NAGR.PP   slim.GEN   escape.PST.3   through   chimney.ACC
'Obviously the guy was slim – (he) escaped through the chimney.'

They could be regarded as "evidential extensions of non-evidential categories" (Aikhenvald 2007) because the evidential meaning is triggered by the syntactic configuration and the grammatical meaning of the participle (Gronemeyer 1997; Wiemer 2006). While the two constructions have been described theoretically in literature, there are no studies that would attest to the frequency and patterns of use of these constructions in authentic contemporary Lithuanian. The aim of the paper is to find out whether the existing potential of the grammatical means of expression of evidentiality in Lithuanian is common in the actual use of contemporary language. The analysis has been carried out in the light of the theoretical approach and the template of the database of evidential markers in European languages (Wiemer and Stathi 2010).

As shown in Usonienė (forthcoming), active participles used in the "reportive construction" can also be non-agreeing as in the "passive evidential" construction. Thus, the focus of the analysis is on three types of participles: active agreeing and non-agreeing participles vs. passive non-agreeing participles (*-ma/-ta* participles), e.g.:

3) agreeing active participle (AGR.AP):   *gyvenę* 'live'PST.AP.AGR
4) non-agreeing active participle (NAGR.AP):   *esant/buvus* 'be'PRS/PST.AP.NAGR
5) non-agreeing passive participle (NAGR.PP):   *esama/būta* 'be'PRS/PST.PP.NAGR

The study employs corpus based quantitative and qualitative methodology in order to investigate the distributional patterns of the two constructions in different types of discourse (fiction, academic and journalistic) in Lithuanian. The data have been collected from two corpora: the Corpus of Academic Lithuanian (CorALit) and the Corpus of Contemporary Lithuanian Language (CCLL). The findings of the corpus-based analysis show that these constructions are most common in academic and journalistic discourse, in the narrative text type. A very frequent use of the non-

agreeing active participles has been observed in *verba dicendi* and mental verb complementation, e.g.:

6) *J. M. Antonjanas   žiaurumą   **mano**   **esant**   asmenybės*
   Antonjanas   cruelty.ACC believe   be.PRS.AP.NAGR   personality.GEN
   bruožu, … (CorALit)
   feature.INS
   'Antonyan believes cruelty to be a feature of personality, …'

Data sources
CorALit   Corpus Academicum Lithuanicum (http://coralit.lt/)
CCLL   Corpus of the Contemporary Lithuanian Language (http://tekstynas.vdu.lt/)

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