

Future tense and narrativity

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This paper investigates the use of future tense in Latvian and Lithuanian in narratives that are located in the past. The data come from corpora of the contemporary languages as well as from folktales documented at the end of the 19th century. While the future is rarely used to tell a story, it does appear in certain functions in clauses that meet all or a part of the criteria for narrative clauses. We distinguish three groups of uses, with increasing degrees of narrativity: (a) imagined and evoked scenarios, including evoking habitual actions in the past; (b) a cluster of meanings around intention, imminence, and inception; (c) functions of text organization and grounding. Purely textual functions are only found in the folktales. Furthermore, switches to future tense in Baltic folktales show similar characteristics as switches from past to present tense in Romance languages.

Keywords: future tense, narrative, narrative clause, Baltic, Latvian, Lithuanian, Latgalian

1. Introduction¹

Kann vielleicht auch mit dem Indikativ des Futurums erzählt werden?
(Delbrück 1897, 306–307)

It is common knowledge in linguistics that there is no one-to-one correspondence between time and tense. Nevertheless, not only pedagogical grammars, but almost all descriptions of tense in Baltic take as their starting point the alignment of tenses according to the time before and

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after the moment of speech. With respect to the future, there is good reason for this persistence: when talking about a time that lies ahead, the future tense is the most frequent choice in Latvian and Lithuanian, and verbs in the future tense in the great majority of uses refer to a time after the moment of speech or after another reference point.² However, neither does this observation cover all uses of the future tense, nor can all other uses be explained as some kind of extension of the future's basic, temporal-deictic function.

In this paper we study some untypical uses of the future tense in Baltic languages. Our focus is on narratives, and our study is guided by two research questions. First, we establish in which functions future tense occurs in *narrative texts* in Latvian, Lithuanian, and (less in detail) Latgalian. Second, we ask whether future tense does occur in *narrative clauses*—clauses that advance the plot, that tell ‘what happened then’; the concept will be explained in more detail in Section 2. We find that the Baltic languages are special in this respect. Studies on tense in narratives in Romance languages and English have mostly looked at the use of various past tenses and present tense, while future tense seems to be excluded from narrative clauses (cf. Fleischman 1990, 26). Most of the uses of future in narrative clauses that we found belong to a register that has disappeared from the modern languages: they are well attested in folktales which reflect an oral tradition of storytelling, collected at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Our findings therefore also corroborate Fleischman's thesis that the difference between orally performed texts (where the author is present) and those with an absent author may be crucial for tense uses (Fleischman 1990, 3; 63; *author* is here to be understood as by Goffman 1981). As there are no earlier and no later records of this particular register, we do not make any claims about the historical development of future functions. Our study, though using material from different time periods, is mainly synchronic.

For folktales, we used the digitalized versions of the collections *Latviešu pasakas un teikas* (LPT) and *Ķono Basanavičiaus tautosakos biblioteka* (BTB),

² We did some small pilot studies with corpora of contemporary Latvian and Lithuanian to corroborate this statement and found, for example, that in clauses with reference to ‘tomorrow’ Latvian used future tense in 67% and Lithuanian in 60% of the clauses (samples contained 350 sentences). Present tense occurred in 14% (Latvian) and 21% (Lithuanian) of the clauses.

and for the modern languages, we used several corpora; see Sources at the end of this paper.

In Section 2 we give some background information on the future tense in Baltic, on tense use in narratives, and on the concept of narrative clause. Sections 3–5 describe different groups of functions of the future in narratives, with a discussion of ‘how narrative’ the respective clauses are. In Section 6 we summarize the results, discuss implications, and compare our findings to functions of tense switching observed in other languages.

2. Background

2.1. The future tense in Baltic

With respect to the formal expression of future tense, the Baltic languages stand out among their relatives and neighbors. They have a special future morpheme, which is not typical for the modern languages of Europe (Dahl & Velupillai 2013). Other contemporary European languages with a morphological future belong to the Celtic and the Romance branches. As is widely known, the inflectional future in western Romance languages developed in historical times from a construction with ‘have’ and an infinitive. The Baltic future marker, in turn, goes back to one or two morphemes that can be reconstructed for the Indo-European protolanguage (see Hill 2014 for the thesis of two independent sigmatic formations as the origin of the Baltic future). This persistence of an inherited future morpheme is rare within the Indo-European family. Furthermore, the Baltic languages show little if any signs of grammaticalization of constructions with a lexical or modal verb into a periphrastic future, processes which are well attested cross-linguistically (cf. Bybee, Pagliuca and Perkins 1991). The Baltic future tense thus defies the thesis of an inherent instability of the future, which Fleischman (1982) sees as an outcome of the “continual fluctuation of the balance of modality and temporality in future forms” (Fleischmann 1982, 31). It seems that in Latvian and Lithuanian, modality and temporality have peacefully coexisted in the future tense for centuries, and most likely will continue to do so. Delbrück (1897, 323) even assumes that the Baltic future and present tenses are used in the same way as they were in the Indo-European ancestor language, and Brugmann (1916, 785) acknowledges the impossibility of disentangling temporal and modal meanings in the oldest layer of reconstructed future uses.

Grammars of modern Latvian and Lithuanian name a range of meanings of the future tenses, using various categorizations and terms (see Endzelin 1923, 746–748; Jablonskis 1922, 148–149, 268–269; LKG II, 1971, 113–129; MLLVG I, 1959, 597–599; Valeckienė 1998, 276; Ambrazas 2006, 247–248; LVG2013, 477–478). A list and uniform treatment of all these functions is far beyond the scope of this paper. We will therefore only name some aspects that are important for our main interest, the use of future tense in narrative contexts.

Future tense occurs in represented and reported speech and thought, both in direct speech and in complement clauses of predicates designating communication and mental processes (speaking, writing, thinking, hoping, remembering, expecting). The reference point is the time of the reported or represented utterance or mental act. There are no special rules of *consecutio temporum* as found in Western European languages such as English, German, or French. The moment of reporting does not play a role. Thus, out of context it is not determined whether the promise reported in (1) is still valid ('he will call').

- (1) Lithuanian (ItTenTen14, non-fiction)

<i>Ĵis</i>	<i>man</i>	<i>pasakė</i>	<i>kad</i>	<i>paskambins</i>
3SG.NOM.M	1SG.DAT	say.PST.3	that	PVB.call.FUT.3
<i>po</i>	<i>dešimt</i>	<i>minučių.</i>		
after	ten	minute.GEN.PL		

'He told me he **will call** in ten minutes.' or 'He told me he **would call** ten minutes later.'

Reported or represented speech and thought may appear in narratives also in independent clauses, without an explicit introduction. Then the switch to future tense by itself signals that the clause is not part of the narration, but represents a character's speech, thought or intention; cf. (2).

- (2) Latvian (LVK2018; Vizma Belševica, *Bille*. Riga 1995)

<i>Durvis</i>	<i>aizcirtās,</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>istabā</i>	
door.NOM.PL	slam.PST.3.RFL	and	room.LOC.SG	
<i>iešņirkstējās</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>patahtes</i>		
PVB.scratch.PST.3.RFL	from	under_sofa.GEN.SG		
<i>velkamais</i>	<i>čēmodāns.</i>	<i>Ies</i>	<i>projām.</i>	
pull.PRS.PP.NOM.SG.M.DEF	suitcase.NOM.SG	go.FUT.3	away	
<i>Vecāmāte</i>	<i>vienmēr</i>	<i>tā.</i>		
grandmother.NOM.SG	always	so		

‘The door banged, and the scratching noise of a suitcase being pulled from under the sofa resounded in the room. [She] **would go** (literally: will go) away. Grandmother [was] always like that.’

In extract (2) it is not clear whether *Ies projām* ‘[she] will go away’ represents an announcement made by the grandmother or an assumption of the narrator, the granddaughter experiencing the scene. This shows the well-known affinity of reported speech to evidential and epistemic meanings. Clearly epistemic is the use of the future perfect to express conjectures about past events, as in (3) and (4); on this function see also Daugavet & Arkadiev (2021). Similar uses are well attested in other European languages.

- (3) Latvian (LVK2018; Egīls Ermansons, *Mala*. Rīga 1999)

<i>Kādēļ</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>vēl</i>	<i>esmu</i>	<i>dzīvs?</i>
why	1SG.NOM	still	be.PRS.1SG	alive.NOM.SG.M
<i>Anete</i>	<i>būs</i>	<i>aizmirsusi</i>		<i>man</i>
Anete.NOM.SG	be.FUT.3	forget.PST.PA.SG.F		1SG.DAT
<i>uzlikt</i>	<i>cilpu</i>	<i>kaklā.</i>		
PVB.put.INF	loop.ACC.SG	neck.LOC.SG		

‘Why am I still alive? Anete **must have forgotten** to put the loop around my neck.’

- (4) Lithuanian (ItTenTen14)

<i>Matyt</i>	<i>bus</i>	<i>pasigavęs</i>		<i>kažkokią</i>
apparently	be.FUT.3	catch.RFL.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M		some.ACC.SG
<i>žarnyno</i>	<i>bakteriją</i>	<i>su</i>	<i>maistu</i>	
bowel.ACC.SG	bacterium.ACC.SG	with	food.INS	
<i>ar</i>	<i>vandeniu.</i>			
or	water.INS			

‘Apparently, he **must have caught** some intestinal bacterium with food or water.’

The uses of the future described so far are not bound to narrative texts, and the clauses in which they appear are non-narrative: they are not part of the story itself, but express reflections by the narrator or a character.

2.2. Tense use in narration

The special use and different effects of tenses in storytelling have long been a topic of linguistic inquiry, but future tense is rarely considered in

this context. Noteworthy is Delbrück's (1897) treatment of this topic in the *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der Indogermanischen Sprachen* and Brugmann's (1916) elaborations in the second edition of this work—the comprehensive compendium of linguistic knowledge at the turn of the 19th/20th century. Delbrück devotes a special section to the use of future tense in narratives in Indo-European languages (*Das Futurum in der Erzählung*, Delbrück 1897, 306–308). He starts by summarizing the differences in the use of imperfect, aorist, and present tense, and adds the question whether future forms may also be used in narrating:

If one wants the listeners to imagine the development of events, one chooses the imperfect; if one only wants to state that something has happened, the aorist or (in Old Indic) the perfect is chosen. If the listener is meant, in a manner of speaking, to take a seat in front of the scene of action, one uses present tense. May it be possible to narrate with the future indicative as well? (Delbrück 1897, 306–307, our translation)³

Almost 100 years later, Suzanne Fleischman in her seminal work on tense and narrativity in Romance gives a similar account, using the metaphor of 'narrating personae', each of which is associated with a tense-aspect category found in narration: the historian with the preterit (the *passé simple* in French), the memorialist with the perfect (*passé composé* in French), the painter with the imperfect (*imparfait*), and the performer with the present tense (Fleischman 1990, 43–44). The possibility of using future tense in narration is not considered by Fleischman. Delbrück in turn does not arrive at a definite answer to his question but concludes with caution that the Indo-European future tense *may* also have had the function "to name an expected link in a chain of narrated events, somewhat as a preterit" (Delbrück 1897, 309, our translation)⁴.

³ "Will man, dass der Zuhörer sich in der Phantasie die Entwicklung der Ereignisse vorstelle, so wählt man das Imperfektum; hat man lediglich die Absicht zu konstatieren, dass etwas geschehen ist, den Aorist oder (im Altindischen) das Perfekt. Wenn der Zuhörer sich gewissermassen im Geiste als Zuschauer vor der Bühne des Geschehens setzen soll, so gebraucht man das Präsens. Kann vielleicht auch mit dem Indikativ des Futurums erzählt werden?" (Delbrück 1897, 306–307)

⁴ "[...] konnte vielleicht auch gebraucht werden, um ein zu erwartendes Glied in einer Kette von erzählten Ereignissen zu bezeichnen, also gewissermassen präterital." (Delbrück 1897, 309)

What unites Delbrück's and Fleischman's accounts is the idea that tenses are used to different effects when telling a story. This seems to be more fruitful than the approach by Benveniste ([1959] 1966) and Weinrich ([1964] 1985), who propose a division between tenses according to discourse types or modes, opposing a narrative mode to a communicative or commenting mode. For more on this approach, problems it poses and further developments, see Fleischman (1990, 78-82); Carruthers ([2005] 2017, 26-29). Different approaches to constituting narration as a discourse type are summarized by Wiemer (1997, 1-38).

An alternative to thinking of narrativity as characterizing whole texts or genres is to associate it with smaller textual units such as sentences, or with syntactic clauses. In his analysis of grounding in narratives, Hopper (1979) distinguishes between foregrounding and backgrounding clauses and points out associated differences in the use of tenses. His foregrounding clauses are the actual narrative clauses, which "relate events belonging to the skeletal structure of the discourse", while backgrounding clauses provide "supporting material which does not itself narrate the main events" (Hopper 1979, 213). According to Hopper's conclusions, it is backgrounding clauses where we find the greatest repertoire of tenses, including pluperfect, future, and others, while foregrounding clauses may get by with one tense, typically a past tense (238-239).

Hopper's equation of foregrounding clauses with narrative clauses poses problems for more detailed analyses of grounding in narratives, for which a binary opposition of background vs foreground is insufficient (cf. Wehr 1984, 97-98; Givón 1987). However, his characterization of narrative clauses is useful and in line with that of most other researchers in the field. In their seminal paper, Labov and Waletzky (1967) establish as the crucial feature of narrative clauses that they are sequential; their order cannot be changed without changing the story. In simple terms, a narrative clause gives answers to the question 'And then?'. The importance of *narrative context* for tense systems is also highlighted by Dahl (1985, 112-114). Based on Dahl's and other previous work, Fleischman develops the following definition of narrative clause, which we adopt for our study:

A narrative clause is one that contains a unique event that, according to the narrative norm, is understood to follow the event immediately preceding it and to precede the event immediately following it. (Fleischman 1990, 109)

Defining features of narrative clauses are thus: temporal order, immediate sequence, and uniqueness of events. Furthermore, as established by Hopper (1979), narrative clauses advance the plot, make up the ‘skeleton’ of the story, and contain foregrounded content. Individual clauses within a text may show all or only some of these characteristics, and this makes *narrative clause* a gradient concept. Also, some of the criteria, such as immediateness or foregrounding, are gradient in themselves. Our task in the following sections 3–5 will be to determine which criteria defining narrative clauses are met by clauses with the future tense—thus, we ask *How narrative are clauses with future tense?*

Within a story, non-narrative clauses with future tense typically appear in comments and evaluations by the narrator, in represented speech, thoughts, or feelings of protagonists, and sometimes in descriptions. It is however not always so clear which clauses in a narrative text belong to the ‘skeletal structure’ and which provide ‘supporting material’, background information or evaluations, which clauses belong to a chain of temporally ordered events and which stand outside the timeline. In the following three sections we will discuss several doubtful cases.

3. Predicted, imagined, and evoked scenarios

In the academic grammar of Latvian published in 2013, ‘narrative tense’ (*vēstījuma laiks*) is mentioned as one of the uses of the future tense (LVG2013, 478; also Kalnača & Lokmane 2021, 237). What the authors have in mind here is text passages in narratives where a narrator devises a future situation as they imagine or predict it. Modern Latvian (and Lithuanian as well) seem not to differ in this use from other contemporary European languages. While it is technically possible to write a whole story in future tense, this is highly unusual and only found in modern experimental writing (cf. Fludernik 2009, 52). Rather, imagined situations are devised in a paragraph within a narrative whose main tense is past or present. It is questionable whether these text parts are narratives (stories) with narrative clauses. Most often, it is not an imagined story that is told, but rather a description of a situation, where actions and processes are named without strict temporal order. An example from a Latvian novel found in the corpus is given in extract (5).⁵

⁵ As this extract is rather long and the only grammatical phenomenon to note here is the use of future tense, we refrain from morphological glossing, but translate the future forms with future forms in English.

- (5) Latvian (LVK2018; Dace Priede, *Kamenes uz stīgām*. Rīga 1997)
Būs viss kā bijis. **Klausīsies** viņa gudrajās runās par mūziku, kura pašai **būs** liegta. Tai vienkārši **neatliks** laika. Ja arī **atļausies** ko iebilst, tad **saņems** atbildi—ko tu saproti. Viņš **ieslēgsies** istabā un **klausīsies** ierakstus, bet viņa **klās** viesību galdus, jo Maldis ir sabiedrīks cilvēks. Pie tiem viņa **nesēdēs**, jo **būs jāsavāc** bērni, lai nemaisās pa kājām. Jāmazgā trauki un jāpasniedz deserts. Viņa **būs** tikai galda meita. Vīri, kas **sēdēs** ap galdu, **slavēs** viņas gatavotos ēdienus un Maldi.
 ‘Everything **will be** as before. She **will listen** to his clever talk about music, which **will be denied** to herself. There simply **will be** no time left for it. Even if she **will dare** to express an observation, she **will get the answer** – what do you understand. He **will shut** himself into the bedroom and **will listen** to recordings, while she **will lay** the tables for a party, for Maldis is a sociable man. She **will not sit down** with them, for she **will have to take** the children so they are not in the way. She must do the dishes and serve the dessert. She **will be** only the table girl. The men, who **will sit** at the table, **will praise** her dishes and Maldis.’

Though the narrator may locate such scenes at a definite time posterior to the current time of the narrative (this evening, the next day), the future tense gives them a flavor of timelessness. While the named events may be in temporal order, they do not immediately follow each other and do not constitute a plot. Furthermore, the predicted scenario is often based on prior experience of the narrator. In extract (5), this is explicitly said at the beginning (‘Everything will be as it has been’). The extract therefore does not talk about unique events, but refers to a type of events, whose recurrence is predicted for the future. This links this use of the future to evidentiality and epistemic modality.

Future tense may likewise be used for recurrent scenarios without a prediction for the future. In extract (6) from another contemporary Latvian novel, the scenario is located in general time (‘always’).

- (6) Latvian (LVK2018; Dace Rukšāne, *Beatrices gultas stāsti*. Rīga 2002)
- | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <i>Sīvens</i> | <i>man</i> | <i>vienmēr</i> | <i>bijis</i> | <i>ārpus</i> |
| SĪVENS.NOM | 1SG.DAT | always | be.PST.PL.SG.M | outside |
| <i>laika</i> | <i>un</i> | <i>notikumiem.</i> | <i>Lai</i> | <i>ko</i> |
| time.GEN.SG | and | event.DAT.PL | PTC | what.ACC |
| <i>es</i> | <i>pārdzīvotu,</i> | <i>lai</i> | <i>kādās</i> | <i>nepatikšanās</i> |
| 1SG.NOM | experience.IRR | PTC | which.LOC.PL.F | trouble.LOC.PL |
| <i>vai</i> | <i>uzdzīvēs</i> | <i>iekultos,</i> | <i>viņš</i> | <i>vienmēr</i> |
| or | revelry.LOC.PL | get_into.IRR.RFL | 3SG.NOM.M | always |

<i>ir</i>	<i>bijis</i>	<i>tas,</i>	<i>kurš</i>
be.PRS.3	be.PST.PA.SG.M	DEM.NOM.SG.M	rel.NOM.SG.M
<i>apsėdīsies</i>	<i>man</i>	<i>līdzās,</i>	<i>stāstīs</i>
sit_down.FUT.3.RFL	1SG.DAT	beside	tell.FUT.3
<i>visjaukākos</i>	<i>stāstus</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>smaidīs,</i>
nicest.ACC.PL.M	story.ACC.PL	and	smile.FUT.3

[nosakot:– Ai, Beatrise, paskaties, cik pasaule tomēr ir skaista.]

‘Steven [**has**] always **been** to me beyond time and events. Whatever I may experience, whatever troubles or revelries I may get myself into, he always **has been** the one who **would sit down** at my side, **would tell** the nicest stories, and **would smile**, [saying: Aye, Beatrise, look how beautiful life is after all.]’

In (6), the present perfect is used besides the future, which is another clear indicator that the passage is not narrative, as the perfect in Latvian is never used to tell a story.

In Lithuanian, we find future tense also for habitual actions located in the past, alongside the past or the past habitual tense (cf. LKG II, 127). Jablonskis writes in his *Lithuanian Grammar* that this use occurs in spoken Lithuanian, especially in the Samogitian dialect, where it is combined with the particle *liuob* (Jablonskis [1922] 1997, 149, 269). In modern standard Lithuanian, we often find the discourse marker *būdavo* with the habitual use of the future, a pragmaticalized form of the habitual past tense of *būti* ‘be’, cf. (7). The description in (7) starts with past tense, then switches first to future and then to present tense.

- (7) Lithuanian (DLKT, Paul Koeck, *Po siestos: novelės*, translated into Lithuanian by Antanas Gailius. Vilnius, Tyto Alba 2004)

[*Visados ir viską kuo puikiausiai spėjo* [PST], *tvarkingai laikėsi* [PST] *kontrakto,*]

<i>išgers,</i>	<i>būdavo,</i>	<i>stiklinę</i>	<i>raudonojo</i>
PVB.drink.FUT.3	PTC	glass.ACC.SG	red.GEN.SG.DEF
<i>vyno</i>	<i>su</i>	<i>mineraliniu</i>	<i>vandeniu</i>
wine.GEN.SG	with	mineral.INS.SG.M	water.INS.SG

[—ne, kavos nenoriu, ačiū, paskui neužmigsiu—*ir važiuoja* [PRS] *sau namo.*]

‘[He always managed to do everything perfectly well, kept the contract.] he **would drink**, PTC, (= ‘it happened many times that he drank’) a glass of red wine with mineral water—no, thank you, [I don’t want coffee, otherwise I won’t sleep at night —and drove (literally: drives) home.]’

A parallel to this construction is found in Russian (and other East Slavic languages), where the discourse marker *byvalo* in combination with the perfective future tense form may be used for reference to a habitual past event (Sitchinava 2013, 291–293; Stojnova 2016). This discourse marker has an etymology similar to Lithuanian *būdavo*: it stems from a past tense form of the existential verb *byvat* ‘be present from time to time’. This development is found in all East Slavic languages (Sitchinava 2013, 289). In Polish, the particle *bywało* in combination with future tense (non-past of a perfective verb) is occasionally found in narrative texts from before 1940, by authors from the eastern parts of Poland.⁶ The construction can therefore count as an areal feature.

Another particle found with the future tense for habitual actions in Lithuanian is *kad* (see also Section 4). In (8), it signals the abrupt beginning of a very intensive event within a scenario depicted as recurrent. As in (7), the future tense in (8) is surrounded by past and present tense forms.

- (8) Lithuanian (DLKT, Birutė Junuškaitė, *Didžioji sala* II d., Vilnius, Vaga 1999)
- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Seniokas</i> | <i>ilgai</i> | <i>pykti</i> | <i>nemokėjo.</i> | | |
| old_man.NOM.SG | long | be_angry.INF | NEG.be_able.PST.3 | | |
| <i>Pavaikščios,</i> | <i>parėkaus,</i> | <i>išsitrauks</i> | <i>ne</i> | | |
| PVB.walk.FUT.3 | PVB.shout.FUT.3 | PVB.RFL.pull.FUT.3 | NEG | | |
| <i>itin</i> | <i>švarią</i> | <i>nosinę,</i> | <i>kad</i> | <i>pradės</i> | |
| very | clean.ACC.SG | handkerchief.NOM.SG | PTC | start.FUT.3 | |
| <i>pūsti</i> | <i>į</i> | <i>ją,</i> | <i>kad</i> | <i>ims</i> | <i>trinti</i> |
| blow.INF | into | 3.ACC.SG | PTC | start.FUT.3 | rub.INF |
| <i>savo</i> | <i>ir</i> | <i>taip</i> | <i>jau</i> | <i>raudoną,</i> | <i>didžiulę</i> |
| RPOSS | and | so | already | red.ACC.SG.F | huge.ACC.SG.F |
| <i>kuprota</i> | <i>nosį</i> | — | <i>jums</i> | <i>visa</i> | |
| humped.ACC.SG.F | nose.ACC.SG | | 2PL.DAT | all.NOM.SG.F | |
| <i>baimė</i> | <i>išgaruoja</i> | <i>ir</i> | <i>pasigirsta</i> | | |
| fear.NOM.SG | evaporate.PRS.3 | and | PVB.RFL.be_audible.PRS.3 | | |
| <i>kikenimas.</i> | | | | | |
| giggling.NOM.SG | | | | | |

‘The old man was not able to be angry for a long time. He [usually] **walked** and **shouted** for a while, [then he] **pulled out** his not very clean

⁶ We found examples in novels by Wasyl Stefanyk (born 1871 in Galicia, now Ukraine) and Bruno Jasiński (born 1901 in South Eastern Poland, spent his teens in Russia).

handkerchief and **suddenly started** blowing into it [very intensively], **suddenly started** rubbing his already red, huge, humped nose—and all your fear evaporated, and the pupils started giggling.’

Although the clauses in extract (8) contain events that immediately follow each other, they are not narrative clauses according to Fleischman’s definition because they do not fulfill the criterion of relating *unique* events.

What extracts (6)–(8) have in common is that the passage told in the future tense gives an example for a point the narrator makes about a person (in other examples also an object, or a weather phenomenon). They serve as illustrations. The switch from past to future tense signals the beginning of such an illustration. It thus has a textual function in addition to the function of expressing habituality, which belongs to the domain of event quantification and thus is related to the grammatical category of aspect (cf. Hengeveld 2011). In this function, the future tense loses its temporal meaning, as also remarked by Wiemer (2021, 396). It neither points to a time after the moment of speech (it is *sprechzeitentoben* ‘removed from utterance time’ in the terminology used by Wiemer), nor to a time posterior to another event.

A different function which may be related to the imagined future scenario as it was exemplified in extract (5), is the announcement of an individual event that, as the speaker knows, will follow events that have been located in the past. This function may be called *prospective* or, using a term from narratology, *proleptic*. In this use, which is rare in Baltic, the future tense points to a time posterior to another event, but anterior to the utterance time.

One pattern where a proleptic use may be observed contains a supplementary relative clause.⁷ Consider extract (9) from a blog where the author writes about her life in Turkey. She has just come home from a morning walk. The narrative tense is present tense.

(9) Latvian (Emuāri)

<i>es</i>	<i>uzlieku</i>	<i>vārīties</i>	<i>zupu,</i>
1SG.NOM	PVB.PUT.PRS.1SG	COOK.INF.RFL	SOUP.ACC.SG

⁷ We use the term *supplementary relative clause* as in Huddleston *et al.* (2002), rather than the more common term *non-restrictive relative clause*. The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses is of minor importance in Latvian grammar.

<i>kas</i>	<i>rakstot</i>	<i>pāries</i>	<i>pāri</i>	<i>un</i>
REL.NOM	write.CVB	spill_over.FUT.3	over	and
<i>appludinās</i>	<i>plīti.</i>			
flood.FUT.3	stove.ACC.SG			

'I put on soup to cook, which **would/will spill** over and **flood** the stove while [I was/am] writing.' (or 'spilled over', 'overflowed'; literally: 'will spill over', 'will flood')

The relative clause in extract (9) can be seen as part of the narration, answering the question 'What happened then?'. The definition of narrative clause is met for the greatest part: the spilling over of the soup is a unique event that follows the previous action of putting on soup to cook. However, it does not follow immediately—something else happens between the two events, for example, the author sits down to write. The sentence in (9) concludes the text for which the author chose the title "10 minutes of a Saturday morning in Istanbul". The event depicted in the relative clause lies outside these 10 minutes—it is a look ahead, beyond the story. Thus, these clauses are not 'fully narrative', but they are 'more narrative' than the clauses expressing habitual situations in (6–8).

Examples such as (9) are rare in the corpora, and we did not find a comparable example from literary fiction. They were found a bit more often in the Latvian corpus of blogposts Emuāri. Blogposts as a register often display different degrees of narrativity, being between the poles of 'typical narrative' and 'typical report' that Vincent & Perrin (2009) establish in their analysis of stories/reports about one's day in conversation. Following Labov & Waletzky (1967) and later work by Labov, a distinguishing feature of narratives is that they 'have a point'. In reporting one's daily activities, be it in a conversation or a blogpost, this point may be less clear or even lacking. In travel blogs, for example, the mere listing of activities may be the point of the text. Nevertheless, individual events are temporally anchored and ordered as well as foregrounded, which makes the clauses narrative clauses. In extract (10) the whole day is reported in one sentence with three independent clauses, ending with a supplementary relative clause in future tense that points ahead to the next episode. In this extract, the narrative tense is past tense.

- (10) Latvian (Emuāri)
- | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <i>Nākamajā</i> | <i>dienā</i> | <i>ļoti</i> | <i>fiksi</i> | <i>apstaigājām</i> |
| next.LOC.SG | day.LOC.SG | very | fast | walk_around.PST.1PL |

<i>vēsturisko</i>		<i>centru,</i>	<i>iegājām</i>	<i>visos</i>
historical.ACC.SG.DEF		center.ACC.SG	enter.PST.1PL	all.LOC.PL.MDEF
<i>lielākajos</i>		<i>vai smukākajos</i>		<i>tempļos</i>
bigger.LOC.PL.M.DEF		or prettier.LOC.PL.M.DEF		temple.LOC.PL
<i>kurus</i>	<i>atradām,</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>pēcpusdienā</i>	
REL.ACC.PL.M	find.PST.1PL	and	afternoon.LOC.SG	
<i>devāmies</i>	<i>uz autobusu,</i>	<i>kurš</i>		<i>mūs</i>
head.PST.1PL	to bus.ACC.SG	REL.NOM.SG.M		1PL.ACC
<i>vedīs</i>	<i>uz Chiang Kong —</i>	<i>Laosas</i>		
carry.FUT.3	to Chiang Kong	Laos.GEN.SG		
<i>robežpilsētu.</i>				
border_town.ACC.SG				

‘The next day we made a very quick round through the historical center, went into all the larger or prettier temples that we found, and in the afternoon we headed for the bus (,) which **was to bring** us to Chiang Kong, the border town to Laos.’

The text following extract (10) makes it clear that the author and their companion indeed boarded the bus and arrived at their goal. It is unlikely that the future tense was used to express non-factuality or doubt. There is also no sign in the text that the sentence in (10) was written before boarding the bus, so a deictic interpretation of the future tense is equally unlikely. However, a perusal of the corpora showed that this use of the future tense is rare and therefore marked in some way. More often, prolepsis in narratives or reports does not trigger a tense switch, instead the author continues using the past tense.

The proleptic use of the future is equally rare in pure reports. An example from Lithuanian was found in the Academic Grammar, cf. (11). The report is given in present tense.

(11) Lithuanian (LKG II, 129)

<i>Rugpjūčio</i>	<i>pradžioje</i>	<i>Gogenas</i>	<i>ima</i>	
August.GEN	beginning.LOC.SG	Gauguin.NOM	start.PRS.3	
<i>jau</i>	<i>keltis</i>	<i>iš</i>	<i>lovos...</i>	<i>Pamažu</i>
already	rise.INF.	out_of	bed.GEN.SG	gradually
<i>jis</i>	<i>vėl</i>	<i>įpranta</i>		<i>vaikščioti.</i>
3SG.NOM.M	again	get_used_to.PRS.3		walk.INF
<i>Paskutinėmis</i>	<i>mėnesio</i>	<i>dienomis</i>	<i>įstengia</i>	<i>ir</i>
last.INS.PL.F	month.GEN.SG	day.INS.PL	be_able_to.PRS.3	also
<i>bent</i>	<i>kiek</i>	<i>tapyti.</i>	<i>Tačiau</i>	<i>ši</i>
at_least	a_little	paint.INF	but	DEM.NOM.SG.F

<i>rugpjūcio</i>	<i>pabaiga</i>	<i>jam</i>	<i>bus</i>
August.GEN	end.NOM.SG	3SG.DAT.M	be.FUT.3
<i>aitri.</i>			
fierce.NOM.SG.F			

'In early August, Gauguin starts to get out of bed... Gradually, he gets used to walking again. In the last days of the month, he is able to paint at least a little. But this end of August **is going to be** fierce for him.'

The uses of the future discussed in this section have in common that they often may be translated into English by the conditional. English uses the conditional (optionally, just as the future in Baltic) both for past habitual and for prolepsis. The following examples from the British National Corpus illustrate habitual (12) and proleptic (13) uses. Prolepsis in English may further be expressed by *be to*, which in turn is polysemous and sometimes vague between prediction and obligation.

- (12) English (BNC)
*Every day of the season she **would travel** in her carriage and six to Ashdown Park on top of the downs, where she **would course** for hares with her magnificent greyhounds and walk for twenty-five miles.*
- (13) English (BNC)
*After two courses of treatment, he was driven home to Wiltshire, where he **would remain** until the start of the third course.*

4. Intention, imminence, and inception

The three meanings discussed in this section are among those typically expressed by 'go'-futures in English (*be going to do something*) and especially French (*aller faire quelque chose* 'go to do something'); cf. Fleischman (1982, 18–19). They may be ordered with respect to factuality. The first is *intention*—an action that is only intended has not taken place and whether it will indeed happen is unclear. Second, an event seen as *imminent* or 'about to happen', likewise has not yet taken place, but is strongly expected; it will happen if the normal course of events is not disturbed. Other terms for this are *prospective* (Comrie 1976, 64–65) and *proximative*. Third, *inception* (also *inchoative*) means that an event has started and will, if not interrupted, continue in the future. In texts, these three meanings cannot always be clearly distinguished, and a given future form may combine more than one meaning.

Clauses expressing pure intention are not narrative clauses but provide background information. Clauses referring to the beginning of an action usually are narrative clauses, as they refer to actions that happen. With imminence, the question is similar to the much-discussed status of negated predicates (cf. Fleischman 1990, 110). Fleischman (ibid.) argues that some negated clauses are narrative, as they advance the plot (they are foregrounded in Hopper's sense). We hold that the same is true for predicates with an imminent meaning which are part of a temporal sequence, as the following examples will show.

In the modern Baltic languages, we find a combination of (or vagueness between) intention and imminence. Imminence alone is expressed by a construction with a lexical verb, for example Latvian *taisīties* 'be about to do/happen'. This verb may appear in various tenses and can have an inanimate subject, for example *Saule jau taisījās rietēt* 'the sun **was about to set**' (LVK2018). When imminence is expressed by a future tense, the expected action is intended by a human subject. Furthermore, in all examples that we found in the corpora (there were only a few), the intended, expected action was not carried out. It thus seems that this construction is developing an *avertive* meaning: a highly expected action does not happen (see Arkadiev 2019 for another avertive construction in Lithuanian). Typically, a future expressing imminence occurs in parts of narratives told in present tense and is followed by a clause starting with 'but'. In Lithuanian and Latgalian, the construction contains the particle *jau*. Extract (14) from Lithuanian shows all the characteristic features.

- (14) Lithuanian (DLKT, *Šimtmetis lyg mirksnis*, Vytautas Girdzijauskas, Lietuvos rašytojų sąjungos leidykla, 1997)
 [Susivynioja, šiaip taip išvelka tuos patiesalus į kiemą,]
užmeta *ant* *žėglo* *ir* ***jau***
 PVB.throw.PRS.3 on crossbar.GEN.SG and PTC
tvos, ***bet*** *pajunta*, *kad* *visos*
 beat.FUT.3 but PVB.feel.PRS.3 that all.NOM.PL.F
jėgos *jau* *pasibaigusios*
 strength.NOM.PL already PVB.RFL.end.PST.PA.PL.F
 '[he/she wraps up the mats and with great difficulty carries them into the yard,] throws them on the crossbar and **is about to beat** them **but** then feels that all his/her strength has gone'

In extract (15) from Latgalian, the story/report is mainly told in past tense. The extract contains two future forms. The first seems to express

mere intention, while the second is part of the same construction as in the Lithuanian example. Again, the clause is followed by ‘but’, and the tense is switched to present tense.

- (15) Latgalian (MuLa; blogpost from <http://naktineica.lv/index.php/2009/02/13/medeibys/>)
 [Izkuopu [PST] augšys stuovā, dūmuoju [PST]—mož kaidom drēbem atlaidis. Drēbis lātuokys kai Viļānu tiergā, tok saprotu [PST], ka maņ tuos lupotys napateik [...]]
- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------|---------------|--|-----------------|--|------------|--|-------------------|
| <i>Apmēšu</i> | | <i>riņči</i> | | <i>i</i> | | <i>jau</i> | | <i>išu</i> |
| PVB.throw.FUT.1SG | | circle.ACC.SG | | and | | PTC | | go.FUT.1SG |
| <i>prūm,</i> | <i>a</i> | <i>pieški</i> | | <i>nazkaida</i> | | | | <i>kosmetikys</i> |
| away | but | suddenly | | some.NOM.SG.F | | | | cosmetics.GEN.SG |
| <i>puordevieja</i> | | <i>skrīn</i> | | <i>prīškā.</i> | | | | |
| sales_woman.NOM.SG | | run.PRS.3 | | ahead | | | | |
- ‘[I went up to the second floor and thought—maybe some clothes [will be] at a discount. The clothes [were] cheaper than at the market in Viļāni, but I recognized that I didn’t like these rags [...]]
 I **intended to make** a round and **was about to leave**, **but** suddenly some cosmetics sales-woman got in my way.’

For Latvian, example (16) was found in a recently published interview. After an orientation in past tense, the story is told in present tense. There is no particle *jau*, and the use of the future tense is vague between intention and imminence. The next sentence shows that the intended action was not realized.

- (16) Latvian (Interview with singer Elina Garanča, *Ir* 14.10.2020)
- | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|--|-----------------|--|----------------|--|-----------------|
| <i>Smieklīgs</i> | | <i>gadījums.</i> | | <i>Kad</i> | | <i>vēl</i> | | <i>nebija</i> |
| funny.NOM.SG.M | | incident.NOM.SG | | when | | yet | | NEG.be.PST.3 |
| <i>Covid-19,</i> | <i>aizbraucu</i> | <i>uz</i> | | <i>koncertu</i> | | | | <i>Londonā.</i> |
| Covid-19 | PVB.go.PST.1SG | to | | concert.ACC.SG | | | | London.LOC.SG |
| <i>No</i> | <i>rīta</i> | | | <i>ieeju</i> | | <i>dušā,</i> | | |
| of | morning.GEN.SG | | | PVB.go.PRS.1SG | | shower.LOC.SG | | |
| <i>krāsošos.</i> | | <i>Attaisu</i> | | <i>krāsu</i> | | <i>maku</i> | | — |
| make_up.FUT.1SG. | | PVB.make.PRS.1SG | | color.GEN.PL | | bag.ACC.SG | | |
| <i>nav</i> | <i>ne</i> | <i>ēnu,</i> | | <i>ne</i> | | <i>tušas,</i> | | |
| NEG.be.PRS.3 | NEG | shadow.GEN.SG | | NEG | | mascara.GEN.SG | | |
| <i>ne</i> | <i>zīmuļa.</i> | | | | | | | |
| NEG | pencil.GEN.SG | | | | | | | |
- ‘A funny incident. Before Covid 19, I went to London for a concert. In the morning I took (literally ‘take’) a shower and **intended to / was**

about to make up (literally: ‘will make up’). I opened (literally: ‘open’) the make-up bag—there was (literally: ‘is’) no shadow, no mascara, no pencil.’

Examples (14–16) show that clauses with an imminent future tense form fulfill several criteria for narrative clauses: they express unique events that are depicted as immediately following the previous event. However, as they do not happen, the next clause does not tell what happens after the announced event, but what happens after the *intention* to carry out this activity, and/or names the reason why it was not carried out.

In addition to expressing intention and imminence, the future tense in extracts (14–16) has textual functions: it marks a turning point of the story and creates suspense.

In the modern languages, non-factuality is present in all examples we found. The close parallel of the contemporary Baltic languages suggests that this construction is inherited, although the counterfactual meaning component may be a more recent development. In the folktales documented in the 19th century, future forms with imminent meaning may refer to expected, intended events both when they are cancelled and when they indeed happen. The imminent (not avertive!) meaning of future tense in narratives is mentioned in the Latvian grammar by Endzelin (1923, 747), while grammars of Lithuanian (e.g. Jablonskis 1922, LG1971, Ambrazas *et al.* 2006) do not mention this function.

Furthermore, future tense is also used when an action has started (inceptive meaning). Extract (17) from a Latvian folktale shows two different values on the scale between intention and inception⁸.

- (17) Latvian (LPT, *Lāča dēls*, 9; Ezere, Southern Courland, 1879)
- | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| <i>Priežurāvējam</i> | <i>sirds</i> | <i>vietā,</i> | <i>iesmels</i> | | |
| fir_ripper.DAT.SG | heart.NOM.SG | place.LOC.SG | PVB.SCOOP.FUT.3 | | |
| <i>traukā</i> | <i>un dos;</i> | <i>bet līdz</i> | <i>šis</i> | | |
| bowl.LOC.SG | and give.FUT.3 | but when | DEM.NOM.SG.M | | |
| <i>palieksies</i> | <i>pie katla,</i> | <i>tā vīrelis</i> | | | |
| PVB.bend.FUT.3. | to pot.GEN.SG | so little_man.NOM.SG | | | |
| <i>no muguras</i> | <i>puses</i> | <i>čuprī</i> | <i>un nu</i> | | |
| from back.GEN.SG | side.GEN.SG | nape.LOC.SG | and now | | |

⁸ Endzelin (1923, 747) cites this example as part of a longer extract which shows different uses of the future tense in narratives.

dod un dod, cik ieiet.
 give.PRS.3 and give.PRS.3 how_much PVB.go.PRS.3
 ‘The fir-ripper [had] his heart at the right place. He **intended to scoop** [gruel] into a bowl and **to give** [it] [to the man who had asked for it]. But as soon as he **started to bend** down to the pot, the little man [sprang] from behind onto his neck and beat him with all his might.’

In (17), the first two future forms (*iesmels* ‘will scoop’, *dos* ‘will give’) express intended actions that as such are non-factual (no commitment as to whether these events happen), but the following *palieksies* ‘will bend down’ is factual⁹—the man in the tale indeed bent down when his adversary attacked him. Here the future highlights the initial phase of an action or process (inceptive meaning) that ends unexpectedly.

Future tense in Baltic folktales is especially frequent with verbs of motion, and with these verbs the meaning often oscillates between intentional and inceptive. Typically, a form such as Latvian *ies*, Lithuanian *eis* ‘go.FUT.3’ expresses that the protagonist has made up their mind to reach a goal and sets off towards it. Whether they reach it is revealed in the following text. Consider (18) from Lithuanian: the hero wants to join a group of people and sets off towards them, but they run away from him, so he ultimately does not reach his goal. Nevertheless, the intended motion has started, so the predicate is factual.

- (18) Lithuanian (BTB; *Apie kalvio sūnų*. Telšiai, Northern Samogitia, 1904)
 [*Vienas kalvis turėjo [PST] sūnų milžioni. Sūnus buvo [PST] toks stiprus, kad jau 3 metų galėjo [PST] su mešku grumtis. Kaip jis suaugo į 12 metų, tėvas nukalo [PST] jam lazda nuo 12 pūdų ir išleido [PST] į svieta tarnautų.*]
Sūnus išejo. Eidamas keliu, pamatė,
 son.NOM.SG leave.PST.3 go.CVB.SG.M way.INS.SG see.PST.3
kad žmonys ketveriais žemę
 that people.PL.NOM four.COLL.INS(PL).M land.ACC.SG
ara. Jis eis prie tų
 plough.PRS.3 3SG.NOM.M go.FUT.3 to DEM.GEN.PL.M
žmonių. Žmonys, pamatę
 people.GEN.PL people.NOM.PL see.PST.PA.NOM.PL.M
ateinantį tokį didelį
 approach.PRS.PA.ACC.SG.M such.ACC.SG.M big.ACC.SG.M

⁹ This is also pointed out by Endzelin (1923, 747).

vyrā, *o* *dar* *su* *geležīne*
 man.ACC.SG and also with iron.INS.SG
didiliausia *lazdu,* *išbēgiojo* *ī* *visas*
 big.SUPER.INS.SG.F stick.INS.SG run.PST.3 to all.ACC.PL.F
puses.
 side.ACC.PL

‘[One blacksmith had a giant son. The son was so strong that already at the age of three he could grapple with a bear. When he became 12 years old, his father made him an iron stick of 12 puds weight and let him go out into the world to serve [people].] The son left. Going on a road, he saw some men who were ploughing the land with four oxen. He **went** (literally: will go) to those men (= ‘made up his mind and set off’). The people, seeing such a big man approaching them with such a large iron stick, ran away in all directions.’

A purely inceptive meaning without the component of intention is attested also with verbs other than those of motion. In (19), a girl was urged to drink a certain jar of beer. She starts drinking and stops abruptly (with good reason: there is a baby werewolf in her drink).

- (19) Latvian (LPT, *Vilkata miršana 2*; Garkalne, Vidzeme near Riga, from LP)
Meitene ***dzers*** *arī,* *bet* *tūdaļ* *iekliežas:*
 girl.NOM.SG drink.FUT.3 PTC but at_once PVB.cry.PRS.3.
 “*Kas* *te* *mīksts!*”
 what.NOM here soft.NOM.SG.M
 ‘The girl indeed **starts to drink** but cries out at once:
 “There is something soft!”’

The link between future tense and inception is further manifested in the fact that verbs with the lexical meaning ‘begin’ often appear in future tense. In Latvian, this occurs mostly in folktales, cf. (20). The verbs are *sākt*, which has the general meaning of ‘begin’, and *ņemties*, which additionally has an intentional meaning component.

- (20) Latvian (LPT, *Vienācis ar izdurtu aci*, Krūte, Southern Courland)
Dzēra, *dzēra* *pēc* *kāda* *laika*
 drink.PST.3 drink.PST.3 after some.GEN.SG.M time.GEN.SG
sāks *velns* *kalējam* *vaicāt:*
 start.FUT.3 devil.NOM.SG smith.DAT.SG ask.INF
 ‘They drank for some time; after a while the devil **started to ask** the smith.’

The future tense and the lexical meaning of the verb both signal a beginning—not only of the action expressed by the dependent verb (here: ‘ask’), but of a new chain of events, a new textual unit. When translating such sentences into English or German, the use of the verb ‘start’ often seems slightly odd, unnecessary.

In Lithuanian, we find a construction where the future form of the verbs *pradėti* and *imti* ‘start’ is preceded by one of the particles *kad*, *kaip*, *kai*, *kadgi* (cf. LKG II, 129). Examples with each of these verbs with the particle *kaip* (*kaip pradės*, *kaip ims*) were contained in extract (8) from a modern novel, cited above when discussing the habitual meaning. Example (21) shows the construction in a folktale.

- (21) Lithuanian (BTB; *Apie kalvio sūnų*. Telšiai, Northern Samogitia, 1904)
- | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|
| <i>Milžionis</i> | <i>geruoju</i> | | <i>prašė,</i> | <i>kad</i> | |
| giant.NOM.SG | in_a_friendly_manner | | ask.PST.3 | that | |
| <i>atstotų,</i> | <i>paskui</i> | <i>kaip</i> | <i>pradės</i> | <i>šaudyti</i> | |
| leave_alone.IRR | then | PTC | begin.FUT.3 | beat.INF | |
| <i>su</i> | <i>lazdu</i> | <i>velniams</i> — | <i>visi</i> | <i>išlakioja!</i> | |
| with | stick.INS.SG | devil.DAT.PL | all.NOM.PL.M | run_away.PST.3 | |
- ‘The giant first asked them in a friendly manner to leave him alone, then [he] **suddenly started** to beat the devils with a stick—they all ran away!’

This construction is widespread in modern Lithuanian fiction texts written by authors from different parts of Lithuania. In addition to inception, it carries a meaning of unexpectedness, suddenness. The construction is also attested in various non-fiction texts of a narrative character. In fact, 29% (93 out of 318) of the occurrences of the sequence *kad pradės* (PTC begin.FUT.3) in the corpus ItTenTen14 belong to this construction. An example from modern language, coming from a blogpost, is given in (22).

- (22) Lithuanian (ItTenTen14)
- | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|------------|----------|
| <i>Staiga</i> | <i>kad</i> | <i>pradės</i> | <i>lyti</i> | <i>ir,</i> | <i>o</i> |
| suddenly | PTC | start.FUT.3 | rain.INF | and | oh |
| <i>stebukle,</i> | <i>aplink</i> | <i>mane</i> | <i>sausą!</i> | | |
| wonder.VOC.SG | around | 1SG.ACC | dry.NA | | |
- ‘All of a sudden it **started** raining and, what a wonder, it [was] dry around me!’

The Lithuanian construction ‘particle (*kaip*, *kad* etc.) plus future tense’ may also be used with other verbs, though this is not as frequently found

as with the verbs meaning ‘begin’. We did not find the construction in Latvian, but there was one example in a Latgalian fairytale, cf. (23)

- (23) Latgalian (Ulanowska 1895; *Ap kalva sīva*; writing modernized)
- | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------|
| <i>A</i> | <i>veirs</i> | <i>īt</i> | <i>jau</i> | <i>vartūs</i> , — | <i>vot</i> |
| but | husband.NOM.SG | go.PRS.3 | PTC | look.SUP | PTC |
| <i>popa</i> | <i>dāls</i> | <i>kai</i> | <i>skrīs</i> | <i>plyks</i> | |
| pope | son.NOM.SG | PTC | run.FUT.3 | naked.NOM.SG.M | |
| <i>pa</i> | <i>durs</i> , — | | | | |
| by | door.ACC.PL | | | | |
- ‘But the husband goes to have a look—**suddenly** the priest’s son **runs** out naked through the door.’

However, without the particle, also in Latvian fairytales future tense is used for indicating a sudden action, unexpected for the characters from whose point of view the situation is described; see (24) and further discussion in Section 5.

- (24) Latvian (LPT, *Cilvēks labprāt pārvēršas par vilkatu*, Vircava, Southern Semigallia)
- | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Tā</i> | <i>vienu</i> | <i>rītu</i> | <i>redzējusi</i> [...] | |
| so | one.ACC.SG | day.ACC.SG | see.PST.PA.SG.F | |
| <i>vedekla</i> | | <i>ielien</i> | <i>apiņu</i> | |
| daughter_in_law.NOM.SG | | PVB.creep.PRS.3 | hops.GEN.PL | |
| <i>krūmā</i> | <i>un</i> | <i>tūdaļ</i> | <i>no</i> | <i>otras</i> |
| bush.LOC.SG | and | instantly | from | other.GEN.SG.F |
| <i>puses</i> | <i>izskries</i> | <i>vilks</i> . | | |
| side.GEN.SG | PVB.fun.FUT.3 | wolf.NOM.SG | | |
- ‘One day she saw [...]: her daughter-in-law crept into a bush of hops and instantly a wolf **ran out** at the other side.’

The Latvian data must be taken into account when evaluating parallels in areally related Slavic languages. The construction with a future form (in Lithuanian mostly ‘begin’) and a particle (Lithuanian *kad*, *kaip*, *kai*, *kadgi*, Latgalian *kai*) is an areal phenomenon with clear parallels at least in Russian (particle *kak*) and Polish (particle *jak*, usually followed by negation). In both these languages, the construction is productive in the modern standard varieties; for Russian see Stojnova (2016). The parallel also comprises the basic meaning of the particle, which is ‘as’. It is possible that the construction in Lithuanian was formed after a Slavic model, as suggested by Senn (1966, 454–455), and in Latgalian after either a

Slavic or a Lithuanian model. However, the use of future tense for sudden, unexpected actions is more widespread in Baltic and can be connected to other uses of the future tense, especially the inceptive meaning. The areal distribution of these uses makes Slavic influence unlikely, and we cannot agree with Senn's (1949, 403) thesis that the use of future tense for past actions in general is a 'specifically Slavic phenomenon' that "was taken over by the Lithuanians, who substituted their own future tense for the Slavic (Polish and Russian) so-called perfective present".

Clauses with future forms expressing intention, imminence and/or inception may be coordinated to clauses in other tenses, cf. (25) from Lithuanian and (26) from Latvian.

- (25) Lithuanian (BTB; *Apie kalvio sūnų*. Telšiai, Northern Samogitia, 1904)

<i>Susinešė</i>	<i>maišus</i>	<i>į</i>	<i>vežimą</i>	<i>ir</i>
PVB.RFL.carry.PST.3	sack.ACC.PL	to	carriage.ACC.SG	and
<i>eist</i>	<i>persivesti</i>	<i>iš</i>	<i>pievas</i>	<i>arklius</i>
go.FUT.3	PVB.take.INF	from	field.GEN.SG	horse.ACC.PL
<i>ir</i>	<i>važiuos</i>	<i>namon.</i>	<i>Nuejo</i>	<i>ir</i>
and	drive.FUT.3	home.ILL.SG	go.PST.3	and
<i>nebranda</i>	<i>arklių!</i>			
NEG.find.PRS.3	horse.GEN.PL			

'He put the sacks into the carriage and **set off** to the field to fetch the horses and **intended to drive** home. He went there, but he did not find the horses!'

- (26) Latvian (LPT, *Brīnuma lampa*, 7. Skrunda, Southern Courland; from LP)

<i>Paņēms</i>	<i>tās</i>	<i>pašas</i>	<i>trīs</i>
PVB.take.PST.PA.SG.M	DEM.ACC.PL.F	EMPH.ACC.PL.F	three
<i>lietas</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>ies</i>	<i>pasaulē</i>
thing.ACC.PL	and	go.FUT.3	world.LOC.SG
<i>laimi</i>	<i>meklēt.</i>		<i>jaunu</i>
luck.ACC.SG	search.INF		new.ACC.SG

'He **took** these three objects and **set off** into the world to search for new luck.'

In such combinations, the future also marks the action explicitly as (immediately) following the preceding one, which is a defining feature of narrative clauses. In (26) the future predicate is coordinated to a past active participle: *paņēms* [...] *un ies* 'take.PST.PA.SG.M and go.FUT.3', 'having taken, he set off', which is a typical pattern in the folktales (see also (31) below from Lithuanian). The past active participle is one of the forms

used in narrating a tale, but when combined with other narrative forms (present or past tense), it expresses anteriority. In turn, a future tense in a chain of actions may signal posteriority. In (27), we see a sequence of three actions: the first is marked as anterior, the second is in functionally unmarked present tense, and the third is the future form of a motion verb.

(27) Latvian (LPT, *Derības par sievas uzticību*, 1. Zaslauks, Rīga, from LP)

Dabūjis	<i>ceļa</i>	<i>zināt,</i>	<i>tas</i>
get.PST.PA.SG.M	way.GEN.SG	know.INF	DEM.NOM.SG.M
iejūdz	<i>divi</i>	<i>dižus</i>	<i>zirgus</i>
harness.PRS.3	two	stately.ACC.PL.M	horse.ACC.PL
<i>un</i>	brauks	<i>šos</i>	<i>uz</i>
and	drive.FUT.3	DEM.ACC.PL.F	to
			<i>turieni</i>
			that_place.ACC.SG
			<i>apsērst.</i>
			PVB.visit.INF

'**Having learned** the way, he **harnessed** two stately horses and **drove off** to visit them there.'

The future in (27) has three functions: it marks an intended action, describes the beginning of a motion event ('will go' = 'sets off'), and it signals that the action follows another one. The latter function is found with all kinds of activities, not only movement, and also occurs without the meaning components of intention and inception. We will return to it in the next section.

5. Text structuring and grounding

In the previous two sections, we saw that the future forms almost always had a *textual function* in addition to temporal or aspectual meanings such as habituality or imminence. By textual functions we understand all functions of organizing the text, including "the strategies speakers use for controlling the rate of information flow in a discourse, for partitioning a discourse into smaller subunits and marking the boundaries between them, and for signaling levels of saliency or information relevance—for creating texture within text" (Fleischman 1990, 4). In this section we look at uses where these are the main if not the only functions of future tense forms in a narrative. We will first describe functions associated with the partitioning of a narrative and then turn to the complex field of grounding. In both instances it is not so much the future tense itself that expresses the function, but the fact that the tense is switched from past

or present to future tense. Tense switches are used in many languages as a marker of discontinuity, of beginnings and ends of textual units such as paragraphs (cf. Longacre 1979; Hinds 1979), as well as for foregrounding and backgrounding individual clauses or sequences of clauses (Hopper 1979; Wehr 1984; Carruthers 2005; Fludernik 2012). They are especially frequent in orally performed narratives, which has led linguists whose ideal of language is written prose to describe tense use in orally based verbal art as chaotic and ungrammatical (cf. Fleischman 1990, Chapter 3, for Romance languages).

The system of tenses in traditional Baltic folktales is very complex. Regional and individual variation make it difficult to describe in its entirety. The most stable and widespread components are simple past and present tense. Where these are opposed to each other, past tense is associated with background and present tense with foreground. For example, after an orientation in past tense ('There was a farmer who had three sons'), the action of the story may be told in present tense ('One day he goes to the field and...'). However, most often we find tense switches throughout the tale, with some stretches told in past and some in present tense. A switch from past to present, or from present to past tense may have several functions, which we will not discuss here (for Lithuanian, see Cotticelli-Kurras 2000). When the same tense is used over several clauses, it becomes functionally neutral. Thus, the narrative present as such is not functionally marked. Besides past and present tense, past active participles may be used in telling a story. This is frequent in the Latvian folktales that we used in this study. Here, the participle has the same function as the simple past tense and is not strongly associated with indirect evidentiality (hearsay), as it is in other registers. When used as a narrative tense, past participles may be the predicate of backgrounded as well as foregrounded clauses. The pluperfect is used for background information by some tellers.

In Latvian folktales, future tense can be used to signal a new episode, when introducing a new actor, and to highlight a new action. In the first two functions, it is found with verbs of motion and verbs of speaking that follow the motion. The appearance of new actors on the scene may be expressed by the verbs *nākt* or *atnākt* 'come'. The first action of a new actor often is a speech act. Extract (28) is the beginning of a tale, and the future tense signals the beginning of action after the orientation. Extract (29) is the beginning of a new episode in the middle of a tale. In

both examples, the verbs *atnākt* ‘come’ and *teikt* ‘say’ are the only ones used in future tense, while the surrounding clauses have present or past tense. The clauses are narrative clauses without doubt: they relate unique factual events that are ordered with respect to preceding and following events, and they are in the foreground.

- (28) Latvian (LPT, *Ar brīnuma lietām iegūtā ķēniņa meita*, 5. Ūziņi, Southern Courland; from LP)

[*Vienam ķēniņam nebija* [PST] *neviena bērna. Viņš sendienām par to gaužas* [PRS], *bet kas jau ir, tas ir.*]

<i>Te</i>	<i>vienreiz</i>	<i>atnāks</i>	<i>vecs</i>	<i>nabags</i>
here	once	PVB.COME.FUT.3	old.NOM.SG.M	beggar.NOM.SG
<i>un</i>	<i>ķēniņš</i>	<i>izsūdz</i>	<i>savas</i>	<i>bēdas</i>
and	king.NOM.SG	unload.PRS.3	RPOSS.ACC.PL.F	trouble.ACC.PL
<i>arī</i>	<i>tam.</i>	<i>Nabags</i>	<i>klausās,</i>	<i>klausās,</i>
also	DEM.DAT.SG	beggar.NOM.SG	listen.PRS.3.	listen.PRS.3.
<i>beidzot</i>	<i>teiks:</i>			
finally	say.FUT.3			

‘[A king did not have a single child. He often lamented it, but it is as it is.] Now once an old beggar **came along** and the king poured out his complaints to him as well. The beggar listened for a while and finally **said:**’

- (29) Latvian (LPT, *Velns ar lāci rijā*, 3. Dole, Vidzeme near Riga; from LP)

<i>Otrā</i>	<i>rītā</i>	<i>atnāks</i>	<i>velns</i>
other.LOC.SG	morning.LOC.SG	PVB.COME.FUT.3	devil.NOM.SG
<i>pie</i>	<i>rijkura</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>teiks:</i>
to	kiln_heater.GEN.SG	and	say.FUT.3

‘The next morning, the devil **came** to the kiln heater and **said:**’

This pattern is not found in Lithuanian (we checked all occurrences of the future of *ateiti* ‘come’ and *sakyti* ‘say’ in BTB). In Latgalian, we found one instance with *atīt* in future tense followed by the verb ‘say’ in present tense; however, in this instance *atīt* had the meaning ‘go back’, not ‘come’, and it did not introduce a new actor but marked an episode border with the same protagonist (after an encounter with a devil, a man goes home and tells his wife about it). Thus, the introduction of a new actor with a future form of ‘come’ seems to be special to Latvian. Note that only Latvian has a root with the meaning ‘come’, while in Lithuanian and Latgalian this meaning is expressed by the root of the verb ‘go’ plus a preverb (mostly *at-*). It is possible that the phonetic similarity between Latvian *nākt* ‘come’

and *sākt* ‘begin’ plays a role here. The latter also may mark the beginning of an episode, but this function is not much pronounced: as we saw in Section 4, verbs meaning ‘begin’ tend to be used in future tense also within episodes, in both Latvian and Lithuanian.

In Latvian, when a new actor appears on the scene with the verb ‘come’ in future tense, this appearance is often marked lexically as sudden or unexpected, or both, as in (30). This is again a parallel to the use of ‘begin’ in future tense, as already argued in Section 4. In (30), additional lexical means are used to express unexpectedness (*par brīnumiem* ‘wondrously’) and suddenness (*tik uz reizi* ‘at once’).

- (30) Latvian (LPT; *Burvju putns*, 17. Ūziņi, Southern Courland, from LP)
- | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Zēns</i> | <i>nosēžas</i> | <i>kalna</i> | <i>galā</i> | | |
| boy.NOM.SG | sit_down.PRS.3 | hill.GEN.SG | top.LOC.SG | | |
| <i>un</i> | <i>neko.</i> | <i>Te</i> | <i>par</i> | <i>brīnumiem</i> | |
| and | nothing.ACC.SG | here | for | wonder.DAT.PL | |
| <i>nāks</i> | <i>tik</i> | <i>uz</i> | <i>reizi</i> | <i>trīs</i> | <i>vīri</i> |
| come.FUT.3 | just | at | time.ACC.SG | three | man.NOM.PL |
| <i>no</i> | <i>meža</i> | <i>ārā</i> | <i>un</i> | <i>gremjas</i> | <i>viens</i> |
| from | wood.GEN.S | out | and | growl.PRS.3 | one.NOM.SG.M |
| <i>uz</i> | <i>otru,</i> | <i>ka</i> | <i>bail.</i> | | |
| at | other.ACC.SG | that | afraid | | |
- ‘The boy sat down on top of the hill and nothing [happened]. Then wondrously three men suddenly **came out** of the wood and growled at each other in a scary way.’

In all three languages, a new episode may begin with the motion of the main protagonist. In this situation, a future form usually combines textual and non-textual functions: that of marking a new paragraph, and intention and inception as described in Section 4. A typical example is extract (26) above, where the hero sets off to new adventures.

Within a paragraph, a switch to future tense may indicate a turn in the episode, or just mark the action as salient. Extract (31) shows various functions of tense switching in a Lithuanian folktale.

- (31) Lithuanian (VTB; *Apie kalvio sūnų*. Telšiai. Northern Samogitia, 1904)
- | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|
| <i>Paskui</i> | <i>priejo</i> | <i>prie</i> | <i>girnų</i> | <i>ir</i> | |
| then | go.PST.3 | up_to | millstone.GEN.PL | and | |
| <i>mato,</i> | <i>kad</i> | <i>į</i> | <i>akmenį</i> | <i>bėga</i> | <i>ne</i> |
| see.PRS.3 | that | into | stone.ACC.SG | fall.PRS.3 | NEG |

<i>grūdai,</i>	<i>bet</i>	<i>smilčias.</i>	<i>Tas,</i>	
grain.NOM.PL	but	sand.NOM.PL	DEM.NOM.SG	
<i>pagriebeš</i>		<i>lazdą,</i>	<i>bēgs</i>	<i>ieškoti</i>
PVB.grab.PST.PA.NOM.SG.M		stick.ACC.SG	run.FUT.3	search.INF
<i>velnių</i>	<i>puo</i>	<i>kambarius,</i>	<i>del ko</i>	<i>jie</i>
devil.GEN.PL	around	room.ACC.PL	why	3PL.NOM.M
<i>apmainė</i>	<i>savo</i>	<i>kviečius</i>	<i>ant</i>	<i>smilčių.</i>
exchange.PST.3	RPOSS	grain.ACC.PL	for	sand.GEN.PL

‘Then he **went** up to the millstones and **saw** that it was not grain, but sand that was falling into the millstone. **Having grabbed** his stick (= he grabbed his stick and), he **ran** around the rooms (literally: will run) searching for the devils, why they had exchanged the grain for the sand.’

In (31), each narrative clause is in a different tense. The first clause is in past tense, the unmarked tense within the narrative. The predicate of the second clause is the verb ‘see’ in present tense—in Baltic folktales as well as in other languages (cf. Fleischman 1990, 51), such perception verbs are often used in present tense. The past active participle in the third narrative clause marks anteriority with respect to the following verb (cf. the Latvian example (24) above). Finally, the future form *bēgs* ‘will run’ explicitly marks the action as following (posterior) and at the same time as salient. This extract shows that grounding cannot be understood by a simple dichotomy of foreground versus background, but must rather be treated as a gradient concept (cf. Givón 1987; Fleischman 1990, 129). The future tense is at the top of a foregrounding continuum: it marks saliency of a clause following other narrative clauses.

Extract (32) comes from a tale which in its first half is told mainly with past participles as a narrative tense (equal to simple past tense in other tales). The scene of the extract is witnessed by a young man in hiding. The actors are devils.

(32) Latvian (LPT, *Velns zarkā* 7. No place mentioned. From LP)

<i>Jā,</i>	<i>ienesuši,</i>	<i>izņēmuši</i>	<i>mironi</i>	
yes	PVB.carry.PST.PA.PL.M	PVB.take.PST.PA.PL.M	corpse.ACC.SG	
<i>un</i>	<i>vilks,</i>	<i>vadzi,</i>	<i>ādu</i>	<i>nost.</i>
and	pull.FUT.3	PTC	skin.ACC.SG	down
<i>tas</i>	<i>padarīts</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>ņemsies</i>
DEM.NOM.SG.M	PVB.do.PST.PP.SG.M	and	now	begin.FUT.3.
<i>mironi</i>	<i>sadalīt</i>	<i>trijās</i>	<i>daļās</i>	
corpse.ACC.SG	split.INF	three.LOC.PL.F	part.LOC.PL	

‘Yes, they carried in the corpse, gutted it out and **pulled**, behold, the skin down. In a jiffy this [was] done, and now they **started** to split the corpse into three parts.’

The future tense of *ņemties* ‘begin’ in the last clause of extract (32) is an instance of the inceptive future described in Section 4. In *vilks* ‘will pull’ in the first sentence, the future is used to mark the salience of this action—the skin of the corpse indeed has a special role in this tale. The interjection *vadzi* ‘lo!’, ‘behold!’ enforces the salience. In addition, the future marks the action as the last in a chain of actions. It is a kind of culmination point. A similar effect can be observed in extract (33), where the main narrative tense is the present. Here, the future may additionally carry an intentional and/or inceptive meaning.

- (33) Latvian (LPT, *Burvju putns* 17. Ūziņi, Southern Courland. From LP)
- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| <i>Mežsargs</i> [...] | <i>tūliņ</i> | <i>plūc</i> | <i>pīli</i> | <i>nost</i> |
| forester.NOM.SG | at_once | pluck.PRS.3 | duck.ACC.SG | down |
| <i>un</i> | <i>nu</i> | <i>ceps.</i> | <i>Necik</i> | <i>ilgi — pīle</i> |
| and | PTC | roast.FUT.3 | not_much | long duck.NOM.SG |
| <i>čurkst</i> | <i>pannā.</i> | | | |
| sizzle.PRS.3 | pan.LOC.SG | | | |
- ‘The forester instantly plucked the duck and **roasted/started to roast** it. Not much later, the duck was sizzling in the pan.’

The foregrounding effect of the future tense is not always as clear as in the examples cited here. Especially in the Latvian collection, in tales collected in Southern Courland and Zemgale, future tense may be used with several verbs in one passage, and only the first occurrence can be interpreted as marking something new (a turn in the story, a new episode) or salient (an action more important than others, a peak in the story). It seems that the effect ‘wears out’ when overused, or, as said above, that the main effect lies in the switch between tenses, not in the meaning of an individual tense.

6. Discussion and conclusions

In her seminal book on tense and narrativity, Suzanne Fleischman (1990) argues that tense and aspect forms in narrative discourse often have pragmatic or textual functions, either as their main function or in combination with their temporal and aspectual meanings. Our study has

shown this to be true also for the future, a tense whose use in narratives is restricted in Romance and Germanic languages, while in Baltic it is found in various functions, especially in traditional folktales documented more than 100 years ago.

In Table 1, we give a summarizing overview of the functions of future tense in narratives in the order in which they were discussed in Sections 3–5. Some extracts contain more than one instance of future tense. If these have different functions, they are listed separately in the table; for example, (14-1) refers to the first future form in extract (14).

Table 1. *Functions of future tense in narratives*

Use	Temporal/aspectual reference	Textual function	Example
Imagined events (Section 3)			
1. Imagined/predicted future scenario	posterior to narrative line		(5)
2. Evoked scenario	habitual in general time	illustration; background	(6)
3. Evoked scenario (past)	habitual in the past	illustration; background	(7), (8)
4. Prolepsis	posterior to time-line	episode border; backgrounding	(9), (10), (11)
Intention, imminence, inception (Section 4)			
5. Imminence + intention + counterfactual	within timeline	peak	(14), (15-2), (16)
6. Intention	within timeline		(15-1), (17-1,2), (25-2)
7. Inception	within timeline	peak	(17-3), (19)
8. Intention + inception; verbs of motion	within timeline	peak; beginning of episode	(18), (23-1), (26), (27)
9. Inception; verbs meaning 'begin' (Lithuanian: construction with particle)	within timeline	turn in story; beginning of episode	(20), (32-2); (8-3,4), (21), (22),
10. Sudden, unexpected event, verbs other than 'begin' (Latgalian: with particle)	within timeline	peak	(23), (24), (30)

Use	Temporal/aspectual reference	Textual function	Example
Text management (Section 5)			
11. New episode with new actor; 'come' and speech act (Latvian only)	within timeline	new episode, new actor	(28), (29), (30)
12. New episode with same actor; verbs of motion	within timeline	new episode or turn in story	(25-1), (26), (27)
13. Foregrounding	within timeline	salient action; culmination	(31), (32), (33)

In the first use, which was the starting point in Section 3, the future tense has its temporal meaning of relating to a time later than the reference time, which here is the time at which the main narrative is located. We argued that such passages usually (maybe except for some literary experiments) are not real narratives: they do not tell a story, but describe a scenario. In this they are related to evoked scenarios that have no future time reference, but are allocated either to a general time or to the past, and depict events as recurrent, as types rather than tokens (uses 2 and 3 in Table 1). Such passages serve as illustrations for a point the narrator makes about a person, object, or phenomenon. Though imitating narration by listing actions that may be in a temporal sequence, clauses with a habitual meaning are not narrative clauses, because they don't relate unique events. They provide a background to the main story. In proleptic function (use 4), the future again has a temporal meaning as a relative tense and the event related is unique. However, with respect to the story these clauses also provide a background or additional information: the predicted event belongs to another story (or report) than the one currently told. The proleptic future tense therefore has a backgrounding effect, especially when used in supplementary relative clauses. It also functions as an episode border.

In the next cluster of functions, uses 5–10 (Section 4), we find combinations of meanings that despite their different nature can be seen as forming a continuum. At the one end, there is intention, a modal meaning often found with the future in its non-narrative uses and associated with a non-factual, but potentially true proposition. At the other end there is the aspectual meaning of inception, highlighting the initial phase of an

(actually happening) event. The meaning of imminence is connected to both: on the one hand, an event that is only about to happen is not (yet) factual; on the other hand, by pointing to the time immediately before the beginning of an event, it is a phasal meaning close to inception. In different types of narratives we find the future tense expressing sometimes only one of these meanings, sometimes intention together with either imminence ('be about to carry out an intended action') or inception ('setting one's mind and starting an action'). We argued that not only clauses naming the beginning of an action are narrative clauses, but also those where the future tense has an imminent meaning, despite their being non-factual. Furthermore, when intention is combined with imminence or inception, the action is foregrounded, while the reference to a pure intention usually is background information. These future forms appear at peaks or turning points in a story, while the lexical expressions are more neutral. A further role is played by the lexical class of the verb that is used in the future tense. In the folktales, motion verbs (especially 'go' and 'drive') in the future are frequently found with intentional-inceptive meaning ('set off for a purpose, to a goal') and signal either the beginning of a new adventure or a turning point in an ongoing episode. Verbs meaning 'begin' are often found in future tense, which results in a kind of double marking of inception and often carries a meaning of a sudden, unexpected start.

In Lithuanian and Latgalian folktales a special construction expressing a sudden, unexpected event is used, consisting in a future form and a particle 'as' (use 10 in Table 1). In Lithuanian this construction is also found in the modern standard language. Parallels in Slavic languages suggest that this is an areal feature, probably expanding from Slavic languages into Lithuanian and Latgalian. However, the use of future tense as such indicating suddenness, unexpectedness, is also found in Latvian folktales and can be interpreted as an extension of the inceptive meaning. Similarly, a Lithuanian construction with future tense and the particle *būdavo* (< 'it happened to be'; cf. Section 3) may have been formed after a Slavic model, while more generally the use of the future tense for habitual actions, serving as an illustration within a narrative, fits well into the use of the future tense for evoking a scenario attested also in Latvian, and is less likely to be a calque from Slavic. The two constructions may have contributed to preserving uses of the future tense for past events in Lithu-

anian, while these uses are no longer found in modern standard Latvian.

In Latvian folktales, we found more examples than in Lithuanian or Latgalian for uses where the textual functions dominate or are even the only ones (uses 11–13). We detected a pattern in Latvian where the arrival and first action of a new participant is marked by the verb ‘come’ and a speech-act verb in future tense. ‘Newness’ and ‘start’ are thus transplanted to the text plane, while the actions are not depicted as intended or inceptive (the new character comes along, arrives, they do not ‘intend to come’ or ‘start to come’). As already mentioned, this is different when the main protagonist sets off and starts a new episode and thus inception is found on both content plane and text plane. The latter pattern is found in all three languages. Latvian offered also more examples for a pure foregrounding use of future tense, and in some tales a ‘surplus’ of future forms for which we did not find a motivation (these were not discussed in this paper). These (yet) unexplainable uses of the future however have in common with those where a textual function is evident the fact that they appear in clauses that are doubtlessly narrative clauses. The future tense is here void of temporal, aspectual, or modal meanings. This is something which we do not find in the modern standard languages, and it may have been part of a tradition of oral performance of stories which died out in the 20th century.

While most of the uses of the future tense described here, especially the textual ones, are not found in Romance languages, there are striking parallels to tense switches involving present tense in those languages (both from a past tense to present and from present to a past tense), as described by Fleischman (1990). First, in the lexical preferences, or the special role of verbs of beginning, verbs of motion, and combinations of motion and speech act (Fleischman 1990, 51).¹⁰ Second, maybe less surprising, in the occurrence of tense switches at peaks in a story, and their association with suddenness, unexpectedness. Third, in the fact that a tense form may combine several referential and textual meanings.

We may ask, then, why Baltic switches to future where Romance switches to present tense—or, as asked by Rosenberger (1852, 37): *Wie kommt der Lette*

¹⁰ Two further classes singled out by Fleischman (1990, 51), in turn, are associated with the present tense in Baltic as well as in Romance: verbs of speaking (especially ‘says’) and verbs of involuntary perception (‘sees’, ‘hears’).

hier zum Futurum? (How do Latvians arrive at the future tense here?).¹¹ We find it likely that the answer is to be found in general differences between the tense and aspect systems. Romance languages have a more differentiated system of past tenses, and the contrast between past and present tense is more pronounced than in Baltic. In Latvian and Lithuanian traditional folktales, in dialects and in spontaneous spoken varieties of the modern standard languages, present tense may function as an unmarked narrative tense, interchangeable with the past. A switch from past to present within a story has therefore no strong effect. The future tense, in contrast, is clearly different and unexpected in a narrative and can therefore be used for foregrounding and expressive purposes. Here it may be recalled that Ultan (1978, 88) acknowledged the possibility that Lithuanian belonged to his retrospective type (contrasting future to non-future), while most Indo-European languages are of the prospective type (contrasting past to non-past). However, standardization and the development of modern literary prose in the 19th and 20th century have made Lithuanian and Latvian more similar to western European languages in the use of future tense. The future tense in clearly narrative clauses which we find in the folktales is hardly encountered any more. On the other hand, modern written prose has developed new uses (in imagined scenarios and prolepsis) which are not typical for traditional spoken varieties, providing new answers to Delbrück's question about the possibility to tell a story in future tense.

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¹¹ Rosenberger's attempt at an explanation will not be rendered here, as it is not connected to linguistic facts, but to ideas about the mindset of the Latvian storyteller as opposed to that of a German.

ABBREVIATIONS

1 — first person, 3 — third person, ACC — accusative, COLL — collective, CVB — converb, DAT — dative, DEF — definite, DEM — demonstrative, EMPH — emphatic pronoun, F — feminine, FUT — future, GEN — genitive, ILL — illative, INF — infinitive, INS — instrumental, IRR — irrealis, LOC — locative, M — masculine, NA — non-agreement form, NEG — negation, NOM — nominative, PA — active participle, PL — plural, PP — passive participle, PRS — present, PST — past, PTC — particle, PVB — preverb, REL — relative pronoun, RFL — reflexive, RPOSS — reflexive possessive pronoun, SG — singular, SUP — supine, SUPER — superlative, VOC — vocative

SOURCES

BNC = British National Corpus. Accessed through sketchengine.eu.

BTB = Jono Basanavičiaus tautosakos biblioteka [Jonas Basanavičius Folklore Library]. Digitalized version at <http://www.knygadvaris.lt/?id=16&lang=lt>.

DLKT = Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos tekstynas [Corpus of Contemporary Lithuanian]. Available at <http://tekstynas.vdu.lt/tekstynas>

EMUĀRI = Corpus of Latvian blogposts. 8 million words. Available at <http://www.korpuss.lv/>.

LP = Ansis Lerchis-Puškaitis. *Latviešu tautas teikas un pasakas*. I-VII. Jelgavā, Rīgā un Cēsīs 1891–1903. Integrated into LPT.

LPT = *Latviešu pasakas un teikas*. Ed. P. Šmits, 1925–1937. Digitalized version at <http://valoda.ailab.lv/folklor/pasakas/>.

LVK2018 = Balanced corpus of modern Latvian. 10 million words. Available at <http://www.korpuss.lv/>.

ltTenTen = Lithuanian Web Corpus. Available at www.sketchengine.eu; information at <https://www.sketchengine.eu/lttnten-lithuanian-corpus/>

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