

Antipassive reflexive constructions in Latvian: A corpus-based analysis

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The article presents a corpus-based investigation of the antipassive reflexive constructions of Latvian. They are subdivided into deobjectives (with suppression of the object) and deaccusatives (with oblique encoding of the object). The emphasis is on the lexical input for the two constructions, frequencies and degrees of lexical entrenchment. The authors identify two subtypes of deobjectives: behaviour-characterising deobjectives (lexically entrenched) and activity deobjectives (weakly entrenched but freely produced ‘online’, hence detectable only through a corpus search). Deaccusatives tend to be lexically entrenched; they are strongly associated with the lexical class of verbs of (chaotic) physical manipulation, but extend beyond this class thanks to processes of metonymy and metaphorisation. The authors argue that while antipassives are often defined as constructions suppressing the object or optionally expressing it as an oblique argument, patientless and patiented antipassives can actually be viewed as different constructions with constructional meanings of their own. While deobjectives conceptualise agency as a self-contained event even though an object is notionally required, deaccusatives additionally convey low affectedness of the object.

Keywords: Latvian, reflexive, antipassive, deobjective, deaccusative

1. Introduction¹

The article deals with Latvian reflexive-marked verbs instantiating the cross-linguistic category of antipassive. Antipassives are defined as “constructions in which the logical object of a transitive (two-place) predicate

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is not realized as a direct object, but instead appears as a non-core argument or [is] left unexpressed (but presupposed)” (Polinsky 2017, 308). The opposition between the basic transitive and the derived intransitive construction is illustrated in (1a–b) below:

- (1a) Chukchi (from Polinsky 2005)
- | | | | |
|---|------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <i>ʔaaček-a</i> | <i>kimitʔ-ən</i> | <i>ne-nlʔetet-ən</i> | |
| youth-ERG | load-ABS | 3PL.SUBJ-carry-AOR.3SG.OBJ | |
| ‘The young men carried away the/a load.’ (transitive) | | | |
- (1b)
- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| <i>ʔaaček-ət</i> | <i>ine-nlʔetet-gʔe-t</i> | <i>kimitʔ-e</i> | |
| youth-ABS | ANTIP-CARRY-AOR.3SG.SUBJ-PL | load-INS | |
| ‘The young men carried away the/a load.’ (antipassive) | | | |

The above definition points to the existence of two varieties, one with object suppression and one with oblique encoding of the object. We will refer to the first as ‘deobjective’ and to the second as ‘deaccusative’. The terms are borrowed from Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey (2004, 1132) and Geniušienė (1987, 94) respectively. They are not used in the typological literature on antipassives, where the terms ‘patientless’ and ‘oblique’ (Heaton 2017, *passim*) can be found though the more general tendency is simply to refer to one antipassive construction with suppression or oblique realisation of the object. The terms ‘deobjective’ and ‘deaccusative’ are here chosen because they can both stand by themselves as a means of referring to what we will here describe as distinct though related constructions.

Latvian antipassive reflexives have previously been dealt with in Holvoet (2017). This earlier publication is concerned most of all with notional matters and problems of demarcation; it makes no use whatsoever of corpora, and therefore gives but a rather rough idea of the lexical input, and no idea at all of the frequency, the distribution according to register, and similar aspects. The present article aims to offer all this to the extent that the available corpora enable it. The structure of the article is as follows. We will first deal with questions of definition and demarcation. After a brief characterisation of the corpus on which we base our research, we will first discuss the deobjective and its subtypes. Next, we will examine in greater detail the class of ‘physical manipulation verbs’, in which the process of expansion of deobjective constructions with oblique objects seems to have occurred; and we will look at the ways in which this expansion occurred. We will then pause over the relationships between the two antipassive constructions, and over their constructional meanings.

2. Questions of definition and demarcation

In early publications in which the notion of antipassive was first used (Silverstein 1972, Dixon 1979) the emphasis was on its function in relation to morphosyntactic alignment: it was characterised as a voice construction enabling the alignment of A with s in ergative alignment systems basically aligning o with s, a mirror image to the passive, which aligns o with s in an system basically aligning A with s. Nowadays the antipassive is no longer associated only with alignment, given that constructions suppressing or demoting the patient, in the same way as ‘realigning’ antipassives do, are attested in languages with a nominative-accusative alignment system, see, e.g., Janic (2013).² Within a nominative-accusative alignment system the antipassive can still, to a certain extent, be characterised as a mirror image of the passive in that it demotes or eliminates the patient whereas a passive demotes or eliminates the agent. Its function cannot, however, be formulated in purely syntactic terms, as it is associated with certain semantic and pragmatic effects. The pragmatic effect is diminished prominence of the object (in different senses, see below); the semantic effect is diminished affectedness. Cf. the following formulations:

- “[The antipassive] denies grammatical prominence to the patient nominal by either encoding it as an oblique constituent or not syntactically encoding it at all.” (Shibatani 1988, 5)
- “The use of a prototypical transitive verb entails that the event denoted by that verb causes a change of state in the object participant [...] The semantic function of the antipassive is to cancel such an entailment.” (Polinsky 2005)

The two features defined here will be invoked throughout this article. We will refer to them as ‘low object prominence’ and ‘low object affectedness’ respectively. The first of these notions is somewhat heterogeneous, as it can refer either to a weakly individuated object or to a clearly individuated object that is non-prominent in the sense of being known and taken for granted. From the formulations above it is clear, and probably uncontroversial, that the notion of antipassive combines features observed at three distinct levels:

² The published version of this thesis (Brussels etc.: Peter Lang, 2016) was not accessible to us.

- morphology: there must be morphological marking on the verb. If a construction has the semantic and pragmatic effects formulated above but lacks marking on the verb, it is not an antipassive. This need not necessarily be a dedicated antipassive marker; it has been noted that reflexive and reciprocal markers often assume an antipassive function, and here, in the case of Latvian, we will be dealing with an instance of this;
- the antipassive always has certain syntactic effects, viz. suppression of the object or the substitution of oblique marking of the object for canonical object marking;
- if the antipassive is not used for syntactic (alignment) purposes, it is used to convey certain semantic and pragmatic effects. In our view, the fact of a construction displaying the formal features characteristic of the antipassive is not in itself sufficient to classify it as antipassive, as similar types of formal marking can be of different origin and do not always have the same function.

This last point is particularly important as the notion of antipassive is sometimes used to characterise constructions calling for another type of description. First of all, when the reflexive marker doubles as antipassive marker, drawing the line of division between reflexive and antipassive functions is not always straightforward. The borderline is fluid in cases involving extended metonymy, that is, cases where the affected object remains unexpressed because it belongs to the subject's personal sphere and can therefore stand metonymically for the subject's self; rather than antipassive, the construction is then simply reflexive. Correspondingly, we do not regard as antipassive the Russian reflexive verbs which Say (2008, 378–396) describes as such, as in (2):

- (2) Russian (Say 2008, 379)
- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|
| <i>Ty</i> | <i>čto,</i> | <i>budeš'</i> | <i>kserit'-sja?</i> |
| 2SG.NOM | what.ACC | FUT.2SG | XEROX.INF-REFL |
- 'Well, are you going to do your xeroxing?'

Say paraphrases *kserit'sja* as *kserit' svoi bumagi* 'xerox one's (own) papers', and the possessive relationship shows that this verb form is, in fact, simply reflexive. It is only when the possessive relationship (creating a relationship of metonymic identity between subject and object) is abandoned

that the reflexive becomes an antipassive.³ The question might seem terminological, but the conceptual distinctness of A and O is in fact an essential element of transitivity (as emphasised in Næss 2007, where the principle of maximally distinguished arguments is described as the basis of prototypical transitivity); where A and O are conceptually insufficiently distinct, we are in the domain of the middle voice as characterised by Kemmer (1993). The notion of antipassive, as an intransitivising device, presupposes a transitive base with clearly distinguishable arguments. We should therefore make the definition of the antipassive more precise by saying it suppresses an object that is low in prominence, more often than not generic but, when made explicit, conceptually clearly distinct from the subject, that is, not in any sense part of the subject.

Secondly, not every construction consisting of a reflexive verb and an oblique object, standing alongside a non-reflexive transitive construction, is antipassive; the two constructions may coexist for a number of reasons, which are discussed in Holvoet (2019). Janic (2013, 196) treats as antipassives alternations like the following:

- (3a) French
- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--|----------------|
| <i>Il</i> | <i>confesse</i> | <i>ses</i> | | <i>péchés.</i> |
| 3.M.SG | confess.PRS.3SG | 3SG.POSS.M.PL | | sin.PL |
| 'He confesses his sins.' | | | | |
- (3b) *Il* *se* *confesse* *de* *ses* *péchés.*
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|------|-----------------|----|---------------|--------|
| 3.M.SG | REFL | confess.PRS.3SG | of | 3SG.POSS.M.PL | sin.PL |
| (same meaning) | | | | | |

Though the relationship illustrated here satisfies the formal criteria for an antipassive, it is not clear in what sense we are really dealing with an antipassive. An essential link between (3a) and (3b) is (3c):

- (3c) *Il* *se* *confesse.*
- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------|-----------------|
| 3.M.SG | REFL | confess.PRS.3SG |
| 'He has his confession heard.' | | |

³ Say (2008, 424) actually cites one instance of this, viz. the Russian verb *ubirat'sja* 'do the cleaning', not necessarily 'do one's cleaning, tidy up one's own room etc.' As the possessive relationship has been abandoned here and subject and object have thereby become sufficiently distinct, this construction could indeed be described as antipassive.

This can be characterised as a metonymic reflexive construction: the subject's conscience and the sins burdening it are conceptualised as part of his personal sphere, so that they can metonymically stand for the penitent's self. The metonymy is eliminated when an oblique object is reintroduced in (3b), but (3a) retains a trace of the semantic effect of metonymy which we find in (3c): the subject unburdens his conscience by the act of confession and is therefore an 'affected subject'. How can we be sure that this difference between (3a) and (3b) is associated with the antipassive? The common wisdom about antipassives is that they eliminate the object and optionally express it in an oblique phrase. But (3c) is clearly reflexive rather than antipassive for the reasons expounded above: the implicit object is not conceptually distinct from the subject. This makes it doubtful that (3b) could be an instance of the same allegedly antipassive construction, this time with optionally expressed object in the guise of a prepositional phrase. There is a semantic difference between (3a) and (3b), and Janic (2013, 196) provides interesting comments on it. But when she regards it as being associated with the 'antipassive' construction, this merely shows how the reasoning concerning the semantic features of the antipassive can become circular. If every construction that displays formal features coinciding with those of the antipassive is automatically counted as antipassive without a critical examination, then the inventory of semantic features associated with the antipassive is bound to expand beyond what can really be regarded as characteristic of this voice construction. It is conceivable that as a result of the object being deprived of prominence the emphasis shifts to the subject and the subject's affectedness; the problem is, however, that in (3b) the low prominence of the object is associated with the reflexive rather than antipassive character of the construction. Affectedness of the subject is hardly surprising in a reflexive construction; indeed it constitutes its very essence. Ascribing the feature of affectedness of the subject to antipassives as a result of mixing up antipassives with reflexives is a misunderstanding.

We must emphasise at this point that we accept the important distinction between comparative concepts and language-specific descriptive categories, introduced in Haspelmath (2010). The facts which we will be describing in this article basically pertain to the Latvian reflexive forms instantiating the cross-linguistic category of antipassive, and we are claiming nothing beyond that. On the other hand, in saying that we

prefer not to treat (2) and (3) as instantiations of the antipassive we are making a claim about the cross-linguistic concept of antipassive, as we think that it should be kept notionally distinct from other cross-linguistic concepts like that of reflexive.

3. The classification of antipassive constructions

As mentioned above, we will operate with the notions of deobjective and deaccusative construction, the two subsumed under the general denomination of antipassive. These two types can be illustrated with the following examples:

- (4) [*Runā, ka zem kalna apraktas bagātības.*]
Te nāca un rakņājā-s ik gadu.
 here come.PST.3 and dig.PST.3-REFL every year.ACC.SG
 ‘[They say a treasure is buried under the hill.] People came and dug about here every year.’
- (5) *Un pietiek rakņātie-s pa pagātņi, mēģinot*
 and suffice.PRS.3 dig.INF-REFL about past.ACC.SG try.CVB
to ievilkt tagadnē.
 it.ACC draw.into.INF present.LOC.SG
 ‘We’ve had enough of that digging into the past and trying to integrate it into the present.’

The identification of these constructions is not always straightforward, so that the criteria must be clearly stated here. First of all, deobjectives look like reflexives, but they are not semantically reflexive. In most cases no confusion is possible, e.g., (4) cannot in any sense be reflexive.

The identification of deaccusatives is not straightforward either, and this is a problem we have had to deal with throughout our research. It is easy to distinguish a deaccusative from a reflexive (if there is an explicit object that is not a reflexive pronoun, it is by definition not a reflexive), but it is sometimes difficult to distinguish it from a deobjective. A deobjective construction contains no external object, but it may contain an adverbial modifier:

- (6) [*Mūsu ģimene gada laikā ir kļuvusi kuplāka*]
un nu auklejo-s pa māju.
 and now nurse.PRS.1SG-REFL about home.ACC.SG
 ‘[Our family has expanded in the course of this year] and now I am busy nursing at home.’

The PP *pa māju* has the same formal marking as the object in (5), but here it is clearly an adverbial that just locates the event. While this case is straightforward, it is not always, and the problem of how to distinguish adverbials from objects, or adjuncts from complements, has plagued syntacticians at least since the early days of x-bar syntax. The time-honoured test that has been used since Jackendoff (1977, 58) to identify complements (???*He likes digging, and he does so into other people's past*) is usually helpful; of course we are unable to motivate our decision for every single case.

As the reflexive marking shows, both antipassive constructions ultimately arose through a semantic shift from originally reflexive (or reciprocal) constructions with unexpressed object. This entails a two-stage process leading to the rise of deaccusative constructions. We may safely assume that diachronically the deaccusative arises from the deobjective through expansion with an oblique object: this follows from the fact that first a reflexive (naturally occurring without object) has to be reinterpreted as an antipassive, after which antipassives with oblique objects can arise. But this relationship does not necessarily hold synchronically. The deaccusative has established itself as a construction in its own right, and in the corpus from some verbal stems a deaccusative is derived while no deobjective is attested. Of course, it is impossible to prove the non-existence of the corresponding deobjective; it could exist *in potentia*. Nevertheless the deaccusative now arguably stands to the non-reflexive transitive construction in a direct relationship that does not presuppose a deobjective construction; we will return to this question further on.

If we accept that the deobjective and the deaccusative are distinct constructions subsumed under the broader category of antipassive, the question of their constructional meanings arises: is there one common antipassive function or are there two? Much depends on what we make of the presence or absence of an oblique object. It is often stated (e.g., Dixon 1994, 146) that in the antipassive the object is either suppressed or optionally expressed in the form of an oblique NP or PP. This view is also reflected in Zuñiga & Kittilä's (2019, 105) confusing terminology in which deaccusatives are called 'adjunct-P antipassives'. In fact, the patient is either unexpressed, or it is a complement. The borderline may be fuzzy, which is hardly surprising as the borderline between complements and modifiers is notoriously fuzzy. But this lack of a clear-cut borderline has not prevented linguists from operating with the useful complement-modifier

distinction; the prototypical cases are opposed clearly enough, and this also holds true for the distinction between deobjectives with adverbial modifiers and deaccusatives with oblique objects. When both a deobjective and a deaccusative construction are derived from the same transitive construction, this creates the impression that we are dealing with one and the same construction in which the expression of the patient is optional. But complements are normally not optional, and therefore it seems more likely that we are simply dealing with two different constructions. If we assume a distinct deaccusative construction, we can dispense with the notion of optional expression of the object. In this article, we argue that the deobjective and the deaccusative are different constructions with different, though related, constructional meanings. This idea was advanced, for Latvian, in Holvoet (2017) and has since been argued, on a broad typological basis, by Vigus (2018). We are not claiming that definitions characterising the oblique object of an antipassive construction as optional are wrong. We have just opted, in dealing with Latvian, for a description distinguishing two constructions, one with suppressed object and one with expressed object. The optionality lies in the co-occurrence of the two constructions.

4. The corpus

One possible way of producing antipassives from a Latvian corpus is automatically searching for a large enough sample of reflexive verbs and then manually selecting antipassives from this sample. This method, however, turned out to be unproductive in the earlier stages of the research. As a sample of 1000 reflexives from the Balanced Corpus of Modern Latvian (*LVK2018*) only yielded a couple of examples, thus proving the antipassive construction to be infrequent in Latvian and uncommon in the small *LVK2018* corpus (10 mln words). Consequently, the larger *lvTenTen14* corpus (about 500 mln words) was chosen for the research. The corpus reflects the use of Latvian on the internet, making it possible to include informal registers that appear to provide a typical environment for antipassives. The frequency problem was solved by conducting the search in multiple steps and applying different solutions for deaccusatives and deobjectives.

Since the deaccusative construction contains a prepositional phrase in addition to the reflexive verb, it can be extracted from the corpus by

searching for reflexives in combination with the prepositions *pa* ‘about’, *ap* ‘around’, *gar* ‘along’, *ar* ‘with’, which are known to be associated with the deaccusative construction from previous research. The results thus obtained were then manually searched for deaccusatives in order to separate them from any other uses of reflexives in combination with the corresponding prepositions. The procedure revealed a productive class of deaccusatives involving what we call ‘physical manipulation verbs’ such as *bakstīties* ‘poke around’, *rakņātīties* ‘dig around’ etc., of which many alternatively employ more than one preposition to introduce the oblique object.

In the next step, the search focused on physical manipulation verbs. About twenty verbs were singled out for extraction of all their uses from the corpus, including their non-reflexive counterparts. Among other things, this allowed us to establish another subtype of deaccusatives with an oblique object encoded by the locative case. But most importantly, it turned out that physical manipulation verbs are also frequently used as deobjectives. Apart from the two varieties of the antipassive construction, at least some of the verbs were also found in other uses typical of Latvian reflexives (natural reflexives, anticausatives and facilitatives).

Non-reflexive counterparts showed several things. First, there is considerable variation in the frequency of antipassives in comparison with non-reflexive forms of the same verbs: some (but not all) iterative verbs are mostly used as antipassives, with only a few examples of non-reflexive uses. Secondly, the range of objects found in the transitive construction may differ from the range of oblique objects in the deaccusative construction. Thirdly, non-reflexive verbs sometimes combine with the prepositional phrases also found in the deaccusative construction to produce intransitive uses that are not antipassives because they lack the marking on the verb.

A separate search was conducted in order to find those deobjectives that do not have deaccusative counterparts. The deobjective construction does not have any additional elements that could be helpful in narrowing the search, and it appears not to participate in frequent collocations. Thus, it has to be searched by checking any likely candidates for antipassive uses. The list of potential deobjectives was established by analogy with the verbs that are described as such in Holvoet (2017), viz. those potentially referring to types of behaviour and occupations. Apart from these, we used the reverse dictionary (Soida & Kļaviņa 2000) to obtain a list of verbs with iterative and causative suffixes that often serve as bases for

Latvian antipassives. While these attempts mostly yielded verbs that are only used in the deobjective construction as antipassives, none of them had the frequency of the physical manipulation class. At the same time, the spontaneous character of many examples that seemed to be produced ‘online’ for a single occasion suggested the deobjective construction is productive.

An extra search for antipassive versions of recently borrowed verbs like *gūglēt* ‘google’, *skrollēt* ‘scroll’ confirmed the productivity of both antipassive constructions.

5. Lexical and grammatical features of verbs occurring in the antipassive construction

The importance of the putative class of ‘manner verbs’ (a notion developed in a series of studies by Levin and Rappaport Hovav, e.g., Rappaport Hovav & Levin 1998) as a lexical basis for antipassives has been pointed out in the literature; it underlies Say’s notion of ‘natural antipassives’ (Say 2008, 148). Latvian antipassives fall broadly within this class, but further divisions are relevant for their classification. Thus, we single out a class of what we call ‘physical manipulation verbs’, whose meaning is not strongly associated with a specific type of result, such as *dig*, *scratch*, *pull* etc. as opposed to *sew*, *wash* etc.

The Latvian antipassive strongly prefers iterative verbs, which conforms to the cross-linguistic pattern known from the literature (Polinsky 2005). Most of the verbs cited in the article are derived from primary⁴ verbs that by themselves do not enter antipassive constructions: *grābt* > *grābāt* ‘grab, seize’, *saukt* ‘call, name’ > *saukāt* ‘call names’, *raust* > *rušināt* ‘stir’, *stumt* > *stumdīt* ‘push’, *šaut* > *šaudīt* ‘shoot’, *ost* > *ostīt* ‘sniff’ etc; see Soida (2009, 192–197) on iteratives in Latvian. The only primary verb that is regularly used as an antipassive alongside its iterative derivatives is *rakt* ‘dig’.

The suffix *-inā-* is polysemous, combining iterative and causative meaning; see Nau (2015, 209). In antipassives, the polysemy is most evident

⁴ In Baltic scholarship, the term ‘primary verbs’ refers to verbs with a basically monosyllabic stem not expanded with syllabic suffixes, e.g., *brauk-t* ‘drive (a vehicle)’. Secondary verbs are verbs whose stem is expanded with a syllabic suffix in at least part of the forms, like *staig-ā-t* ‘walk’.

in the closed class of verbs describing sound/light emission which are regularly produced by the same polysemous suffix *-inā-* from secondary verbs (for example, *grabēt* > *grabināt* ‘rattle’, *zibēt* > *zibināt* ‘flash’), but is also found outside it, as in the behaviour deobjective *ķircināties* ‘tease’.

Derivatives with other suffixes include denominal verbs (*auklēt* ‘nurse’ from *aukle* ‘nurse’, *cūkāt* ‘spoil’ from *cūka* ‘pig’, *gleznot* ‘paint’ from *glezna* ‘picture’; *zīmēt* ‘draw’ from *zīme* ‘mark’, as well as borrowings from Middle Low German (*skrāpēt* ‘scrape, scratch’, *krāmēt* ‘arrange, stow’, *stīvēt* ‘lug, drag’) and recent borrowings from English (*skrollēt* ‘scroll’), which are usually assigned to the class of secondary *-ē-* verbs in Latvian. The rest are imperfective non-primary verbs that might have originated as iteratives and sometimes still retain the iterative meaning but have no base verbs in modern Latvian: *gramstīt* ‘seize’, *taustīt* ‘feel, probe’, *knibināt* ‘fiddle, fidget’, *mānīt* ‘deceive’ and *darīt* ‘do, make’.

Apart from *rakties* ‘dig’ the few entrenched uses of primary (non-iterative) verbs in antipassive constructions include *ņemties* (from *ņemt* ‘take’) and *burties* (from *burt* ‘practice magic’), as well as *krāpties* ‘practice deceit’ from *krāpt* ‘deceive’ (there is an iterative *krāpināt* but it does not underlie antipassive constructions).

As seen from Table 1, *rakties* ‘dig’ is, in fact, the most frequent antipassive verb in the corpus, immediately followed by the iterative *rakņāties* and *rakāties* (1601, 1215 and 1069 instances respectively). For many physical manipulation verbs including the ‘digging’ subgroup, the percentage of non-antipassive reflexive uses is negligible; see the column headed ‘NANTIP’. (For this reason, the latter are not filtered from the numbers of reflexive uses in the ‘REFL’ column.) Exceptions correlate with verbs of caused motion (see Section 7 for the classification) that are often used as reciprocals and natural reflexives (138 instances of *stīvēt* ‘drag, lug’ and 22 instances of *stumdīt* ‘push’),⁵ as well as *skrāpēties* ‘scrape, scratch’ (79 instances) and *grabināties* ‘rattle’ (27 instances), often found as facilitatives and anticausatives.

⁵ The numbers are not absolute as it is sometimes difficult to clearly differentiate reflexive verbs of caused motion between reciprocals and behaviour-type deobjectives and, in certain cases, between behaviour deobjectives and natural reflexives, when it is unclear if the activity is directed at the agent’s surroundings or their own body. This kind of ambiguity is, however, absent from many instances of *staipties* ‘stretch’ which is very common as a natural reflexive in descriptions of sport activities.

Table 1. Most common physical manipulation verbs⁶

verb, translation	suffix	REFL	NANTIP	NREFL	verb class
<i>rakt</i> 'dig'	-	1601	2	10765	operations on amorphous substances
<i>rakņāt</i> 'dig'	ITER	1215	0	34	operations on amorphous substances
<i>rakāt</i> 'dig'	ITER	1069	0	18	operations on amorphous substances
<i>taustīt</i> 'feel, probe'	+	749	1	1138	superficial operation on solid objects
<i>rušināt</i> 'stir'	ITER	557	1	211	operations on amorphous substances
<i>grābstīt</i> 'seize'	ITER	535	5	66	prehensile motion
<i>staipīt</i> 'drag pull'	ITER	433	410	1513	caused motion
<i>krāmēt</i> 'pack'	+	341	1	707	operations on collections of small discrete objects
<i>knibināt</i> 'fiddle, fidget'	ITER	269	1	222	operations on collections of small discrete objects
<i>skrāpēt</i> 'scrape, scratch'	+	238	79	834	superficial operation on solid objects
<i>stīvēt</i> 'drag, lug'	+	220	138	114	caused motion

⁶ In Tables 1 and 2, 'NREFL' and 'NANTIP' refer to non-reflexive verbs and non-antipassive uses of reflexive verbs respectively. The column headed 'suffix' provides information on whether a verb is expanded with a syllabic suffix (+) or not (-). If a particular suffix conveys iterative or causative meaning, instead of '+' the corresponding rows are marked with 'ITER' or 'CAUS'.

verb, translation	suffix	REFL	NANTIP	NREFL	verb class
<i>grabināt</i> ‘rattle’	CAUS	151	27	281	sound/light effects
<i>gramstīt</i> ‘seize’	ITER	133	0	18	prehensile motion
<i>bakstīt</i> ‘poke’	ITER	131	0	2192	superficial operation on solid objects
<i>stumdīt</i> ‘push’	ITER	119	22	508	caused motion

Considering that the antipassive is a derived construction, the marked member of the opposition of transitive and antipassive, we should expect it to be lower in type and token frequency. This is indeed the case if we look at overall type and token frequencies, but if we look at the frequencies for individual deaccusatives compared to the corresponding non-reflexive transitive verbs, they are often higher. Table 2 shows frequencies of reflexive forms of verbs frequently participating in the antipassive constructions divided by frequencies of non-reflexive forms of the same verbs (see the column headed ‘REFL/NREFL’). While these figures are not accurate, as possible non-antipassive (e.g., anticausative) uses of reflexive forms have not been filtered out, they give a general idea of the situation. We see that whereas the non-iterative non-reflexive *rakt* ‘dig’ is much higher in frequency than its reflexive counterpart, one has the impression that the iterative *rakṇāt* has been derived from it mainly for the sake of providing the base for an antipassive reflexive. The two classes of verbs clearly standing out with respect to the frequency of their iterative reflexives are operations on amorphous substances and verbs of prehensile motion.

Table 2. Frequency of reflexive and non-reflexive forms from the same verbal stem.

verb, translation	suffix	REFL	NREFL	REFL/ NREFL	verb class
<i>rakāt</i> ‘dig’	ITER	1069	18	59.4	operations on amor- phous substances
<i>rakṇāt</i> ‘dig’	ITER	1215	34	35.7	operations on amor- phous substances

verb, translation	suffix	REFL	NREFL	REFL/ NREFL	verb class
<i>grābstīt</i> ‘seize’	ITER	535	66	8.1	prehensile motion
<i>gramstīt</i> ‘seize’	ITER	133	18	7.4	prehensile motion
<i>rušināt</i> ‘stir’	ITER	557	211	2.6	operations on amor- phous substances
<i>stīvēt</i> ‘drug, lug’	+	220	114	1.9	caused motion
<i>knibināt</i> ‘fiddle, fidget’	ITER	269	222	1.2	operations on collections of small discrete objects
<i>taustīt</i> ‘feel, probe’		749	1138	0.7	superficial operation on solid objects
<i>grabināt</i> ‘rattle’	CAUS	151	281	0.5	sound/light effects
<i>krāmēt</i> ‘pack’	+	341	707	0.5	operations on collections of small discrete object
<i>staiņāt</i> ‘drag pull’	ITER	433	1513	0.3	caused motion
<i>skrāpēt</i> ‘scrape, scratch’	+	238	834	0.3	superficial operation on solid objects
<i>stumdīt</i> ‘push’	ITER	119	508	0.2	caused motion
<i>rakt</i> ‘dig’	–	1601	10765	0.1	operations on amorphous substances
<i>bakstīt</i> ‘poke’	ITER	131	2192	0.1	superficial operation on solid objects

6. Deobjectives

Deobjective reflexives, as argued in Holvoet (2017), have different sources. An important source is the reciprocal use of reflexive verb forms, illustrated in Latvian by such verbs as *kauties* ‘fight’, *ķīvēties* ‘quarrel’, *lamāties*

‘exchange abuse’ etc. In many languages, including Baltic, these combine not only with plural subjects but in the so-called ‘discontinuous reciprocal construction’ (for this notion cf. Dimitriadis 2004) also with singular subjects. In this case they require a complement (with comitative marking) denoting the other partner in the reciprocal relationship:

- (7) *Māte* *patstāvīgi* *lamāja-s* *ar*
 mother.NOM.SG constantly **quarrel.PST.3-REFL** with
tēvu *par* *dažādiem* *sīkumiem* <...>
 father.ACC.SG about various.DAT.PL trifle.DAT.PL
 ‘My mother constantly quarrelled with my father about all sorts of trifles.’

In a construction like this, the complement can be suppressed as being generic or backgrounded, and the focus is then on the external behaviour of the subject participant. Possibly, but not necessarily, this backgrounding of the complement is connected with a habitual or potential reading of the construction, where the propensity of an individual for participating in the kind of (usually aggressive) reciprocal relations is characterised.

- (8) [*Jaunatne dzīvo virtuālajā pasaulē.*]
Vienīgi *ēd,* *pīpē* *un*
 only eat.PRS.3 smoke.PRS.3 and
lamāja-s *reāli* <...>.
swear.PRS.3-REFL really
 ‘[Young people live in the virtual world.] In the real world, they only eat, smoke and swear <...>.’

A second type starts out not from the reciprocal but from the properly reflexive function of the reflexive marker. Reflexivity often involves metonymy: an object belonging to the subject’s personal sphere may metonymically stand for the subject’s self, as in the case of clothes in (9):

- (9) *Tev* *nav* *līdz* *augšai*
 2SG.DAT be.PRS.3.NEG up.to top.DAT.SG
jā-aizpogāja-s *un* *jā-jūta-s* *savā*
DEB-button.up-REFL and DEB.feel-REFL RPO.LOC.SG
apģērbā *neērti.*
 clothes.LOC.SG uncomfortably
 ‘There’s no need for you to button yourself up to the chin and feel uncomfortable in your clothes.’

In a further development, constructions like these extend to objects that do not necessarily belong to the subject’s personal sphere. The construc-

tion then ceases to be reflexive and can now be regarded as antipassive: the object, conceptually distinct from the agent, is suppressed as being backgrounded. The following example is from the Latvian Academy Dictionary (LLVV), as no instance was found in the corpus (as we will show further on, the verbs constituting the core group from which the activity deobjective spread further are no longer frequently used nowadays):

- (10) LLVV (Skaidrīte Andersone, 1974)
Sievietes vērpi, ada vai lāpā-s.
 woman.NOM.PL spin.PRS.3 knit.PRS.3 or mend.PRS.3-REFL
 ‘The women are spinning, knitting or mending.’

We disagree with Sansò (2017, 207–208), who hypothesises that reflexive-marked antipassives always start out from the reciprocal function of the reflexive marker. In many languages the reciprocal reflexive is probably the only source of antipassive reflexives, but Latvian shows that there is another possible source, viz. metonymic reflexives. We will now discuss in greater detail the two subtypes starting out from reciprocals and metonymic reflexives respectively.

6.1. Behaviour-characterising deobjectives

Behaviour-characterising deobjectives originate, as mentioned above, as reciprocal reflexives. The original core group of behaviour-characterising deobjectives consists of verbs that still combine the two functions. The physical or verbal behaviour described by the verb can be interpreted as an element of human interaction or as being characteristic of a person (at a particular moment or habitually) while abstracting away from the possible human interaction of which it is or could be part. Among the verbs represented in the corpus, some describe aggressive physical behaviour of humans or animals, like *spārdīties* ‘kick’, *badīties* ‘butt (with the horns)’, *splaudīties* ‘spit’, *stumdīties* ‘push, jostle, elbow’, *spaidīties* ‘id.’, *grūstīties* ‘id.’; others characterise aggressive or provocative verbal behaviour, like *saukāties* ‘call names’, *lamāties* ‘utter abuse’, *ķircināties* ‘speak teasingly’, *mēdīties* ‘speak mockingly, mimicking somebody’. The following examples illustrate the reciprocal (11) and the deobjective use (12) respectively:

- (11) [*Mēs tagad mēģinām pierast pie riņķīšiem pirkstā un saukt vienam otru par vīru/sievu.*]
Pašlaik tas notiek vairāk kā
 now this.NOM happen.PRS.3 more like

ķircinotie-s savā starpā.

tease.CVB-REFL mutually

‘[We are now trying to get used to these circlets on our fingers and to call each other wife and husband.] Now this happens more like when we’re teasing each other.’

- (12) [*Pats īsti nesapratu, vai es tagad centos būs atklāts pret viņu.*]

vai arī tikai kārtējo

or also only another.ACC.SG.DEF

reizi ķircinājo-s.

time.ACC.SG **tease.PST.1SG-REFL**

‘[I haven’t quite understood whether I was now trying to be sincere with her] or whether I was once more teasing.’

Reciprocal interaction presupposes animacy, and most of the verbs in the group under discussion have animate subjects. Just a few verbs have extended to inanimate subjects, which, of course, precludes a reciprocal interpretation, e.g., *skrāpēties* ‘scratch’ or *durstīties* ‘prick’:

- (13) *Skūtie-s nāksies reizi 2 dienās,*
 shave.INF-REFL be.needed.FUT.3 once 2 day.LOC.PL
citādi ataugošie matiņi
 otherwise grow.again.PPRA.NOM.PL.M.DEF hair.DIM.NOM.PL
sāks skrāpētie-s.
 begin.FUT.3 **scratch.INF-REFL**
 ‘You will have to shave every two days, otherwise the stubbles will start scratching.’

Other extensions are not concerned with the animacy scale, but with the character of the physical behaviour that is being characterised. One of these extensions involves a shift towards perceptible manifestations of bodily functions or processes, as reflected in verbs like *ostīties* ‘sniff’ (from *ostīt* ‘sniff’, iterative of *ost* ‘smell’) or *vemstīties* ‘retch’ (from *vemstīt*, iterative of *vemt* ‘vomit’):

- (14) *Bērni vemstījā-s redzot tos*
 child.NOM.PL **vomit.PST.3-REFL** see.CVB that.ACC.PL.M
kaulus un ādas, novērsā-s to
 bone.ACC.PL and skin.ACC.PL avert.PST.3-REFL that.ACC
visu maļot.
 all.ACC grind.CVB
 ‘The children retched at the sight of these bones and shreds of skin, and averted their gazes while all this was being ground.’

The transition to such uses could have been provided by a verb like *ostīties*, which also allows for a reciprocal use, as in *suņi ostās* ‘dogs sniff each other’. As *ostīt* can also take inanimate objects, the connection with the original reciprocal use of the reflexive is easily shed and the emphasis shifts to externally perceptible physical behaviour:

- (15) *Paceļu galvu un sāku ostītie-s.*
 raise.PRS.1SG head.ACC.SG and begin.PRS.1SG **sniff.INF-REFL**
 [*Patikams aromāts iesitas vēl dziļāk manās degunu porās.*]
 ‘I raise my head and start sniffing around. [The pleasant aroma invades my nasal receptors even more deeply.]’

An important subgroup of types of physical behaviour is represented by reflexive verbs describing such physical behaviour as is involved in manipulation of objects rather than in physical aggression towards people. For this very reason they do not occur in reciprocal constructions. We could describe them as the manipulation type. The non-reflexive verbs take inanimate rather than animate objects, as shown in (16); the corresponding reflexive verb describes a person going through the type of motion necessary for performing the physical manipulation described by the transitive verb:

- (16) <...> [*tādam uzņēmumam uzplaukums nespīd...*]
Visu laiku tik pa kaktiem
 all.ACC.SG time.ACC.SG only about corner.DAT.PL
kapeikas grābstīt,
 kopeck.ACC.PL **grab.INF**
 [*jo uz cilvēku apkrāpšanu nopelnīt nevar!*]
 ‘<...> [Such an enterprise isn’t going to prosper.] It will be a mere raking in of pennies on the side all the time, [because you can’t make money from deceiving people!]’
- (17) *Bodnieks grābstā-s, rāda šo*
 shopkeeper.NOM.SG **grasp.PRS.3-REFL** show.PRS.3 this.ACC
un to.
 and that.ACC
 ‘The shopkeeper grapples around, pointing now at this, now at that.’

The transition from physical behaviour to manipulation may have involved verbs combining both types of use. Compare (18) (physical behaviour as part of human interaction) and (19) (physical manipulation of an object):

- (18) *Pieturā* *vīrietis* *vēl* *stīvējā-s*
 stop.LOC.SG man.NOM.SG still **struggle.PST-REFL**
pretim,
 against
 [taču beidzot konduktors viņu pa aizmugurējām durvīm izgrūda laukā <...>.]
 ‘At the bus stop the man was still struggling in resistance, [but finally
 the conductor pushed him out by the rear entrance.]
- (19) *Jā* *konkrēti* *līnim,* *paskaties* *pastingrāku*
 if concretely tench.DAT.SG look.IMP.2SG strong.COMP.ACC.SG
kātu, *lai* *vari* **stīvētie-s.**
 handle.ACC.SG so.that be.able.PRS.2SG **tug.INF-REFL**
 ‘If [the fishing rod] is specifically for catching tench, then you must look
 for a solid handle, so you can tug [at it] properly.’

We will return to the physical manipulation type further on as it seems to play an important part in the rise of deaccusative constructions from deobjective ones.

The core group of the behaviour-characterising deobjectives shows very little productivity because the lexical class, pertaining to bodily demeanour and functions, is closed. The manipulation subtype is an exception, as verbs referring to different types of manipulation can acquire new senses inspired, e.g., by technological innovation.

6.2. Activity deobjectives

Judging by the exemplars that are apparently sufficiently entrenched to have made it to the dictionaries, the source class for activity deobjectives was a very small group of verbs denoting domestic activities including above all maintenance of clothes; LLVV lists *velēties* ‘do one’s washing’, *lāpīties* ‘do one’s mending’ and *gludināties* ‘do one’s ironing’; Kagaine & Raģe (1977) also mention *pletēties* ‘do one’s ironing’ (from German *plätten*, now replaced in the standard language with *gludināt*). Presumably these were originally normal reflexives involving metonymy, i.e. the clothes (or other objects belonging to the subject’s personal sphere) stood metonymically for the subject’s self. The dictionaries do not reflect this extended reflexive meaning any more: LLVV defines *velēties* as ‘being occupied with washing for a long time’, and the definitions for *lāpīties* and *pletēties* are similar. The dictionaries, hence, do not regard a possessive relationship

between the patient and the subject as an essential feature of the meaning of these verbs. This means that the implicit object is no longer part of the subject's personal sphere, and no longer stands metonymically for the subject's self. That is, the meaning has shifted from reflexive to antipassive. We may reconstruct the original possessive relationship on the grounds that it is notionally necessary in order to explain the transition from reflexive to antipassive, and also on the basis of other instances of metonymy that have escaped the shift to antipassive, as in (20), where the subject's house is conceived as part of their personal sphere (for more examples from Baltic and Slavonic languages and some discussion see Holvoet 2020, 30–35):

- (20) [Šos būvgabalus pamazām sadalīja.]
un cilvēki sāka būvēt-s.
 and human.NOM.PL start.PRS.3 **build.INF-REFL**
 '[These building plots were gradually allotted,] and people started building houses for themselves (literally: started building themselves).'

The verbs of the presumable source group, though still listed in the dictionaries, are difficult to find in internet sources; some have gone out of use (like *velēties* 'launder', which refers to the obsolete practice of washing on a washboard), while others, being restricted to the domestic sphere, rarely make it to the internet. But the antipassive construction that sprang from them is fully alive and expanding. It has acquired additional constructional meanings beyond the element that originally motivated the rise of the construction. This element was the diminished prominence of the patient; this was already a defining feature of the reflexive construction from which the antipassive construction developed and it was inherited by the antipassive construction. Objects belonging to the agent's personal sphere are default patients in various kinds of domestic activities, which motivates the rise of a construction like 'mend oneself' meaning 'mend one's clothes'. In the first stage of the rise of the antipassive construction this feature is still present; but when we look at the productive deobjective construction as it manifests itself in the corpus, we see that the suppression of the backgrounded object is not an essential feature of their use. Indeed, the corresponding non-reflexive verbs can, in many cases, also be used absolutely, without overt object, to denote a type of activity. Consider (21), with a deobjective reflexive:

- (21) *Nesanāk laika arī pārāk*
 NEG.be.found.PRS.3 time.GEN.SG also too.much
lasītie-s un komentētie-s.
read.INF-REFL and comment.INF-REFL
 [Interneti kļuvuši mazsvarīgi.]
 ‘There is also not time enough left to do a lot of reading and commenting.
 [All this Internet stuff has become irrelevant.]’

The corresponding non-reflexive verb in absolute use, presumably also with non-prominent implicit object, is seen in (22):

- (22) <...> [*arī tas ir labi, ka kāds ir atradis laiku,*]
lai lasītu un komentētu!
 in.order.to **read.IRR** and **comment.IRR**
 ‘<...> [it is also good that someone has found time] for reading and
 commenting.’

Thus, while the reflexive derivation is still object-backgrounding, the object-backgrounding function ceases to be the principal motive for its use. Instead, emotive and evaluative effects come to the fore as main factors. These effects are somewhat diversified according to the type of situation in which the deobjective forms are used. We could speak of a general implication that the activity is self-contained and in some way withdrawn from the surrounding world. This might then be interpreted as a kind of self-absorbed activity completely engrossing the agent, or else it can also develop more strongly evaluative overtones, conveying a general idea of the irrelevance of the activity to the surrounding world. The self-engrossing activity use can be observed in examples like the following (note the adverbial *uz nebēdu* ‘to one’s heart’s content’):

- (23) <...> [*darbnīcās šāda grīda ir nenovērtējama ērtība,*]
var trieptie-s un šķaidītie-s
 be.able.PRS.3 **smear.INF-REFL** and **splatter.INF-REFL**
uz nebēdu,
 to one’s heart’s content
 [*kopšanu neprasa*].
 ‘[In a workshop such a floor is an invaluable convenience.] one can smear
 and splatter to one’s heart’s content, [it doesn’t require any maintenance.]’
- (24) [*Kad beigs vidusskolu, tad lai iet profesionālajā dienestā.*]
Tur iedos stroķi, un varēs
 there give.FUT.3 rifle.ACC.SG and be.able.FUT.3

šaudītie-s *uz nebēdu.*
shoot.INF-REFL to his heart's content
 [When he finishes secondary school, let him become a career military man.]
 They will give him a rifle and he will be able to shoot to his heart's content.'

Such deobjectives referring to self-engrossing activity often occur in strings of verbal forms, as in the following example. Note that the last verb form, *krāsot* 'coat with paint', is non-reflexive, apparently because the deobjective derivation is blocked by the naturally reflexive reading of *krāsoties* as 'apply make-up, do one's face':

- (25) *Es* *varu* ***knibinātie-s,***
 1SG.NOM be.able.PRS.1SG **potter.about.INF-REFL**
limētie-s *un* *krāsot!*
glue.INF-REFL and paint.INF
 [Patīk no salvetēm pagatavot super izturīgu saiņošanas papīru!]
 'I can potter about and happily glue away and paint. [I like making super strong wrapping paper out of paper napkins.]'

It should be noted that there is also a deobjective form of *darīt* 'do', which, being poor in semantic content, usually does not stand alone but is coordinated with another verb that is richer in content, often also a deobjective:

- (26) [To, ka pastāv tāda lieta kā otiņas, ar kuru palīdzību var uzklāt kosmētiku, es uzzināju tikai, kad man bija gadi piecpadsmit,]
skatoties *ar* *lielām* *acīm* *kā*
 watch.CVB with large.DAT.PL.F eye.DAT.PL how
māmiņa ***darā-s*** ***un*** ***burā-s*** <...>
 mum.NOM.SG **do.PRS.3-REFL** **and** **do.magic.PRS.3-REFL**
 '[It wasn't until age fifteen that I discovered there was such a thing as brushes with which you could apply cosmetics,] as I looked on round-eyed while my mum went about doing her magic.'

It is not quite clear whether such combinations are sufficiently entrenched, and their form is sufficiently stable, for them to be recognised as a constructional idiom. More research is needed to establish the classes of verbs with which this *darīties* combines, and the function of the whole combination. The construction is superficially reminiscent of co-compounds with 'echo words' (Wälchli 2005, 167–169), but in such co-compounds the echo-word

is normally in second position. A parallel construction appears with the deobjective *ņemties*, derived from *ņemt* ‘take’. Part of its uses seems to be similar in function to *darīties un V*:

- (27) [Tāpat arī aizbraucot trešdienas vakarā uz Kuldīgu viss bija kārtībā —]
mazie **ņēmā-s** **un** **spēlējā-s**
 little.NOM.PL.M.DEF **take.PST.3-REFL** **and** **play.PST.3-REFL**
ar mani.
 with me.ACC
 ‘[Similarly, when I was leaving for Kuldīga on Wednesday evening, every-
 thing was all right—] the children were happily playing with me.’

However, not all uses of ‘*ņemties* + v’ are of this type; some are more reminiscent of the ‘take and v’ construction dealt with by Nau *et al.* (2020), a constructional meaning wholly unconnected with the antipassive. Nau *et al.* (2020, 245) actually mention a variety with the reflexive form of *ņemt*, but don’t discuss it in detail. More research is needed here as well.

In many cases evaluative effects manifest themselves. When the subject is referring to her or his own activity, the use of the deobjective reflexive is a way of depreciating this activity, presumably out of modesty:

- (28) [Šodien uzrakstīju eksāmenu, biju Preses Bārā ar foršajiem kursabiedriem un Maiju],
zīmējo-s *ar krītiņiem <...>*
draw.PST.1SG-REFL with crayon.DAT.PL
 ‘[I wrote an exam today, went to the Preses Bārs with my cool fellow students and Maija.] did some drawing with crayons <...>’

When another person’s activity is referred to, the implication is often that this activity is devoid of sense and annoying to other people:

- (29) *Brāli,* *beidz* *te* **sludinātie-s,** *ar*
 brother.VOC end.IMP.2SG here **proclaim.INF-REFL** with
varu *taču* *tu* *to* *savu* *jēzu*
 force.ACC.SG PTC 2SG.NOM that.ACC.SG RPO.ACC.SG Jesus.ACC
nevienam *neuzbāzīsi.*
 nobody.DAT NEG.impose.FUT.2SG
 ‘Brother, stop your preaching here, you can’t force this Jesus of yours on anybody.’

If the activity is not actually going on but only considered in an abstract way, the implication is also that it would be a waste of time and energy:

- (30) *Pēdējā laikā galīgi nesanāk ne*
 last.LOC.SG time.LOC.SG at.all NEG.be.found.PRS.3 neither
iedvesmas, ne laika rakstītie-s blogā.
 inspiration.GEN.SG nor time.GEN.SG write.INF-REFL blog.LOC.SG
 ‘Lately I cannot find either inspiration or time to write on my blog.’
- (31) *Ja nu esi dikti ticīgais un*
 if now be.PRS.2SG very religious.NOM.SG.M.DEF and
vēlies svinētie-s,
 wish.PRS.2SG celebrate.INF-REFL
 [*tad ņem brīvu dienu uz atvaļinājuma rēķina!*]
 ‘If you are very religious and go in for all that celebrating [then take a day off at the expense of your annual leave!]

It is interesting to note that reflexive forms of the type discussed here can be derived from intransitive verbs: the verb *burt* ‘do magic’ in (26) is always intransitive except for some rare poetic uses. It was already noted above that object backgrounding is no longer the defining feature of the activity deobjective in its present-day function, and it is therefore not astonishing that the construction should, at some moment, have spread to intransitive verbs.

The activity subtype of the deobjective is only weakly entrenched in usage. As mentioned above, the verbs of the original core group (referring to traditionally well-established domestic activity without evaluative nuance) are not very frequent any more. In its new, evaluatively marked variety, the activity type is, however, productive and new instances are created online, so that only corpus research can bring to light their existence. They are apparently characteristic of informal spoken language as well as of the language of the internet, which is intermediate between spoken and written language. Though in Latvian lexicography reflexive forms are regarded as distinct lexemes and listed separately in the dictionaries, the currently productive activity subtype of the antipassive reflexive is not reflected in them at all owing to its occasional character and low frequency. It would be interesting to know when it became productive, but to establish this would probably be difficult: as the type is characteristic of the spoken language, a historical corpus would not necessarily reflect this process.

7. The physical manipulation type of deobjectives

We will now deal in somewhat greater detail with the above-mentioned subtype of ‘manipulation’ deobjectives, as these regularly occur alongside deaccusatives, which suggests they could have been the source class within which the rise of deaccusatives through expansion of deobjective constructions with oblique objects took place.

The distinguishing feature of manipulation deobjectives is, as already mentioned, that they derive from verbs usually or exclusively taking inanimate objects. What is still involved is the description of a type of physical demeanour abstracted away from the interaction with the external world of which it is normally part. The reflexive morphology utilised to mark this originates as reciprocal marking, and in a first stage the physical demeanour is abstracted from reciprocal physical (sometimes verbal) interaction between humans or animate beings; then an extension occurs in the lexical input of deobjectively used reflexives so as to include descriptions of physical behaviour abstracted from interaction with inanimate objects like tools or other objects of everyday use surrounding us. Unlike the deobjectives of the original core group, the deobjectives resulting from this extension no longer combine their deobjective use with a reciprocal use (though a few lexemes straddle the borderline between the two types, see (18) and (19) above). The verbs of physical manipulation providing the base for such extended use of the originally reciprocal reflexive marking can be divided into several subgroups. Part of them (7.1–7.4) describe the physical manipulation directly, while two subtypes (7.5–7.6) evoke different types of physical manipulation through the auditory effects or light effects they produce. The justification for including these verbs in the ‘manipulation’ type will be discussed further on. A distinct place is occupied by verbs of caused motion (7.7).

7.1. Operations on amorphous substances

This group comprises *rakt(ies)* ‘dig’ and its iterative derivatives *rakāt(ies)* and *rakņāt(ies)*, as well as *rušināt(ies)* ‘loosen (earth) by rooting or digging’:

- (32) [*Ejot gar pirti redzēju.*]
- | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <i>ka</i> | <i>putni</i> | <i>atgriezušies</i> | <i>pie</i> | <i>vecajām</i> |
| that | bird.NOM.PL | return.PPA.NOM.PL.REFL | to | old.DAT.PL.F.DEF |
| <i>liepām</i> | <i>un</i> | <i>tur</i> | <i>rakņā</i> | <i>sniegu.</i> |
| linden.DAT.PL | and | there | dig.PRS.3 | snow.ACC.SG |

‘[As I walked past the bathhouse, I saw] that birds had returned to the old linden trees and were digging the snow there.’

- (33) *Pēdējā laikā man iepaticies*
 recent.LOC.SG time.LOC.SG 1.SG.DAT please.PPA.NOM.SG.M
rakņātī-s savā dārziņā, audzēt
dig.INF-REFL RPO.LOC.SG garden.LOC.SG grow.INF
puķes.
 flower.ACC.PL
 ‘Recently I have come to like digging around in my little garden and growing flowers.’

7.2. Superficial operations on solid objects

Typical verbs of this type include *taustīt* ‘feel, probe, search with the hands’, *bakstīt* ‘poke’, *skrāpēt* ‘scrape, scratch’ etc.

- (34) [*Pirmais no viņiem gāja.*]
taustīdams ceļu ar zarainu
search.by.touch.CVB.M.SG way.ACC.SG with knotty.ACC.SG
un stingru nūju.
 and pliant.ACC.SG stick.ACC.SG
 ‘[The first of them advanced] feeling his way with a knotty and pliant stick.’
- (35) *pirksti, kas taustā-s*
 finger.NOM.PL REL.NOM **search.by.touch.PRS.3-REFL**
pēc gaismas slēdža tumšā telpā.
 after light.GEN.SG switch.GEN.SG dark.LOC.SG room.LOC.SG
 ‘... fingers that grope about in search of the light switch in a dark room.’

7.3. Operations on collections of small discrete objects

Verbs of this type refer to the manipulation of small objects, and their deobjective counterparts evoke an unspecified fussy and trivial activity. For instance, *krāmēt* ‘arrange, stow’ refers to the arranging and rearranging of small objects, and the deobjective *krāmēties* usually reflects a person’s resentment at having to fuss about with some unimportant business:

- (36) [*Lielākā dienas daļa pāriet pie kafijas tases.*]
krāmējot papīrus no viena
shift.about.CVB paper.ACC.PL from one.GEN.SG.M
galda uz otru <.,>
 table.GEN.SG to other.ACC.SG

‘[The greater part of the day goes by with a cup of coffee,] shifting papers from one table to another.’

- (37) [*Problemātiskie klienti tiek atsijāti pirmie,*]
jo neviens nevēlas krāmētie-s
 because nobody.NOM NEG.wish.PRS.3 **shift.about.INF-REFL**
ar naudas atgūšanu.
 with money.GEN.SG recovery.ACC.SG
 ‘[Problematic clients are sifted out first,] because nobody wants to fuss about with recovering their money.’

7.4. Prehensile motion

This type was illustrated with a pair of examples for *grābstīt(ies)* ‘grasp’ in (16) and (17) above. Other verbs belonging here are *gramstīt(ies)* and *grābāt(ies)*, which do not differ notably in meaning from *grābstīt*.

7.5. Sound effects produced by physical manipulation

All verbs of this group are based on morphologically marked causatives derived from sound verbs: *čabināt* from *čabēt* ‘rustle’, *čaukstināt* from *čaukstēt* ‘rustle, crackle’, *grabināt* from *grabēt* ‘clatter, rattle’, *klabināt* from *klabēt* ‘rumble, clatter’, *klibināt* ‘(make) clatter’ (with no attested intransitive base), *klikšķināt* from *klikšķēt* ‘click’. Whereas in English such verbs can be both intransitive and transitive (*his papers rustled* : *he rustled his papers*), Latvian requires overt causative marking for the transitive use:

- (38) <...> *tauta jau stāv rindā un*
 people.NOM.SG already stand.PRS.3 queue.LOC.SG and
nepacietībā čaukst-ina banknotes,
 impatience.LOC.SG **rustle-CAUS.PRS.3** banknote.ACC.PL
 [*tvīkstot pēc iespējas tās iztērēt.*]
 ‘<...> people are already standing in the queue and impatiently rustling banknotes [burning with desire to spend them.]’

The following table shows the type of nouns these transitive sound verbs take as objects:

Table 3. *Types of objects with transitive sound verbs*

<i>čabināt</i> ‘rustle’	<i>lapas</i> ‘leaves’, <i>papīrus</i> ‘papers’, <i>maisū</i> ‘bag’, <i>turzu</i> ‘paper bag’
<i>čaukstināt</i> ‘rustle, crackle’	<i>papīrus</i> ‘papers’, <i>lapas</i> ‘leaves’, <i>avīzes</i> ‘newspapers’, <i>maisū</i> ‘bag’, <i>turzu</i> ‘paper bag’
<i>grabināt</i> ‘clatter, rattle’	<i>grabuli</i> ‘rattle’, <i>naudu</i> / <i>kapeikas</i> / <i>santīmus</i> / <i>monētas</i> ‘coins’, <i>traukus</i> ‘kitchenware’, <i>instrumentus</i> ‘instruments’
<i>klabināt</i> ‘rumble, clatter’	<i>zobus</i> ‘teeth’, <i>taustiņus</i> ‘keys’, <i>klaviatūru</i> / <i>tastatūru</i> ‘keyboard’, <i>knābi</i> ‘beak’
<i>klibināt</i> ‘clatter’	<i>tastatūru</i> ‘keyboard’
<i>klikšķināt</i> ‘click’	<i>taustiņus</i> ‘keys (of a keyboard)’, <i>pele</i> ‘(computer) mouse’

The causatives usually occur in transitive constructions; there are occasional intransitive uses which we will not discuss in detail here. As we can see from the definitions in LLVV, the verbs of the group *klabināt* ‘rumble, clatter’, *klibināt* ‘clatter’, *klikšķināt* ‘click’ are also associated with riding a horse, due to the sounds produced by horseshoes, and *grabināt* ‘clatter, rattle’ in Mühlenbach and Endzelin’s dictionary (ME) has an additional meaning ‘drive about in a vehicle’. These are clear instances of lexicalisation in intransitive use. An example is shown in (39):

- (39) *uzsauca* *braucējam ...* **grabini** *ātrāk*
call.out.PST.3 driver.DAT.SG **rattle.CAUS.IMP.2SG** quicker
uz priekšu!
forward
‘[He] called out to the driver: Rattle forward swiftly!’

The deobjectives derived from causative sound verbs refer to an unspecified activity of the subject producing a sound of the type described by the verb:

- (40) *zem* *vecās* *mājas* *grīdas* *sāk*
under old.GEN.SG.F.DEF house.GEN.SG floor.GEN.SG begin.PRS.3
grabinātie-s *pele.*
rattle.INF-REFL mouse.NOM.SG
‘Under the floor of the old house a mouse starts rustling.’

When we compare such constructions with the causative construction in (38), a conspicuous difference is that the object emitting the sound effect under the impact of the subject's manipulation remains unspecified. This part of the semantic content being backgrounded, a relatively greater weight is laid on the motion, manipulations etc. of an animate subject. This metonymic shift from the sound effect to the motion or manipulation producing it can also be seen in the above-mentioned intransitive uses of the causatives derived from sound verbs (see ex. (39)). In this sense the constructional meaning of the deobjective construction referring to a certain type of physical behaviour conceived as self-contained is realised in this case as well; the causation of a sound effect is rather a means of identifying the type of manipulation.

There are, however, instances where a verb of the type described here occurs with an inanimate subject:

- (41) *Durvis* *ik pa laikam* *grab-inā-s.*
 door[PL].NOM every now and then rattle-CAUS.PRS.3-REFL
 'The door rattles every now and then.'

In such cases two elements of the semantic characterisation just given are absent: first, the object emitting the sound effect is not left unspecified—it is clearly the subject referent that functions as sound emitter. Secondly, the subject referent being inanimate, there can be no agency—self-controlled motion or manipulation—identified on the basis of the sound effect. The constructional meaning of the deobjective is therefore clearly not realised here. The reflexive causative is, for all practical purposes, identical to that of the corresponding intransitive sound verb (*durvis grab* 'the door rattles'). The function of the reflexive derivation could be described as anticausative. However, the deobjective origin of the reflexive form in uses like this is not in doubt. A kind of metaphorisation is apparently involved here, just as in other cases of extension of a deobjective formation to inanimate subjects (cf. the above-mentioned case of Latvian *matiņi skrāpējas* 'the stubbles scratch', Russian *krapiva žžetsja* 'the nettles burn' etc.).

7.6. Light effects produced by physical manipulation

This subtype is analogous to the one discussed in 7.5 but is much less important. Like the sound type, it consists of verbs with overt causa-

tive marking and comprises but a few verbs: *spīdināt*, causative of *spīdēt* ‘shine’ and *zibināt*, causative of *zibēt* ‘glitter, flash’. Examples (42) and (43) illustrate the transitive use and the deobjective reflexive respectively:

- (42) *Marka* *laukumā* *ļaudis* *baro*
 Mark.GEN.SG square.LOC.SG human.NOM.PL feed.PRS.3
baložus, [...] *un* *zibina* *fotoaparātu*
 pigeon.ACC.PL and flash.PRS.3 camera.GEN.PL
objektīvus *un* *zibspuldzes* *uz nebēdu*.
 lens.ACC.PL and flashbulb.ACC.PL to one’s heart’s content
 ‘At Piazza San Marco people feed the pigeons [...] and flash their camera lenses and flashbulbs to their heart’s content.’
- (43) [Noslēpumainais radījums peldēja pa ūdens virsmu pāris sekundes,]
zibinotie-s *vairākās* *krāsās*.
flash.CVB-REFL various.LOC.PL colour.LOC.PL
 ‘[The mysterious creature swam on the surface of the water for a few seconds] flashing around in various colours.’

7.7. Caused motion

This subtype comprises verbs like *staiņāt* ‘drag, pull’, *stīvēt* ‘drag, lug’. It is illustrated in example (19) above.

All the subtypes here enumerated have been found in the corpus alongside deaccusative constructions. For considerations of space, we will not illustrate the deaccusative counterparts of all subtypes; the exemplification in the next section involves a verb of subtype 7.1.

8. From deobjective to deaccusative

A deaccusative reflexive is originally a deobjective reflexive expanded with an oblique object. We assume this process of expansion to have taken place in the class of ‘physical manipulation verbs’ characterised above, as verbs of this class show a systematic coexistence of deobjective and deaccusative formations. For most subtypes the process of expansion starts out from an optional adverbial phrase locating the event in space. This situation is illustrated in (44):

- (44) [*Tirgotāji un ražotāji, protams, būs pret, bet patērētājiem ir jābūt iespējai nopietnāk patestēt,*]
nekā tikai pa-grābstītie-s veikalā pāris
 than just **DELIM-grab.INF-REFL** shop.LOC a.few
minūtes
 minutes.ACC.PL
 [*un apskatīt jūtrubā atsauksmes*].

‘[Vendors and manufacturers will be against it, of course, but consumers should have more serious testing opportunities] than just grabbing about for a few minutes in the shop and looking at the comments on YouTube.’

Here the object of manipulation (a shop item) is implicit, and the locative phrase is undoubtedly an adverbial modifier. Subsequently the locative phrase may be narrowed so as to refer to the part of space specifically affected by the activity, so that it becomes unclear whether the locative phrase is just a location for the event or the object affected:

- (45) [*Kad viņš izlīdīs no sava patvēruma, lai atrastu barību, viņš tiks parkā,*]
kur grābstītie-s atkritumos pie
 where **grab.FUT.3-REFL** garbage[PL].LOC near
kioskiem.
 kiosk.DAT.PL

‘[When it gets out of its hiding place in search of food, it will get into the park], where it will rummage in the garbage next to the kiosks.’

Here it is not obvious whether the garbage is just a location or the object of manipulation. But the situation is different in (46), which has the preposition *gar* instead of the locative:

- (46) [*Domājat, ka man mamma neteica, ka uguns ir sāpīte? Teica gan.*]
Un, vienalga, es pamēģināju
 and all.the.same 1SG.NOM try.PST.1SG
pa-grābstītie-s *gar sveces liesmu.*
DELIM-grab.INF-REFL along candle.GEN.SG flame.ACC.SG

‘[Do you think my mum didn’t tell me fire hurts? She did.] And all the same I tried to grab at the flame of the candle.’

Here the flame cannot be seen as a location where the event takes place; rather, it is the object of the kind of manipulation expressed by the verb. Compare also the following, which is analogous to (46) but shows metaphorical transfer, with emotions being compared to physical objects being manipulated and the verb refers to mental impact rather than physical manipulation:

- (47) [*Un es izjutu riebumu, kādu izjūti, kad saproti, ka ar tevi cenšas manipulēt,*]
netīri grābstotie-s gar tavām
 vilely **grab.CVB-REFL** along your.DAT.PL.F
vissvētākajām jūtām.
 holiest.DAT.PL.F.DEF feeling.DAT.PL
 ‘[And I felt the kind of disgust which you feel when you understand somebody is trying to manipulate you,] vilely playing about with your most sacred feelings.’

The adverbial interpretation being excluded in (46) and (47), we can only interpret the oblique phrase as an object. The cline here described between the construction with a locative adverbial phrase added to a deobjective reflexive and that with an oblique object borrowing its morphological shape from locative phrases marks the transitional zone between the deobjective and the deaccusative construction.

The pathway here outlined for the rise of deaccusative reflexives is probably not the only one. Non-reflexive verbs may also combine with oblique objects, which is a device for conveying diminished semantic transitivity in its own right; it is observed in several languages, including English, cf. *was lugging a heavy suitcase upstairs* and *was lugging at a heavy suitcase* (the conative alternation, see Levin 1993, 41–42). The same can be found in Baltic:

- (48) *Nu kā var pa miskasti*
 PTC how be.able.PRS.3 about waste.container.ACC.SG
rakņājošā bomža balsi
dig.PPA.GEN.SG.M.DEF homeless.GEN.SG voice.ACC.SG
pielīdzināt augsti intelektuālajiem
 equate.INF highly intellectual.DAT.PL.M.DEF
neta komentētājiem.
 internet.GEN.SG commenter.DAT.PL.
 ‘How can you treat the voice of a tramp who digs around in a waste container on a par with highly intellectual internet commenters.’
- (49) *Pabeigūši vienu, iet pie otra*
 finish.PPA.NOM.PL.M one.ACC.SG go.PRS.3 to other.GEN.SG.M
un ar tādām pat netīrām rokām,
 and with such.DAT.PL.F PTC dirty.DAT.PL.F hand.DAT.PL
ar tiem pašiem netīriem
 with dem.DAT.PL.M same.DAT.PL.M dirty.DAT.PL.M
pirkstiem grābsta pa tavu ģīmi.
 finger.DAT.PL **grab.PRS.3** about your.ACC.SG face.ACC.SG

‘When they are finished with one, they go to another and with the same dirty hands, with the same dirty fingers they grab at your face.’

This oblique marking of objects reflecting diminished transitivity may combine in a natural way with verbs already marked for diminished transitivity by means of the deobjective (formally reflexive) derivation. In this way a deaccusative construction arises:

- (50) [*Savā jaunajā dzīves vietā es bieži brīnos par to,*]
cik regulāri cilvēki mēdz rakņātīe-s
 how regularly human.NOM.PL be.USED.PRS.3 **dig.INF-REFL**
pa miskastēm un cik labi
 about waste.container.DAT.PL and how well
ģērbusies viņi mēdz būt.
 dress.PPA.NOM.PL.M.REFL 3.NOM.PL.M be.USED.PRS.3 be.INF
 ‘[In my new place of residence I often feel surprised at] how regularly people dig around in waste containers and how well-dressed they tend to be.’

So there were apparently at least two processes feeding into the rise of deaccusatives: adverbial modification in the deobjective construction and the carrying over of oblique object marking into deobjective constructions. In view of the diversified origin of the constructions put to use in the deaccusative construction, it is clear that there cannot be one single uniform pattern for the oblique expression of the object; rather, one finds a great variety of constructions, some of which have become more entrenched than the others, without any of them gaining absolute predominance. We will present the results of our corpus research in section 10. But first we will comment on the lexical content of the oblique object phrases in its relation to the lexical range of subjects in the corresponding transitive constructions.

9. The range of objects in deaccusative constructions

Within the lexical class discussed here—that of verbs of physical manipulation—the range of objects introduced in the deaccusative construction does not completely coincide with that of original objects of the transitive construction. This is not unexpected considering that the rise of the deaccusative construction is, historically, a complex process consisting of two distinct operations—the suppression of the object in the deobjective

[*ja nevari pacelt servisu pēc tam!*]

‘There is no point in grappling about with diesel vehicles
[if you cannot assure proper service afterwards].’

A second reason for differences between the range of objects occurring in the deaccusative construction and that observed with the transitive verb is to be sought in variation in object assignment. The verbs of physical manipulation deriving antipassives often show alternations in argument realisation, and in such cases the deaccusative construction may pick out just one of the alternating patterns. This will never be the theme argument but the locative argument. This can be illustrated with *skrāpēt* ‘scratch’, a verb of the ‘wipe’ type in Levin’s (1993, 125) classification:

- (54) <...> 7 : 00 *jau* *skrāpēju* *ledu*
 already scratch.PRS.1SG ice.ACC.SG
 no *mašīnas*.
 from car.GEN.SG
 ‘At 7 am I am already scratching the ice from my car.’

- (55) *Kā* *ar* *nagiem* *skrāpētie-s* *pa*
 how with nail.DAT.PL scratch.INF-REFL about
 ledu.
 ice.ACC.SG
 ‘It’s like scratching about with your nails on ice.’

While in (54) *ledus* ‘ice’ is a theme, in (55) it is a location. When the transitive verb shows an alternation in argument realisation, it is not always the case that only one of the alternating patterns is taken as a base for the deaccusative construction. The verb *krāmēt* ‘arrange, stow’, for instance, is a verb of the ‘spray’/‘load’ type (Levin 1993, 117–118) and it can take not only the locative argument but also the theme as object. A specific feature of *krāmēt* (not shared by all ‘load’ verbs) is that it requires a composite theme argument expressed by a plural noun phrase. The set of theme objects can be conceptualised as defining a space through which one can move, and this is exploited in the deaccusative construction, which substitutes a locative expression with *ap* for the theme argument:

- (56) *Krāmējot* *somā* *mantas*,
 pack.CVB bag.LOC.SG thing.ACC.PL
 [*kuras rīt no rīta jāņem līdzī, aizdomājos, kāpēc es to daru <...>*]
 ‘As I was packing things into the bag [that needed to be taken along in

the morning, I paused to think why I was doing it <...>]

- (57) [*Pirmām kārtām tiek atvilкта elpa, tad tiek izvilkti pāris aliņi,*]
nu un pēc tam pamazām tiek
 PTC and after that little.by.little get.PRS.3
sākts krāmētie-s ap mantām.
start.PPP.NOM.SG.M rummage.INF-REFL about thing.DAT.PL
 ‘First a short rest is in order, then a couple of bottles of beer are produced,
 and then, little by little, one starts rummaging around with the things.’

Surface-impact verbs deserve a special mention here. Their semantics often involves an impact that is dispersed over a surface or space, so that the object can easily be reconceptualised as a location for the impact. This reconceptualisation is frequently exploited by the deaccusative construction. This is illustrated by *taustīt* ‘feel, search by touch’, which involves tactile contact dispersed over a surface (usually with the aim of assessing the physical properties of an object):

- (58) *Taustot diegu, tas bija biezs.*
feel.CVB thread.ACC.SG it.NOM be.PST.3 thick.NOM.SG.M
 ‘When one felt the thread, it felt thick.’

The reconceptualisation of the object of dispersed impact as a space opens the way for the introduction of new oblique objects not normally (or just rarely) occurring as objects of the transitive *taustīt*, like, e.g., *kabata* ‘pocket’, which defines the container searched for the presence of an object within it:

- (59) *Neikens taustījā-s pa kabatām,*
 PN.NOM **feel.PST.3-REFL** about pocket.DAT.PL
 [*jo tur noteikti kaut kam vajdzēja būt ieliktam <...>*]
 ‘Neikens felt in his pockets, [convinced that something must have
 been put in there].’

Apart from containers, this class of oblique objects also includes virtual locations like contents of a file that one physically manipulates with a keyboard or a mouse, as in (60).

- (60) [*Toreiz nedēļu sabiju aiz letes un ievilku tur portatīvo datorīņu,*]
lai varētu bakstītie-s pa savām
 so.as be.able.IRR **prod.INF-REFL** about RPO.DAT.PL.F
tabulām <...>
 table.DAT.PL

[I spent a week behind the counter at that time and I dragged my portable computer with me] so I could prod about in my tables.’

The asymmetry in the ranges of objects used in transitive and deaccusative constructions manifests itself in frequency as well—see Table 2. These facts taken together—object selection and relative frequencies—show that within this lexical class the antipassive (both deobjective and deaccusative) is strongly lexical, having the characteristic properties of derivation rather than inflection.

10. Lexical sources for oblique object marking

The oblique object of the deaccusative construction is usually encoded with one of four prepositions: *pa* ‘about’, *ap* ‘around’, *gar* ‘along’, *ar* ‘with’, or with the locative case. *Pa* ‘about’, *ap* ‘around’, *gar* ‘along’ group with the locative under the locative subtype of the construction; *ar* ‘with’ alone represents the instrumental subtype (Holvoet 2020, 67–68). The two subtypes represent cross-linguistically attested strategies (Palmer 1994, 178). The coexistence of prepositions with locative and instrumental meaning as alternative markers of the oblique object has a parallel in Chibchan (Heaton 2017, 210–211).

Although the prepositions, as well as the locative, are also found within adverbial modifiers in the deobjective construction, they are regularly used for marking the oblique object of the deaccusative construction. Other prepositions, like *pie* ‘to, at’ in (61), can be occasionally employed by the deaccusative construction, but they normally introduce adverbial modifiers.

- (61) *Vai* ***pie*** *jaunas* *un* *platas* *trepju*
 Q **at** new.GEN.SG.F and wide.GEN.SG.F stair.GEN.PL
margas *ir* *vieglāk* ***grābstītie-s?***
 railing.GEN.SG be.PRS.3 easier **grapple.INF-REFL**
 ‘Is it easier to grab onto a new and wide stair railing?’

It is common for verbs to combine alternatively with more than one preposition and/or the locative, but only few verbs combine with all possible markers. The choice of the marker(s) is loosely associated with the meaning of a verb. Operations on amorphous substances frequently

involve *pa* ‘about’ (63) or the locative (62).

- (62) *Viņš* *sēž,* *lasa* *avīzi*
 3.SG.NOM.M sit.PRS.3 read.PRS.3 newspaper.ACC.SG
vai *rakņāja-s* ***grāmatās,*** *bet*
 or dig.around.PRS.3-REFL **book.LOC.PL** but
es *rakstu.*
 1.SG.NOM write.PRS.1SG
 ‘He is sitting, reading a newspaper or digging around in his books,
 but I’m writing.’
- (63) *Es* *tur* *sāku* *rakņātīe-s* ***pa***
 1SG.NOM there start.PST.1SG dig.around.INF-REFL **about**
dažām *grāmatām,*
 some.DAT.PL book.DAT.PL
 [*kas istabas kaktā bija saliktas uz plaukta.*]
 ‘I have started digging among some books there [that were placed
 together on the shelf in the corner of the room].’

Verbs of prehensile motion favour *pa* ‘about’ (64), *ap* ‘around’ (65) and *gar* ‘along’ (66).

- (64) *Kad* *elektriķis* *sāka* ***pa***
 when electrician.NOM.SG start.PST.3 **about**
vadiem *grābstītie-s,*
 cable.DAT.PL grapple.INF-REFL
 [*izsita drošinātāju auto.*]
 ‘When the electrician started grappling around the cables,
 [a fuse blew in the car].’
- (65) [*Saprātīgs vecāks neļaus bērnam spēlēties ar pielādētu ieroci,*]
neļaus *braukt* *ar* *motociklu* *vai*
 NEG.allow.FUT.3 drive.INF with motorbike.ACC.SG or
gramstītie-s ***ap*** *elektrības* *vadiem.*
 grapple.INF-REFL **around** electricity.GEN.SG cable.DAT.PL
 ‘[Any reasonable parent will never allow their child to play with a
 loaded gun,] will never allow them to ride a motorbike or grapple around
 electric cables.’
- (66) *Kāds* *no* *mājdzīvniekiem,* *bet* *varbūt*
 some.NOM.SG.M from pet.DAT.PL but possibly
pat *abi <.,>* *ir* *gramstījušie-s*
 even both.NOM.PL be.PRS.3 grapple.PPA.NOM.PL.M-REFL
gar *vadiem* *un* *sagrauzuši* *Viasat*

along cable.DAT.PL and chew.PPA.NOM.PL.M Viasat
kastes elektrības vadu.
 box.GEN.SG electricity.GEN.SG cable.ACC.SG
 ‘One of the pets, probably even both <...> have grappled around the
 cables and chewed the electric cable of the Viasat box.’

The preposition *ar* ‘with’, associated with the instrumental subtype of the deaccusative construction, combines with verbs referring to caused motion (67).

- (67) [*Sākumā gan izlemjam nobāzēties viesnīcā,*]
lai nav jāstaipā-s apkārt
 in.order.to NEG.be.PRS.3 DEB.haul.PRS.3-REFL around
ar *koferiem <...>*
with suitcase.DAT.PL
 ‘[We decide to to settle in the hotel for a start], so that we don’t have
 to haul around the suitcases.’

But *ar* ‘with’ is also found with verbs with a meaning that involves rearranging and moving things around, and such verbs are also alternatively found with the markers of the locative subtype, which makes them similar to verbs of prehensile motion or those referring to operations on amorphous substances.

- (68) *Ļoti patīk knibinātie-s ar*
 very please.PRS.3 potter.about.INF-REFL **with**
dažādiem rokdarbiem.
 various.DAT.PL.M handicraft.DAT.PL
 ‘I like very much to potter about with various handicrafts.’
- (69) *Man patīk knibinātie-s ap*
 1SG.DAT please.PRS.3 potter.about.INF-REFL **around**
maziem rokdarbiem.
 small.DAT.PL.M handicraft.DAT.PL
 ‘I like pottering about small handicrafts.’

Although sound-effect verbs favour the locative subtype, they are also sometimes found with *ar* ‘with’.

- (70) [*Laimīgā kārtā karti pieņēma*]
un nebūs vajadzība grabinātie-s
 and NEG.be.FUT.3 need.NOM.SG rattle.INF-REFL
ar *sīceni.*

with cash.ACC.SG
 ‘[Fortunately they accepted the card,] and there will be no need to
 jingle with cash.’

- (71) [*Pamostos no tā,*]
ka kāds no kolēģiem
 that someone.NOM.SG.M from colleague.DAT.PL
jau grabinā-s gar kastroļiem <...>
 already rattle.PRS.3-REFL along pot.DAT.PL
 ‘[I was awakened by the sound of] some of my colleagues clattering
 with pots <...>’

11. The relationship between deobjectives and deaccusatives

The co-occurrence of deobjectives and deaccusatives within the class of physical manipulation affords the possibility of comparing the functions of the two constructions. Let it be repeated here that the deaccusative is not simply a deobjective expanded with an optional adverbial. Though deobjectives may undoubtedly be expanded with adverbials, they are also expanded with oblique phrases that can only be interpreted as complements, and it makes sense to restrict the notion of deaccusatives to the latter.

The two types of deobjectives described above—behaviour-characterising and activity deobjectives—have in common that their implicit objects are generic or potential. Deaccusatives, on the other hand, often have quite individualised and referential oblique objects. Let us repeat example (64) from above:

- (72) *Kad elektriķis sāka pa*
 when electrician.NOM.SG start.PST.3 about
vadiem grābstītie-s,
cable.DAT.PL grapple.INF-REFL
 [*izsita drošinātāju auto.*]
 ‘When the electrician started grappling around the cables,
 [a fuse blew in the car].’

As mentioned above, incomplete affectedness of the object has often been invoked in the literature to characterise the semantic effect of the antipassive derivation. In (72) we are dealing with a surface impact that does not produce the desired effect although in this case it produces an undesirable

side effect. It seems plausible, therefore, that low object affectedness is the antipassive feature that should be invoked here.

As pointed out in Holvoet (2017), the deaccusative construction often has, when compared to the original transitive construction, an atelicising effect. The transitive verb *taustīt* ‘feel, probe’ has a perfective counterpart *aptaustīt* ‘feel, probe completely, from all sides’, suggesting the whole surface of an object has been probed. The corresponding deaccusative construction, on the other hand, is atelic and can be perfectivised only through the addition of the delimitative prefix *pa-*, which expresses a limited temporal quantum of an atelic situation:

- (73) *Viņš* ***ap-taustija*** *krēslu* *no*
 he.NOM **TEL-feel.PST.3** chair.ACC.SG from
visām *pusēm*
 all.DAT.PL.F side.DAT.PL
 [*un secināja, ka šis nav krēsls ar sviru, ar kuru var regulēt krēsla augstumu.*]
 ‘He probed the chair from all sides [and concluded it was not a chair with a lever enabling regulation of the seat height.]’
- (74) *Pa-meklēju* *internetos,* ***pa-taustījo-s***
 DELIM-search.PST.1SG internet.LOC.SG **DELIM-feel.PST.1SG-REFL**
ap *trenažieri*
 about training.machine.ACC.SG
 [*un aizdomas apstiprinās: manam CycleOps Fluidz ir iztecējis šķidrums*]
 <...>
 ‘I checked on the internet, probed my training machine here and there [and my suspicions were confirmed: the liquid had leaked from my CycleOps Fluidz.]’

It would be an oversimplification, however, to say that low prominence is the defining feature of deobjectives whereas in the deaccusative construction it is replaced with low object affectedness. We also find uses of the deobjective in which the implicit object is not generic or potential but contextually retrievable. Let us consider (75) and (76), which contain the recent borrowing *skrollēt* (from English *scroll*). (75) shows the transitive construction:

- (75) *Vienīgā* *acīm* *redzamā*
 only.NOM.SG.F.DEF eye.DAT.PL visible.NOM.SG.F.DEF
problēma *bija* ***skrollējot*** *ekrānu*
 problem.NOM.SG be.PST.3 **scroll.cvb** screen.ACC.SG

[*ar daudzām horizontālām un ļoti kontrastainām līnijām kalendāra sadaļā <...>*]

‘The only obvious problem was with scrolling down a screen

[with many starkly contrasting horizontal lines in the calendar field].’

This verb occurs in a deobjective construction in (76):

- (76) <...> [*un lai tiktu no saraksta viena gala uz otru,*
anāk *pamatīgi* **skrollētie-s.**
 be.needed.PRS.3 thoroughly **scroll.INF-REFL**
 ‘[And in order to get from the top of the list to the bottom,]
 one has to do a lot of scrolling.’

This means many screens have to be scrolled down, but this is not an instance of the generic activity of scrolling down screens, even though in the modern world ‘scrolling’ could be recognised as a socially well-established type of activity like reading, painting, fishing etc. What is referred to is the scrolling down of the number of screens needed to reach the bottom of the list, which is basically a telic event. There is no suggestion that the scrolling is ineffectual or leads nowhere. In other words, neither the feature of genericity nor that of cancellation of causative entailment will help us out here. A similar situation is found in (78), though here the meaning of the verb is more abstract. However, we could still treat the verbs *lutināt* ‘indulge, pamper’ and *auklēt* ‘nurse, act nurturingly or protectively’ as a kind of manipulation verbs if we start out from an original meaning ‘handle with care’:

- (77) [*Un piekrītu, ka diviņu gadījumā jo sevišķi vajag režīmu ...*]
ar *vienu* *vēl* *var* *vairāk*
 with one.ACC.SG still be.able.PRS.3 more
lutinātie-s *un* **auklētie-s,**
indulge.INF-REFL and **nurse.INF-REFL**
 [*bet ar diviem vienkārši, tas ir ļoti grūti, gandrīz neiespējami!*]
 ‘[And I agree that especially in the case of twins a regimen is needed...]
 with one child you can engage in pampering and caring, [but with two
 it’s simply too difficult, almost impossible.]

The object is, again, contextually retrievable: if you have one child, you can afford to pamper it. The purpose, which is that of rearing the child in a satisfactory manner, is, in this case, taken for granted. What (76) and (77) have in common is that there is a desirable change of state which is

not negated but known, or taken for granted. A final example of interest here is (78):

- (78) *Minūtes* *desmit* *rakāmie-s*,
 minute.ACC.PL ten **dig.PST.1PL-REFL**
 [*kamēr dabūjam Foresteri no kupenas laukā.*]
 ‘We had to dig some ten minutes
 [before we got the Forester out of the snowdrift.]’

To be noted here is the use of *rakt* ‘dig’ rather than *rakņāt* ‘dig [ITER], turn up, root, rummage’. Whereas the iterative *rakņātīe-s* is used for chaotic and ineffectual digging, and therefore particularly fit to be used in antipassive constructions conveying precisely this semantic feature (cf. examples (62) and (63) above), it is not used here because the agency is goal-directed and effective—the achievement of the goal is defocused but not negated.

These examples suggests that the feature of ineffectual agency or cancellation of the change-of-state implication is absent in the deobjective construction, but we can nevertheless detect a common feature: when the change-of-state is given or taken for granted, we can focus on the process leading to it and view it, so to speak, as a self-contained event, an effect similar to that achieved when the change of state is negated.

Assuming that there is a connection between the feature of incompleteness involved in deaccusatives and that of defocusing of a change of state that is taken for granted in the case of deobjectives, we could suggest a possible pathway for the rise of deaccusatives out of deobjectives. Deobjectives could, for instance, start out as a means of referring to events with non-prominent (generic or potential) objects. Then, in an extension, they could start denoting events whose implicit patients are not generic and unidentified but specific and known, without, however, ceasing to focus on the subject’s agency because the change of state involving the patient is abstracted away from. This could pave the way for the introduction of oblique objects.

The idea, expressed in Holvoet (2017), that the constructional meaning of the deobjective is low object prominence whereas that of the deaccusative is low object affectedness is also not quite satisfactory in that there are obvious common features shared by the two constructions which could be formulated in terms of an inheritance relation. These common features cannot be restricted to ‘low transitivity’, though low semantic transitivity in the sense of Hopper & Thompson (1980) is undoubtedly a

prototype underlying both low object prominence and low object affectedness, as already pointed out by Cooreman (1994). The common element is apparently that both antipassive constructions afford the possibility of focusing on the subject's agency as if it were a self-contained event, even though the presence of an object at which the agency is directed is often notionally indispensable. In the deobjective construction there is no single motivation for this conceptualisation of the subject's agency as a self-contained event: genericity of the object may be a reason, but defocusing of the change-of-state is also a possible motive. The deaccusative inherits this feature of self-containedness of the subject's agency but adds that of low affectedness of the patient.

12. Deaccusative constructions beyond the physical manipulation type

The class of physical manipulation is the likely source class of the deaccusative construction and, in a sense, has remained the class within which it is at home. Deaccusatives have, however, expanded beyond this class through processes of metaphorisation and also, to some extent, metonymy, which were already briefly mentioned in section 8. Processes of metaphorisation are also observed in the use of deobjectives from manipulation verbs, as mentioned above. In the case of deaccusatives these processes are reflected in lexical selection principles for oblique objects and thereby become grammatically relevant.

The targets of metaphorical extensions include:

(a) objects of mental activity, intentionality

- (79) *Mums nav laika grābstītie-s*
 1PL.DAT be.PRS.3.NEG time.GEN.SG **grapple.INF-REFL**
ap kādiem iedomu tēliem,
 about some.DAT.PL.M phantasy.GEN.PL image.DAT.PL
 [lietas ir jāsauc īstajos vārdos.]
 'We have no time to grapple with some images of our phantasy,
 [we have to call things by their real names.]'

(b) loose engagement in a sphere of human activity

- (80) [*Kādu laiku atpakaļ ...*]
es nedaudz pa-bakstījo-s ar
 1SG.NOM a.bit **DELIM-prod.PST.1SG-REFL** with

elektronisko *apmācību* *materiālu*
 electronic.ACC.SG.DEF teaching.GEN.PL material.GEN.PL
veidošanu.
 design.ACN.ACC.SG

‘[Some time ago] I had a shot at designing electronic teaching aids.’

(c) inquisitive activity

- (81) *Tomēr, rakņājotie-s pa šiem sarakstiem,*
 yet **dig.CVB-REFL** about DEM.DAT.PL.M list.DAT.PL
 [*es sapratu, ka ir pietiekami daudz grāmatu un autoru, par kurām neko*
 nezinu.]
 ‘Yet, while ploughing through these lists, [I understood there are more
 than enough books and authors about which I don’t know anything.]’

All these subtypes contain an evaluative element, usually suggesting that the activity referred to is futile, insignificant or not quite serious.

13. The antipassive constructions of Latvian: an overview

The aim of this article was to investigate a group of Latvian reflexive-marked verbs that can be characterised with the aid of the notion of antipassive, a voice operation that either suppresses or demotes the object.

Our corpus-based investigation was based on the working hypothesis that the deaccusative must have arisen from expansion of the deobjective construction with an oblique object, while the latter in its turn arose from semantic reinterpretation of a reflexive or reciprocal construction with reflexive marking. The notions of suppression and demotion are therefore diachronically misleading as they make sense only in a synchronic comparison of the deobjective and deaccusative construction with the corresponding transitive construction. This hypothesis was based on notional necessity: it is hardly possible to imagine a single historical process in which the reflexive marking is introduced in the transitive construction and the accusative object is at the same time replaced with an oblique object. These diachronic assumptions determine the structure of the article and inform the systematisation of the corpus material.

The analysis of the corpus material has substantially improved our knowledge concerning the lexical input and the productivity of the two

constructions. The corpus data confirms the existence of two subtypes of deobjectives: the behaviour-characterising subtype, which is more entrenched in usage but low in productivity, and the activity subtype, which is weakly entrenched but freely produced online, so that only corpus data reveal their existence. The status of the class of physical manipulation verbs as the source class for the rise of deaccusative reflexives from deobjective ones, as hypothesised in Holvoet (2017), is confirmed by the corpus material, which shows systematic coexistence of deobjective and deaccusative constructions for verbal stems within this class. Both deobjectives and deaccusatives within this class are strongly entrenched, and their frequency often exceeds that of the corresponding transitive constructions. Finally, we find a number of extensions beyond the physical manipulation type, resulting from various types of metaphorisation. These seem to be productive in the informal spoken language and in the language of the internet.

Among the Balto-Slavonic languages, Latvian stands out by the widespread and productive use of antipassive—both deobjective and deaccusative—reflexive constructions. The activity type of deobjectives seems to have no counterparts in Lithuanian and Slavonic. The robust development of deaccusative constructions (only rudimentarily developed in Lithuanian and Slavonic) is an exception to the general tendency (noted by Heaton 2017, 217) for languages where the antipassive has semantic-pragmatic rather than realigning functions to have only or mainly patientless antipassives.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS — absolutive, ACC — accusative, ACN — action noun, ANTIP — antipassive, AOR — aorist, CAUS — causative, COMP — comparative, CVB — converb, DAT — dative, DEB — debitive, DEF — definite, DELIM — delimitative prefix, DEM — demonstrative, DIM — diminutive, ERG — ergative, F — feminine, FUT — future, GEN — genitive, IMP — imperative, INF — infinitive, INS — instrumental, IRR — irrealis, ITER — iterative, LOC — locative, M — masculine, NANTIP — non-antipassive, NEG — negative, NOM — nominative, NREFL — non-reflexive, OBJ — object, PL — plural, PN — personal name, POSS — possessive, PPA — past participle active, PPRA — present participle active, PPP — past participle passive, PRS — present, PST — past, PTC — particle, Q — question marker, REFL — reflexive, REL — relative pronoun, RPO — reflexive possessive, SG — singular, SUBJ — subject, TEL — telicising prefix

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