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THE TWO KINDS OF PASSIVE VOICE IN LITHUANIAN

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In our *Introduction to Modern Lithuanian*[1] and in our article, rather lengthy, on the Lithuanian participles[2], we state that Lithuanian has two types of passive voice. This is due to the fact that Lithuanian has, all told, three passive participles: the present tense passive participle, in *-mas,* the past tense passive participle in *-tas,* and the future passive participle in *-simas.* In order to acquaint the non-specialist with these, we shall give here several examples:

The infinitive	**Present passive participle**
matyti 'to see'	matomas 'the one visible'
virti 'to cook'	verdamas 'being boiled, cooked'

Past passive part	**Future passive participle**
matytas 'seen'	matysimas 'the thing to be seen'
virtas 'cooked'	virsimas 'the thing to be cooked.'

Theoretically, there could be three types of passive voice in Lithuanian: one with the present passive participle, one with the past passive participle, and one with the future passive participle. However, the third type is hardly ever used, except in indirect speech and in a few other special expressions.[3]

Before we plunge, as it were, into the discussion of the two basic types of passive voice in Lithuanian, let us briefly say a few words on the passive voice in general.

In English, for example, the passive voice occurs with only one passive participle for the simple reason that there is only ONE passive participle in English. In addition to that, the passive voice, in English, is limited, as in all modern Indo-European languages, to the intransitive verbs of a certain type. In other words, it combines the English auxiliary verb 'to be' and the past participle:

Present tense:	The book *is (being) written.*
Past tense:	The book *was (being) written.*
Present perfect:	The book *has been written.*
Past perfect:	The book *had been written.*
Future:	The book *will be written.*
Future perfect:	The book *will have been written.*

Adding "being" carries some sense of the action in process, not yet completely finished.

We should note here that 'being' is usually added only in the present and in the simple past tense: after all, in English the sentence *The book will be being written,* is at best very awkward.

Thus, in English, the so-called actional, or real, passive can be used, as we have just seen, primarily in the present tense and in the (simple) past tense, also known as preterit, or imperfect tense.

In German, on the other hand, there are, in practical terms, also two kinds of passive voice: the actional, or real, passive, with the auxiliary verb *werden* 'to become, to turn into', and the so-called statal passive, or resultative passive, used with the auxiliary verb *sein* 'to be'.

Actional Passive	**Statal Passive**
Das Buch wird geschrieben	Das Buch ist (schon) geschrieben.
The book is being written'	The book is already written' = (ready)
Das Buch wurde geschrieben	Das Buch war (schon) geschrieben.
The book was (being) written'	The book was written' = (finished)
Das Buch ist geschrieben worden	
'The book has been written'	
Das Buch wird geschrieben werden	
'The book will be written'	
Das Buch wird geschrieben worden sein	
'The book will have been written'	

Theoretically, the statal passive, with the auxiliary verb *sein* 'to be', could also have all the six tenses, but, in practice, only the two are used: the present tense, and the simple past tense. Only in the so-called ungrammatical German one can run into more tenses with *sein.*[4]

But in both of the closely related Germanic languages, i.e., English and German, there is only ONE past passive participle, such as in English: *seen, spoken, worked, been,* etc. and in German: *gesehen, gesprochen, gearbeitet, gewesen,* etc. From the semantic point of view, these English and German passive participles can also be used as active participles, as follows:

In English:	I have written a letter.
	I had written a letter.
	I will have written a letter.
In German:	Ich have einen Brief geschrieben.
	Ich hatte einen Brief geschrieben.
	Ich werde einen Brief geschrieben haben.

Now, in Lithuanian there are four active participles,[5] as for example, *skaityti* 'to read'

Present active participle:	*skaitąs/skaitanti* 'one who is reading'
Past active participle:	*skaitęs/skaičiusi* 'the one who has read'
Frequentative past active p.:	*skaitydavęs/skaitydavusi* 'the one who used to read'
Future active participle:	*skaitysiąs/skaitysianti* 'the one who will read'

Therefore, there are FOUR active participles, and all kinds of compound tenses may be formed with them.[6]

Since there are THREE passive participles in Lithuanian, then, theoretically, THREE kinds of the passive voice should be available, as it were, in Lithuanian: one each with each passive participle and auxiliary verb.[7]

However, only TWO major passive participles, the present passive participles in *-mas,* and the past passive participles in *-tas* are actually used. [8]

Since very few textbooks of Lithuanian give all of these passive voice tenses in full, we shall list them here in full, in all four major tenses.

The actional passive **Present tense**	**The statal passive** **Present tense**
aš esu matomas, matoma	aš esu matytas, matyta
tu esi matomas, matoma	tu esi matytas, matyta
jis yra matomas	jis yra matytas
ji yra matoma	ji yra matyta
mes esame matomi, matomos	mes esame matyti, matytos
jūs esate matomi, matomos	jūs esate matyti, matytos
jie yra matomi	jie yra matyti
jos yra matomos	jos yra matytos
"I *am seen/visible,' etc.*	*'I am observed, seen, known,' etc.*

Simple past tense	**Simple past tense**
aš buvau matomas/matoma	aš buvau matytas/matyta
tu buvai matomas/matoma	tu buvai matytas/matyta
jis buvo matomas	jis buvo matytas
ji buvo matoma	ji buvo matyta
mes buvome matomi/matomos	mes buvome matomi/matomos
jūs buvote matomi/matomos	jūs buvote matyti/matytos
jie buvo matomi	jie buvo matomi
jos buvo matomos	jos buvo matomos
'I *was seen/visible,' etc.*	*'I was seen,' etc.*

Frequentative past tense	**Frequentative past tense**
aš būdavau matomas/matoma	aš būdavau matytas/matyta
tu būdavai matomas/matoma	tu būdavai matytas/matyta
jis būdavo matomas	jis būdavo matytas
ji būdavo matoma	ji būdavo matyta
mes būdavome matomi/matomos	mes būdavome matyti/matytos
jūs būdavote matomos/matomos	jūs būdavote matyti/matytos
jie būdavo matomi	jie būdavo matyti
jos būdavo matomos	jos būdavo matytos
'*I was seen/visible several times"*	'*I was seen repeatedly'*

NB. This tense is really very seldom used in both of these versions. Only in certain descriptions as well as in the so-called "officialese," or, as the British put it, the "office bumph, or bumf."

Future tense	**Future tense**
aš būsiu matomas/matoma	aš būsiu matytas/matyta
tu būsi matomas/matoma	tu būsi matytas/matyta
jis bus matomas	jis bus matytas
ji bus matoma	ji bus matyta
mes būsime matomi/matomos	mes būsime matyti/matytos
jūs būsite matomi/matomos	jūs būsite matyti/matytos
jie bus matomi	jie bus matyti
jos bus matomos	jos bus matytos[9]
'I *shall/will be visible'*	*'I shall/will be seen/spotted'*

Subjunctive Present tense	**Subjunctive Present tense**
aš būčiau matomas/matoma	aš būčiau matytas/matyta
tu būtum matomas/matoma	tu būtum matytas/matyta
jis būtų matomas	jis būtų matytas
ji būtų matoma	ji būtų matyta
mes būtume matomi/matomos	mes būtume matyti/matytos
jūs būtute matomi/matomos	jūs būtute matyti/matytos
jie būtų matomi	jie būtų matyti
jos būtų matomos	jos būtų matytos
'I would be seen/visible,' etc.	*'I would be seen/spotted, observed,' etc.*

As is commonly known, the passive voice is, in practical terms, a selective voice: its usage is determined, above all, by the logical possibility and the need. For example, if we take the simple transitive verb *pirkti* 'to buy, to purchase,' then theoretically, all the tenses, as listed above, are possible, but many a form will not be used because of the practical impossibility. For example, one could say "Aš esu smarkiai perkamas," or using the feminine form, "Aš esu labai perkama," literally, "I am being bought lustily," but in real life, at least in almost all modern Indo-European languages, such a phrase would be used, if ever, only when you have some animation, as in a play where the toys are bragging about being very popular, like before the Christmas time...

Therefore, in spite of the fact that we have just, above, given full conjugational paradigms of the Lithuanian passive voice of both kinds, in practice both kinds are used very selectively, and, very often, if in the present tense, without the auxiliary verb *būti* 'to be'.

Generally speaking, the passive voice, can be easily replaced by the active voice, and only certain generalities will occur, without fail, in one or the other kind of passive voice. We shall give, below, some of the most commonly used such phrases.

The actional/real passive:

/1/ Sustoti *draudžiama!* - "No stopping!" /Cf. Ger. Halten verboten!/
/2/ Čia *kalbama* lietuviškai. — "Lithuanian spoken here."
/3/ Čia *statomi* tik mūriniai namai. — "Only brick homes are built here."
/4/ Kaip tai *daroma?* — "How is that done?"
/5/ Iš ko kepama *duona?* — "Out of what bread is being baked?"
/6/ Kur *gaminami* šie batai? — "Where are these shoes manufactured?"
/7/ Tada pilys dar *buvo statomos* iš medžio. — "At that time, castles were built of wood."
/8/ Matematika *bus dėstoma* nuo antro skyriaus. — "Mathematics will be taught from the second grade."
/9/ Kur dar *yra kalbama* čiuvašiškai? — "Where is Chuvash still being spoken?"

The statal/resultative passive:

/1/ *Baigta!* Viskas *baigta!* — "The end! All finished! Kaput!"
/2/ *Pasakyta — parašyta* — "It's all written here what I said."
/3/ Kur *girdėta,* kad jis man padėtų! — "It's unheard of that he would ever help me."
/4/ Kiek čia alaus *išgerta!* — "Lots of beer has been drunk here."
/5/ Čia jų tais laikais *gyventa.* — "They used to live here in those times."
/6/ Kiek čia gėlių *prisodinta — "So* many flowers had been planted here."
/7/ Jis *yra* tikrai velnio *neštas* ir *pamestas."* — This man certainly had gone through hell and high water." (Literally: 'Here is a man whom the devil had carried and then dropped.")
/8/ Taip *nebuvo šnekėta/kalbėta/susitarta/numatyta..* "This was not our agreement/talk/covenant..."
/9/ Taip ir *sutarta!* — 'That's the way it will be!"
/10/ Viskas *bus padaryta.* — "Everything will be done."
/11/ Čia, matyt, jų *gulėta.* — "They had apparently been lying here."

Remarks

1. Theoretically, any phrase in the active voice, particularly the one with a transitive verb, could be transformed into the passive voice like so:
Active : The boy throws/threw/has thrown/had thrown/will throw/would throw...the ball.
Passive: The ball is/was/ has been/had been/will be thrown by the boy.
But, in practice, only a very small portion of the normally used active voice is rendered also into the passive voice.

2. The passive voice, especially in all modern Indo-European languages, is used less in everyday conversational patterns, but is used more in formal texts, particularly descriptive texts, such as history, natural sciences and the like.

3. There is also the subjunctive perfect/or past/tense, like so: *Aš būčiau buvęs matomas 'I* would have been seen,' but it is used only in some unreal /contrary-to-fact/ if-clauses.

Notes

1 Leonardas Dambriūnas, Antanas Klimas, and William R. Schmalstieg, *Introduction to Modern Lithuanian,* Franciscan Fathers Press, Brooklyn, N.Y., 457 pages. 1st edition: 1966; 2nd edition: 1972; 3rd edition: 1980; 4th edition: 1990.
2 Antanas Klimas, "The Lithuanian Participles: Their System and Functions," *Lituanus,* Vol. 33 (1987), No. 1, pp. 38-73.
3 In many of these special expressions, both participles, the present passive participle as well as the past passive participle are used, mostly, as adjectives. Their historical development, however, shows that they were originally participles.
4 Several examples of this type of the so-called ungrammatical usage of German passive voice can be found in Ludwig Thomas' *Lausbubengeschichten.*
5 For a complete description, cf. *Introduction to Modern Lithuanian,* op. cit, particularly pages 438 ff. and the article by Antanas Klimas, cited in Footnote #2.
6 Many a linguist, or, more exactly, many a grammarian and/or syntactician, does not even consider those compound tenses as verbal tenses proper. Rather, some of these modern syntacticians consider any participle to be an adjective. After all, they maintain, syntactically, there is ho difference between the two following sentences:
Jonas yra drąsus - 'John is courageous'
Jonas yra pavargęs. - 'John is tired'
7 Again, theoretically almost any verb meaning some change, moving, becoming, turning into, etc., could be used as an auxiliary to form the passive voice, but in Standard Literary Lithuanian only the verb *būti* 'to be' is so used, somewhat similar to only the compound tenses of Classical Latin.
8 Both of these participles, i.e., the one in *-mas* and the one in *-tas* are inherited from Proto-Indo-European. For a more

detailed discussion, cf. Antanas Klimas *Lietuvių kalbos dalyvių vartosena/* 'The Usage of the Lithuanian Participles'/, to appear in Vilnius, Lithuania, in 1993.

9 Both of the Lithuanian passive participles used in forming these two types of the passive voice are inflected as to case, number, and gender. Cf. *Introduction to Modem Lithuanian,* op. cit., particularly pages 460 ff.