

Lithuanian anticausative verb triads: form, semantics and functions

Antikauzatiūvū verbū triādės lietuviėšū valodā: forma, semantika un funkcijas

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In Lithuanian, a considerable number of infixed/*sta*-presents, causal verbs (basic or with the suffix *-(d)inti/- (d)yti*), and middle marked verbs form the so-called verb triads (cf. Ambrasas 1997, 231; see also Geniušienė 1987). Functionally these triads are not homogeneous because the first and the third members may be either synonyms or not, depending on the function of the middle marker of the triad's third member, which may be a body action (indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion) middle (e.g. *lenktis* 'bend (MM)', as in *Aš lenkiuosi* 'I bend (myself)') or an anticausative (*lenktis* 'bend (MM)' = *linkti* 'bend (INTR)', as in *Šaka lenkiasi/linksta nuo vėjo* 'The branch bends in (lit. from) the wind'). The subject *aš* 'I' in the former example is agentive and *šaka* 'the branch' in the latter example is non-agentive, therefore it is proposed here that the main defining property is agentivity (control, volition, animacy, see DeLancey 1984, 181) of the subject. This paper aims at characterising each of these triad types and defining the formal, semantic, and functional differences between them.

Keywords: verb triad; *n/sta*-present; middle marked verb; causal/noncausal; anticausative; body action middle.

1. Introduction

In Lithuanian, a considerable number of infixed/*sta*-presents, causal verbs¹ (basic or with the suffix *-(d)inti/- (d)yti*), and middle marked verbs form the so-called verb triads (cf. Ambrasas 1997, 231; see also Geniušienė 1987). This is determined by the fact that *n/sta*-presents and middles have some overlapping functions:

1. Infixed/*sta*- presents form a limited group of anticausative/inchoative verbs in Lithuanian². The main functions of the marker *n/st* (cf. Ulvydas 1971; Pakalniškienė 1993; Ambrasas 1997) are the following:

¹ In this paper, the term *causal verb* is used as a semantic description because there is no formal causativity marker in basic verbs; the term *causative verb* refers to the verbs with the suffix *-(d)inti, -(d)yti* (cf. Haspelmath et al. 2014, 589).

² According to Pakalniškienė (1993), in Lithuanian there are about 1100 *n/sta*-presents in total but considerably less are used in contemporary Lithuanian (e.g. *dvok-sta* 'starts stinking', *skamb-sta* 'starts sounding' are replaced with the phrases with *pradėti* 'start', *imti* 'start' (*pradeda dvokti* 'starts stinking') or *su-* prefixed verbs (*su-skamba* 'starts

- (i) inchoative
- (1) a. *su-skausti, su-skausta* ‘start aching’: *skaudėti, skauda* ‘ache’
 b. *švisti, švinta* ‘start shining’: *šviesti, šviečia* ‘shine’
- (ii) anticausative
- (2) a. *džiūti, džiūsta/džiūna* ‘dry (INTR)’: *džiauti, džiauna* ‘hang out (the wash)’
 b. *linkti, linksta* ‘bend (INTR)’: *lenkti, lenkia* ‘bend (TR)’

In case of inchoative meaning, verb triads are rare but in case of anticausative *n/sta*-presents, they are a prevailing phenomenon.

2. The middle voice in Lithuanian forms a productive group of verbs with the middle marker *-si-* (more than 3300 attested in eDCL). The main functions of the middle marker *-si-* (cf. Geniušienė 1987; Holvoet et al. 2015) are the following:

- (i) body action (‘reflexive like’) middles
- (3) a. *praustis* ‘wash (oneself)’: *prausti* ‘wash (TR)’
 b. *gintis* ‘protect (oneself)’: *ginti* ‘protect (TR)’
 c. *lenktis* ‘bend (down)’: *lenkti* ‘bend (TR)’
 d. *sėstis* ‘sit (down)’ ~ *sėsti* ‘idem’
- (ii) indirect (benefactive) middles
- (4) *užsidėti kepurę* ‘put on a hat (for oneself)’ : *uždėti kepurę* ‘put on a hat (for someone else)’
- (iii) cognition/emotion middles
- (5) a. *rūstintis* ‘be angry’: *rūstinti* ‘make angry’
 b. *ramintis* ‘calm down (INTR)’: *raminti* ‘calm down (TR)’
- (iv) reciprocal middles
- (6) a. *bučiuotis* ‘kiss each other’: *bučiuoti* ‘kiss’
 b. *muštis* ‘beat each other’: *mušti* ‘beat’
- (v) anticausative middles³
- (7) a. *atsidaryti* ‘open (INTR)’: *atidaryti* ‘open (TR)’
 b. *baigtis* ‘end up’: *baigti* ‘end (TR)’
- (vi) facilitative middles
- (8) *šaka lengvai lenkiasi* ‘the branch bends easily’

As far as earlier treatment of verb triads is concerned, they have already been recognised in the literature (see Ambrazas 1997, 231) but have not received any dedicated attention. So far, the most extensive analysis has been offered by Geniušienė (1987, 89, 106–109).

sounding’); *slipti, slimpa* ‘hide (INTR)’ is replaced by the middle marked *slėptis, slepiasi* ‘hide (MM)’.

³ In Geniušienė (1987) and Ambrazas (1997), the term *decausative* is used to describe this group of Lithuanian middles.

This paper aims at describing Lithuanian verb triads according to their form, syntax and function, highlighting the differences determined by the agentivity of the subject.

The paper is organized as follows: section 2 gives a theoretical description of the subject and an overview of the data used for this paper; section 3 is devoted to the analysis of Lithuanian verb triads: in section 3.1 the triads are classified according to their form, in section 3.2 the semantics of the triads is discussed, section 3.3 is devoted to the identical and different functions of the marker *n/st* and the middle marker in verbs with the same root in contemporary Lithuanian, in section 3.4 the polysemy of the middle marker is highlighted; section 4 provides the conclusions.

2. Theoretical prerequisites. Data

The concept *verb triad* is used here to name a set of three verbs that have a common root (with a vowel alternation or without it) and are semantically related. This term is not very well-known but it is already used in the literature (e.g. Geniušienė 1987; Ambrazas 1997).

As regards their function, the verb triads are:

- 1) inchoative
- (9) a. *sužvingti, sužvingsta* ‘start neighing, neigh (shortly) (ANIM)’ : *sužvengti, sužvengia* ‘neigh, laugh heavily (ANIM; HUM)’ : *susižvengti* ‘start neighing (ANIM), laughing heavily (HUM)’
- b. *suvimti, suvimsta* ‘start vomiting’ : *vemti, vemia* ‘vomit’ : *susivemti* ‘start vomiting’

It must be noted that the function of the prefix *su-* plays a key role in the inchoative semantics. However, there are only a few middle marked verbs that have inchoative meaning, like *n/sta*-present inchoatives.

- 2) anticausative
- (10) *virsti, virsta* ‘tumble down/over (INTR)’ : *versti, verčia* ‘tumble, turn (TR)’ : *verstis* ‘tumble, turn (MM)’

This paper is devoted to anticausative verb triads that have the following features:

1. The first member of an anticausative verb triad formally is an infixed/*sta*-present; semantically it is a noncausal/spontaneous verb, i.e. it has the same meaning as a causal verb but lacks the ‘cause’ component.
2. The second member formally is a basic verb (mostly the *ia*-present / *ė*-preterit, except for *lieti, lieja, liejo* ‘pour, water’; *sieti, sieja, siejo* ‘link’; *šlieti, šlieja, šliejo* ‘abut’; *griauti, griauna, griovė* ‘destroy’; *regzti, rezga, rezgė* ‘weave’; also a few verbs with a mixed root, e.g. *taikyti, taiko, taikė* ‘apply, conciliate’) or a causative with the derivational suffix *-(d)inti/- (d)yti*; semantically it is a causal verb. The causal verb is a verb that includes a ‘cause’ meaning component but has no specific marking for it (Haspelmath et al. 2014, 589). Causal verbs are transitive and have the cause and the

causee overtly expressed (e.g. *Jonas lenkia šaką* ‘John bends the branch’). In case of a basic causal verb, synchronically both the first and the second members are basic⁴.

3. The third member of a triad is a *si*-middle; semantically it may be either body action/indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion middle or anticausative. Anticausative in this case is a formal and semantic definition of a noncausal intransitive verb with a special marker of anticausativity (e.g. *Šaka lenkiasi* ‘The branch bends (MM)’ (cf. Haspelmath 1987).

The main features of anticausatives (cf. Kemmer 1993, 142–144) are the following:

- 1) they express spontaneous events, i.e. changes of the state of an entity:
 - a) autonomous events happen absolutely spontaneously, e.g. *bananai pajuodo* ‘bananas got black’;
 - b) non-autonomous events are usually initiated by the causer in some way, e.g. *langas sudužo* ‘the window broke’ (cf. Geniušienė 1987, 107);
- 2) no agent entity receives encoding;
- 3) the entity undergoing the change of state is the chief nominal.

Data

The main object of this paper is anticausative verb triads in Lithuanian. At the first stage of analysis, all the infixed/*sta*-present verbs with noncausal meaning were collected from the verb list given in Pakalniškienė 1993. Later their usage was investigated based on eDCL and CCL in order to select the ones that were still actively used in contemporary Lithuanian. Finally, they were grouped and analysed according to their form, semantics, and the function of the marker *n/st* and the middle marker *-si-*.

3. Verb triads

3.1. Form

As mentioned above, *infix*/*sta*-presents as noncausal verbs enter into an opposition with causal verbs that may be either basic or derived by means of suffixation with the suffix *-(d)inti/--(d)yti*. Therefore, according to the verb form these triads may be classified as follows:

(A) *n/sta-V* : *V* : *V + MM*

- (11) a. *virsti, virsta* ‘tumble down/over (INTR)’ : *versti, verčia* ‘tumble, turn (TR)’ : *verstis* ‘tumble, turn (MM)’

⁴ However, in some studies causal verbs are treated as derivatives (e.g. Ambrazas 1997, 224). Also, according to Geniušienė (1987, 16), a *-n/-sta*-present (e.g. *plisti* ‘spread (INTR)’) is a base word for the *derivation* of a causal word (e.g. *plėsti* ‘spread (TR)’) which in its turn is a base for the *derivation* of a middle marked verb (e.g. *plėstis* ‘spread, widen’).

b. *kisti, kinta* ‘change (INTR)’ : *keisti, keičia* ‘change (TR)’ : *keistis* ‘change (MM)’

- (B) *n/sta-V* : - : *V + -(d)inti/-(d)yti* : *V + -(d)inti/-(d)yti + MM*
- (11) a. *misti, minta* ‘feed (INTR)’ : *maitinti, maitina* ‘feed (TR)’ : *maitintis* ‘feed (oneself) (MM)’
- b. *tolti, tolsta* ‘recede, move away (INTR)’ : *tolinti, toлина* ‘move away (TR)’ : *tolintis* ‘move away (MM)’

- (C) *n/sta-V* : *V* : *V+MM* : *V + -(d)inti/-(d)yti* : *V + -(d)inti/-(d)yti + MM*
- (12) a. *visti, vysta* ‘breed (INTR)’ : *veisti, veisia* ‘breed (TR)’ : *veistis* ‘breed (MM)’ : *vaisinti, vaisina* ‘fertilize (TR)’ : *vaisintis* ‘get fertilized (MM)’
- b. *išklypti, išklypsta* ‘become slipshot (INTR)’ : *iškeipti, iškleipia* ‘make slipshot (TR)’ : *išsikleipti* ‘become slipshot (MM)’ : *išklaipyti, išklaipo* ‘make slipshot (TR)’ : *išsiklaipyti* ‘become slipshot (MM)’

In the latter case, the difference in the meaning of the *-n/sta*-present and the middle marked verbs depends on the difference between the basic causal verbs and the derived causatives.

3.2. Semantics

First of all, some *n/sta*-presents and middle marked verbs have different lexical meaning in contemporary Lithuanian, despite the fact that they have the same root. They are formally related but cannot be considered as triads in terms of causativity, e.g.

- (13) a. *stygti, stygsta* ‘calm (INTR)’ : *steigti, steigia* ‘establish (TR)’ : *steigtis* ‘establish itself (e.g. about a company) (MM)’
- b. *tįsti, tįsta* ‘stretch (INTR)’ : *tęsti, tęsia* ‘continue; stretch (TR)’ : *tęstis* ‘continue; stretch (MM)’

This paper is aimed at the infixed/*sta*-presents and middle marked verbs with the same lexical meaning, e.g.

- (14) a. *virsti, virsta* ‘tumble down/over (INTR)’ : *versti, verčia* ‘tumble, turn (TR)’ : *verstis* ‘tumble, turn (MM)’ (formal type A)
- b. *vargti, vargsta* ‘weary (INTR), get worn’ : *varginti, vargina* ‘wear, fatigue (TR)’ : *vargintis* ‘wear, fatigue (MM)’ (formal type B)
- c. *išklypti, išklypsta* ‘become slipshot (INTR)’ : *iškeipti, iškleipia* ‘make slipshot (TR)’ : *išsikleipti* ‘become slipshot (MM)’ : *išklaipyti, išklaipo* ‘make slipshot (TR)’ : *išsiklaipyti* ‘become slipshot (MM)’ (formal type C)

3.3. Function

When the *n/sta*-present and the middle marked verb have the same (similar) lexical meaning, according to the function of the marker *n/st* and the middle marker *-si-* the relation between the two can be twofold: either both of them belong to the category of noncausal events and have similar distribution (cf. section 3.3.1) or they have different functions: the *n/sta*-present denotes a spontaneous event,

whereas the middle marked counterpart belongs to the domain of body action middles (cf. section 3.3.2). The main difference comes from the agentivity (that comprises of control, volition, animacy; cf. DeLancey 1984, 181) of the subject: in case of a noncausal/anticausative event, the syntactic subject is patient-like and most often inanimate (or at least unvolitional and does not have any control over the event) whereas in case of a body action/indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion middle, the subject is agentive and most often animate.

As the middle marker is highly polysemous in Lithuanian, the same lexical item may denote anticausative, body action, indirect, reciprocal, cognition/emotion middle, therefore polysemy also plays a role in the analysis of the function of anticausative verb triads (cf. section 3.3.3).

3.3.1. SPONTANEOUS : CAUSAL : ANTICAUSATIVE

As mentioned above, *n/sta*-presents and middles have at least one overlapping function, i.e. both may denote noncausal events. The major difference between these two is formal: *n/sta*-presents are considered to be basic verbs correlating with causal basic verbs whereas the middle marker *-si-* is added to the causal verb (basic or derived) in order to form an anticausative middle, e.g.

- (15) a. *plisti, plinta* ‘spread (INTR)’ : *plėsti, plečia* ‘spread (TR)’ : *plėstis* ‘spread, widen (MM)’
 b. *kisti, kinta* ‘change (INTR)’ : *keisti, keičia* ‘change (TR)’ : *keistis* ‘change (MM)’
 c. *klišti, klyšta* ‘become slipshot’ : *klišinti, klišina* ‘make slipshot (TR)’ : *klišintis* ‘become slipshot (MM)’

As the first and the third member of a triad have the identical function, they can be used in similar syntactic environments, as in (16) and (17), e.g.

- (16) *Sulig amž-iumi kint-a mityb-os savitum-ai.*
 with age- INS.SG change-PRS.3 nutrition- GEN.SG trait-NOM.PL
 ‘With age the traits of nutrition change.’ (CCL)

(INANIMATE SUBJECT)

- (17) *Didži-ausi-as mityb-os žinov-o darb-as yra*
 big-SUPL-NOM.SG nutrition-GEN.SG expert-GEN.SG task-NOM.SG be.PRS.3
padė-ti žmog-ui supras-ti, kad keiči-a-si
 help-INF person-DAT.SG understand-INF that change-PRS.3-MM
jo mityb-os poreiki-ai <...>
 3.GEN.SG nutrition- GEN.SG need-NOM.PL

‘The biggest task for a nutritionist is to help a person to understand that his/her nutritional needs change <...>’ (CCL)

(INANIMATE SUBJECT)

- (18) *Rašytoj-ai kint-a su kiekvien-a nauj-a knyg-a.*
 writer-NOM.PL change-PRS.3 with every-INS.SG new-INS.SG book-INS.SG
 ‘Writers change with every new book.’ (CCL)

(ANIMATE, NON-VOLITIONAL SUBJECT)

As shown in the examples above, the subjects of both *n/sta*-presents and middle marked verbs commonly are inanimate (examples 16 and 17), therefore non-agentive, and the denoted events are spontaneous. The middle marked counterpart of the triad here denotes an anticausative situation type which is a common function of the middle marker *-si-* in Lithuanian (cf. Geniušienė 1987, 98–104; Haspelmath 1987; Holvoet et al. 2015). Animate subjects (example 18) may be used with inchoative *n/sta*-presents in order to show that the subject has no volition or control over the event but the change of state is a result of some other action.

Figure 1 shows that transitive clauses correlate with spontaneous and anticausative clauses in the same way.

SPONTANEOUS	ANTICAUSATIVE
<p>Vėjas lenkia šaką ‘The wind bends a branch’</p> <p>S V O</p> <p>Šaka ← linksta nuo vėjo ‘The branch bends in (lit. <i>from</i>) the wind.’</p> <p>S <i>sta</i>-present OBL (EXTERNAL CAUSE)</p>	<p>Vėjas lenkia šaką ‘The wind bends a branch’</p> <p>S V O</p> <p>Šaka ← lenkiasi nuo vėjo ‘The branch bends in (lit. <i>from</i>) the wind.’</p> <p>S V-MM OBL (EXTERNAL CAUSE)</p>
SUBJECT = PATIENT	SUBJECT = PATIENT

Figure 1. Correlation with the transitive clause - spontaneous events vs. anticausative middles.

In contrast to the triads with body action middles (cf. section 3.3.2), both *n/sta*-presents and middle marked anticausatives may denote a non-autonomous event, i.e. they may be supplemented with an external cause, e.g.

- (19) *Eksperimentin-iai tyrim-ai parad-ė, kad žuv-ų*
 experimental-NOM.PL studies-NOM.PL show-PST.3 that fish-GEN.PL
biomas-ė kint-a nuo vand-ens druskingum-o.
 biomass-NOM.SG change-PRS.3 from water-GEN.SG salinity-GEN.SG
 ‘Experimental studies have shown that the biomass of fishes changes depending on the salinity of water.’

- (20) <...> *vis-ų aplinkini-ų valstybi-ų požiūr-is į*
 all-GEN.PL surrounding-GEN.PL country-GEN.PL approach-NOM.SG to
tave keiči-a-si nuo to, koki-q turi
 you.ACC.SG change-PRS.3-MM from that.GEN.SG what-ACC.SG have-PRS.3
pil-į.
 castle-ACC.SG
 ‘<...> the approach to you of all the surrounding countries changes depending on what castle you have.’

However, the full synonymy is not a prevalent phenomenon:

1. In the majority of verb triads the middle marked counterpart greatly differs in frequency from the infixed/*sta*-present counterpart, cf. the usage of some verbs in CCL (the 3rd person Present, Past, Past Frequentative, Future tense, and Conditional forms were counted):
 - (21) a. *gesti, genda* ‘deteriorate, rot-INTR’ (899) : *gadintis* ‘deteriorate, rot-MM’ (3)
 - b. *plyšti, plyšta* ‘tear, split-INTR’ (790) : *plėštis* ‘tear, split-MM’ (9)
 - c. *įsmigti, įsminga* ‘stick-INTR’ (343) : *įsismeigti* ‘stick-MM’ (3)
 - d. *drikti, drinka* ‘extend-INTR’ (6) : *driektis* ‘extend-MM’ (1344)
 - e. *mišti, myšta* ‘mix-INTR’ (33) : *maišytis* ‘mix-MM’ (473)
2. Infixes/*sta*-presents differ from middles in combinability. For example, the subjects of the noncausal *drikti, drinka* ‘extends-INTR’ and anticausative *driektis, driekiasi* ‘extends-MM’ are the following:

drikti, drinka ‘extends-INTR’ + *plaukai* ‘hair’, *mintis* ‘thought’ (23);
driektis, driekiasi ‘extends-MM’ + *kelias* ‘road’, *maršrutas* ‘route’, *šešėlis* ‘shadow’ (24).

- (22) <...> *taip plauk-ai iš-si-liej-o per gili-us*
 thus hair-NOM.PL PREF-MM-overflow-PST.3 through deep-ACC.PL
Omi-o pažast-ų krant-us ir tiršt-ai drik-o
 Omis-GEN.SG armpit-GEN.PL shore-ACC.PL and dense-ADV extend-PST.3
krūtin-ės link.
 chest-GEN.SG towards
 ‘<...> thus the hair overflowed through the deep shores of Omis’ armpits and densely extended towards the chest’ (CCL)

- (23) *Per dykum-as driek-ė-si karavan-ų keli-ai,*
 through desert-ACC.PL extend-PST.3-MM caravan-GEN.PL road-NOM.PL
kuri-ais keliau-davo tik drąs-ūs pirkli-ai <...>
 which-INS.PL travel-FREQ.3 only brave-NOM.PL merchant-NOM.PL
 ‘The roads for caravans extended through the deserts, and only brave merchant used to travel there.’ (CCL)

This difference in combinability is closely related with the distinct semantic features of the synonyms involved. For example, infixed *plisti, plinta* ‘spread’ means expanding as a dispersion in some environment and the usual subjects are *virusas* ‘virus’, *žodis* ‘word’, *liga* ‘disease’, *idėja* ‘idea’, etc., whereas *plėstis, plečiasi* ‘expand’ means that the entity gets bigger by itself and the usual subjects are *rinka* ‘market’, *tinklas* ‘network’, *kraujagyslė* ‘blood vessel’, etc.

To sum up, markers of both noncausal members of the anticausative triads have the same function but languages do not tend to retain full synonymy, therefore semantic differences occur, even though in some contexts both noncausal

and anticausative verbs may be used identically. This aspect should be analysed in more detail taking into account the data from the actual usage of contemporary Lithuanian.

3.3.2. SPONTANEOUS : CAUSAL : BODY ACTION MIDDLE

There is another type of anticausative verb triads in Lithuanian, where triads consist of a noncausal verb, a causal verb and a body action middle (or a different middle marked verb, see section 3.3.3). Strictly speaking, these verb triads are not ‘anticausative triads’ because the middle marker here does not function as a marker of anticausativity, therefore the first and the second members differ depending on their function, and this distinction is closely related to the agentivity of the subject. However, these triads are treated as anticausative here because, in comparison to the causal verb, body action middles are also in a way noncausal; besides the two verbs are clearly related formally and semantically, e.g.

- (24) a. *čiurti, čiūra* ‘get dirty’: *čiurinti, čiurina* ‘make dirty’: *čiurintis* ‘make oneself dirty’
 b. *linkti, linksta* ‘bend (INTR)’: *lenkti, lenkia* ‘bend (TR)’: *lenktis* ‘bend oneself (MM)’
 c. *nirti, nyra* ‘get submerged’: *nerti, neria* ‘submerge, dive’: *nertis* ‘submerge oneself (MM)’
 d. *tolti, tolsta* ‘recede, move away (INTR)’: *tolinti, tolina* ‘move away (TR)’: *tolintis* ‘move away (MM)’
 e. *virsti, virsta* ‘become’: *versti, verčia* ‘convert, transform (TR)’: *verstis* ‘transform oneself (MM)’

In these triads, *n/sta*-presents and middles take different kind of subjects, e.g.

- (25) <...> *sužino-jus-i apie sav-o vyr-o mirt-į,*
 know-APTCP-NOM.SG.F about own-GEN.SG husband-GEN.SG death-ACC.SG
Eglė pat-i pasiverči-a ir sav-o
 Eglė-NOM.SG self-NOM.SG transform-PRS.3 and own-GEN.SG
vaik-us paverči-a medži-ais.
 child-ACC.PL transform-PRS.3 tree-INS.PL
 ‘<...> after learning about her husband’s death, Eglė transforms herself and transforms her children into trees’ (CCL)

(ANIMATE AND VOLITIONAL SUBJECT)

- (26) “*Vikšr-el-iai pavirst-a į drugeli-us. Tai ir*
 caterpillar-DIM-NOM.PL become-PRS.3 to butterfly-ACC.PL thus and
aš pavir-s-iu į maž-ą mergait-ę? – Ne. – Kodėl?”
 I.NOM.SG become-FUT-1SG to little-ACC.SG girl-ACC.SG no why
 ‘Little caterpillars become butterflies. Thus I will also become a little girl? – No. – Why?’ (CCL)

(ANIMATE BUT NON-VOLITIONAL SUBJECT)

- (27) *Jo kūnas gul-i žem-yje kol*
 3.GEN.SG body-NOM.SG lie-PRS.3 ground-LOC.SG until
sunykst-a ir pavirst-a dulk-ėmis.
 decay-PRS.3 and become-PRS.3 dust-INS.PL
 ‘His body lies in the ground until it decays and becomes dust.’ (CCL)
 (INANIMATE, NON-VOLITIONAL SUBJECT)

As shown in the examples above, the subject of the *n/sta*-present may be both animate (*vikšreliai, aš* in 26) or inanimate (*kūnas* in 27)⁵ but always non-volitional, whereas the subject of the middle marked verb is animate and volitional (*Eglė* in 25). Therefore, the event denoted by the verb is spontaneous in the former cases and ‘reflexive like’ in the latter case. The causal verb *paverčia* (25) has a prototypical agentive and volitional causer and a causee (resp. *Eglė* and *vaikus* in 26) (cf. DeLancey 1984, 181-185). The subject of the middle marked verb coincides with the subject of the causal verb (*Eglė* in 25), and this fact allows to conclude that subject of a ‘reflexive like’ middle is equal to the subject of the causal verb in terms of agentivity.

Furthermore, in case of the spontaneous event (28), an external causer may be also expressed (but not in case of the body action middle, cf. 29 and 30), e.g.

- (28) *Kai bu-v-au jaun-as – merg-os dreb-ėj-o, dabar*
 when be-PST-1SG young-NOM.SG girl-NOM.PL tremble-PST-3 now
pat-s linkst-u nuo vėj-o <...>
 self-NOM.SG bend(INTR)-PST.1SG from wind-GEN.SG
 ‘When I was young – girls used to tremble, now myself I bend in (lit. *from*)
 the wind <...>’ (CCL)

- (29) *Kai bu-v-au jaun-as – merg-os dreb-ėj-o, dabar*
 when be-PST.1SG young-NOM.SG girl-NOM.PL tremble-PST-3 now
*pat-s *lenki-uo-si nuo vėj-o <...>*
 self-NOM.SG bend-PRS.1SG-MM from wind-GEN.SG
 ‘idem’ (CCL)

- (30) *Saul-ė švieči-a - juoki-uo-si, vėj-as puči-a -*
 sun-NOM.SG shine-PRS.3 laugh-PRS.3-MM wind-NOM.SG blow-PRS.3
prie žem-ės lenki-uo-si.
 to ground-GEN.SG bend-PRS.3-MM
 ‘The sun shines - I laugh, the wind blows - I bend (myself) to the ground.’
 (CCL)

⁵ Therefore the statement in Ambrasas 1997 (p 231) that the difference between *-n/sta*-presents and middle marked verbs in the triads is based on the category of animacy should be further elaborated and supplemented.

Figure 2 shows that the spontaneous verb and the body action middle correlates differently with the transitive clause. Therefore, according to Geniušienė (1987, 108), in such cases the middle marker serves as a means of formally differentiating between the two situation types.

SPONTANEOUS EVENT	BODY ACTION MIDDLE
Vējas lenkia mane ‘(The) wind bends me’ S V O	Aš lenkiu (šaka) ‘I bend a branch’ S V O
↙ Aš linkstu nuo vējo ‘I bend in (lit. <i>from</i>) the wind’ S <i>sta-present</i> OBL (EXTERNAL CAUSE)	↓ Aš lenkiuosi ‘I bend (myself)’ S V-MM
SUBJECT = PATIENT	SUBJECT = AGENT

Figure 2. Correlation with the transitive clause - spontaneous events vs. body action middles.

Example (28) illustrates external causation, which is allowed with spontaneous *n/sta*-presents but not with middle marked forms. According to Kemmer (1993, 67–74), body action middles are ‘reflexive like’ verbs and their main feature is the *relative participant distinguishability*, i.e. these verbs are semantically intermediate between one- and two-participant events, as their initiator and endpoint are necessarily the same entity. In our case (*lenkiuosi* in example 31), the cause and the causee are merged into one referent, therefore no other cause may be syntactically expressed, despite the fact that the verb is still noncausal (no cause is encoded separately).

Furthermore, body action middles may form the construction “*lenktis + DAT*” (as in 31) or “*lenktis + prieš ACC*” where the subject acts volitionally and purposefully in order to show his/her gratitude/respect. The *n/sta*-present form is ungrammatical here (32).

- (31) *Lenki-uo-si žemdirbi-ų darb-ui ir j-ų*
 bend-PRS.3-MM cultivator-GEN.PL work-DAT.SG and they-GEN.PL
didži-ajai meil-ei, kuria j-ie myl-i sav-o
 big-DAT.SG love-DAT.SG which they-NOM.PL love-PRS.3 own-GEN.PL
žem-ę.
 land-ACC.SG
 ‘I bend to the work of cultivators and their big love, which they give to their land.’ (CCL)

- (32) **Linkst-u žemdirbi-ų darb-ui ir j-ų*
 bend-PRS.3 cultivator-GEN.PL work-DAT.SG and they-GEN.PL
didži-ajai meil-ei, kuri-a j-ie myl-i sav-o
 big-DAT.SG love-DAT.SG which they-NOM.PL love-PRS.3 own-GEN.PL
žem-ę.
 land-ACC.SG
 ‘idem’ (CCL)

In typical cases, the subject of the *-n/-sta*-present is inanimate and the subject of the middle marked verb is animate. Anyway, semantical-functional differences are identical when the subjects of both forms are animate, e.g. *žūsta* ‘perishes’ : *žudo* ‘kills’ : *žudosi* ‘kills oneself’.

- (33) *Ne-maž-ai kolaborant-ų nu-si-žud-ė pat-ys*
 not-little-ADV collaborator-GEN.PL PREF-MM-kill-PST.3 self-NOM.PL
arba žuv-o dėl alkoholi-o.
 or die-PST.3 from alcohol-GEN.SG
 ‘Quite a few collaborators killed themselves or died from the alcohol.’ (CCL)

- (34) *Ne-maž-ai kolaborant-ų *žuv-o pat-ys*
 not little-ADV collaborator-GEN.PL die-PST.3 self-NOM.PL
*arba *nu-si-žudė dėl alkoholi-o.*
 or PREF-MM-kill-PST.3 from alcohol-GEN.SG
 ‘idem’ (CCL)

In (33), the subject is animate but in case of middle marked form *nusižudė patys* it is agentive and its agency is strengthened by the pronoun *patys*, whereas in case of *sta-present žuvo nuo alkoholio* the event is conceptualized as spontaneous and for this reason an external cause may be added.

To sum up, body action middles enter into anticausative verb triads with infixed/*sta*-presents because these middles are also semantically noncausal. However, the functional difference is of utmost importance: infixed/*sta*-presents denote spontaneous events, i.e. either there is no cause at all/it is of no importance or the cause is external, while body action middles denote events with internal causation, i.e. the subject itself is the cause.

3.3.3. Polysemy

As regards polysemy, two aspects must be taken into account:

1. So far only examples of body action middles have been given. However, the middle marker is highly multifunctional in Lithuanian (see Geniušienė 1987). Therefore, the same middle marked verb, as the third member of a triad, may have more functions, namely, it can denote not only body action (35) but also indirect (36), reciprocal (37) situation type and cognition/emotion middle (38).

- (35) *Vairuotoj-ai nuolat skundži-a-si, kad vaik-ai*
 driver-NOM.PL constantly complain-PRS.3-MM that child-NOM.PL
kabin-a-si ant automobili-ū, lend-a po kauš-u <...>
 hang-PRS.3-MM on car-GEN.PL get(under)-PRS.3 under scoop-INS.SG
 ‘Drivers constantly complain that children hang onto the car, get under the scoop <...>’
- (36) *<...> ant kaklo j-os kabin-a-si kažk-q*
 on neck-GEN.SG they-NOM hang-PRS.2-MM something-ACC.SG
panāš-aus ī grandin-es, ant rank-ū - kažkoki-us
 similar-GEN.SG to collar-ACC.PL on hand-GEN.PL some-ACC.PL
žied-us.
 ring-ACC.PL
 ‘<...> on the neck they hang something similar to the collars, on the hands - some kind of rings.’
- (37) *Ap-si-kabin-o laiming-i, kad išveng-ē grēsm-ēs.*
 PREF-MM-embrace-PST.3 happy-NOM.PL that avoid-PST.3 danger-GEN.SG
 ‘They embraced happy, that [they] avoided the danger.’
- (38) *Kai žmog-us nu-si-ramin-a, tuomet praded-am-a*
 when person-NOM.SG PREF-MM-calm.down-PRS.3 then start-PPTCP-DF
klausinē-ti dalyk-ū, kur-ie parody-tū žini-as.
 ask-INF thing-GEN.PL that- NOM.PL show-COND.3 knowledge-ACC.PL
 ‘When the person calms down, then [they] start asking the questions (lit. things) that would show [his/her] knowledge.’

However, the difference between the *n/sta*-present and indirect/reciprocal/cognition middle is the same as between the *n/sta*-present and body action middles, therefore they are not analysed separately.

2. Due to the multifunctionality of the middle marker, the same lexical item may also denote an anticausative (39) or body action event (40) (also an indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion middle).

- (39) *Skris-kit skris-kit Per tiršt-q debes-ī,*
 fly-IMP.2PL fly-IMP.2PL through dense-ACC.SG cloud-ACC.SG
Ne-nukris-kit, Kai rūk-as keli-a-si.
 not_fly-IMP.2PL when mist-NOM.SG rise-PRS.3-MM
 ‘Fly fly Through the dense cloud, Do not fall, When the mist rises.’ (CCL)
- (40) *Jis anksti keli-a-si ir važiuoj-a ī miest-q*
 3.NOM.SG early get up-PRS.3-MM and drive-PRS.3 to town-ACC.SG
už dvidešimt penki-ū kilometr-ū.
 away twenty.NOM.SG five-GEN.PL kilometre-GEN.PL
 ‘He gets up early and drives to the town twenty five kilometres away.’ (CCL)

Here the difference is attributable to the subject - if it is animate and agentive as *jis* 'he' (example 40), then the denoted event is a body action (indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion) middle; and if the subject is inanimate and therefore non-agentive, the verb denotes a spontaneous event (e.g. *rūkas* 'mist' in 39).

Conclusions

Middle marked verbs that formally enter into triads with *n/sta*-presents and causal verbs, can be either body action/indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion middles or anticausatives depending on the agentivity of the subject:

- 1) If the subject is animate, agentive and acts volitionally/purposefully, the verb denotes body action situation type (also it can be an indirect/reciprocal/cognition/emotion middle). In this case the functional difference is of utmost importance in the triads: infixed/*sta*-presents denote spontaneous events, while body action middles denote events with internal causation; however, these triads may be treated as anticausative because, in comparison to the causal verb, body action middles are also noncausal and the two verbs clearly related formally and semantically.
- 2) If the subject is inanimate (in most cases), lacks control and volition, the verb denotes a spontaneous/anticausative situation type. Therefore, both noncausal verbs with different markers may be used in identical syntactic environments but their full synonymy is not a prevalent phenomenon: usually *n/sta*-presents differ from the middle marked counterparts in the frequency of usage, combinability, semantic features or stylistic facets.
- 3) As the middle marker is highly multifunctional in Lithuanian, the same lexical item may denote anticausative, body action, indirect, reciprocal, cognition/emotion situation type, therefore polysemy must be addressed while analysing anticausative triads.

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	person
ACC	accusative
ANIM	animate (subject)
APTCP	active participle
CCL	The Corpus of Contemporary Lithuanian
COND	conditional mood
DAT	dative
DF	definite
DIM	diminutive
eDCL	The Dictionary of Contemporary Lithuanian
F	feminine
FREQ	frequentative
GEN	genitive

HUM	human being (subject)
INF	infinitive
IMP	imperative mood
INS	instrumental
INTR	intransitive
LOC	locative
M	masculine
MM	middle marker
NOM	nominative
PL	plural
PPTCP	passive participle
PRS	present
PST	past
SG	singular
SUPL	superlative
TR	transitive

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Kopsavilkums

Lietuviešu valodā liels skaits infiksa/*sta-* tagadnes celmu, kauzātīvo darbības vārdu (pirmatnīgu vai atvasinātu ar sufiksu *-(d)inti/- (d)yti*) un mediāli marķētu darbības vārdu veido tā saucamās verbu triādes (sk. Geniušienė 1987; Ambrazas 1997, 231). Funkcionāli šīs triādes nav homogēnas, jo pirmais un trešais loceklis var būt vai nebūt sinonīmi atkarībā no triādes trešā locekļa mediālā marķiera funkcijas. Triādes trešais loceklis var būt ķermeņa darbības (netiešas/reciprokas darbības/izziņas/emocijas) izteicējs (piem., *lenktis* 'liekties (MM)', kā *Aš lenkiuosi* 'Es liecos (resp. liecu sevi)') vai akuzatīvs (*lenktis* 'liekties (MM)' = *linkti* 'liekties (INTR)', kā *Šaka lenkiasi/linksta nuo vējo* 'Zars liecas vējā'). Subjekts *aš* 'es' iepriekšējā piemērā ir darītājs, bet *šaka* 'zars' otrajā piemērā ne, tāpēc šajā publikācijā ierosināts, ka galvenā noteicējpazīme ir subjekta darītspēja (kontrolē, griba, dzīvums, sk., piem., DeLancey 1984, 181). Šīs publikācijas mērķis ir raksturot katru darbības vārdu triādes tipu un definēt tā formālo, semantisko un funkcionālo atšķirību.