

The Ghost of the Old Norse Subjunctive: the Norwegian Subjunctive Participle

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1. Introduction

This paper will argue that in modern Norwegian there are constructions in which what looks like a past participle or supine is better described as an irrealis form. I refer to this participle as ‘subjunctive participle’. Earlier analyses have resorted to concepts such as ‘*have*-omission’, ‘misplaced perfect’ and ‘morphological attraction’ to account for the unexpected past participles in infinitival positions. I will present data showing that what looks like a past participle sometimes occurs in finite positions in Norwegian dialects, data that make those earlier analyses less convincing. My proposal follows my earlier analyses (Eide 2002; 2005): it assumes that this participle is a *distal* form; a form expressing modal remoteness (Langacker 1978; cf. Section 3.1. below) which amounts to a full-fledged irrealis marker; cf. also Julien (2003). Admittedly, the form has a rather restricted distribution in standard written Norwegian, but it occurs in many dialects and variants of spoken Norwegian in spite of the tendency of normative grammars to ban or ignore it.

I assume that the morphological collapse of the old subjunctive preterit form and the past participle led to the subjunctive preterit retaining its counterfactual meaning and disguising as a past participle although confined to constructions with a hypothetical or counterfactual meaning (cf. Sandøy, 1991; Dørum, 2000; and Julien, 2003 for related ideas). More specifically, the old subjunctive, subsumed by the supine, can still impose counterfactual or subjunctive meaning, provided its syntactic surroundings contain the right semantic elements to trigger it. What counts as a sufficient trigger varies between dialects and constructions, and I will examine some of those constructions. Relevant examples are listed in (1)–(3), all of which have counterfactual or hypothetical readings.

- (1) (a) Jon skulle vært på kontoret
Jon shallPRET bePTCPL¹ on officeDEF
‘Jon should have been in his office’

¹ PTCPL means a verb form formally indistinguishable from a past participle. Although I will argue that this verb has a different function and semantic value in these constructions, I concede that it looks exactly like a past participle formally.

- (b) Hu har måtta vorre her
She has mustPTCPL bePTCPL here
'She must have been here '
- (2) (a) Det hadde vært artig å sett deg igjen²
It had been fun to seePTCPL you again
'It would have been fun to see you again'
- (b) Har du arbeidd heile dagen utan å kokt kaffe?³
Have you worked all day without to boilPTCPL coffee?
'Have you worked all day without making coffee?'
- (3) (a) Tænk om æ ha vorte det!⁴
Think if I haveINF⁵ becomePTCPL that
'Imagine if I had become that '
- (b) Da fått du en helt anna opplevels⁶
Then getPTCPL you a totally different experience
'Then you would have had a totally different experience '

My aim is to provide an empirical description of the selected constructions and show that analysing the participial form, or subjunctive participle, as irrealis in these contexts enables us to generalize over a range of seemingly different constructions. Although I suggest that this irrealis semantics stems from the Old Norse subjunctive, this is by no means a necessary development. The fact that the subjunctive participle occurs in different constructions in different dialects indicates that there is nothing inevitable in this course of events; the Old Norse subjunctive could have slipped into complete oblivion without leaving a mark on modern Norwegian. Instead, it lives on as a ghost-like figure, confined to Norwegian dialects⁷ and the non-standard spoken language.

1.1 *Selecting the relevant data set*

The constructions I discuss in this paper may be grouped under three headings. Firstly, there are the participle-for-infinitive constructions in (1) and (2); secondly, there is what looks like a non-finite auxiliary *ha* 'have' where you would expect to find a finite one in counterfactual constructions like (3a); and thirdly, there is the participle-for-preterit construction in (3b). I will discuss all three constructions, but first I address whether and why they constitute a coherent data set.

Although the Norwegian participle-for-infinitive is not well-studied, it has been mentioned by various authors as a puzzling phenomenon. Ivar Aasen (1864) deemed this construction 'rather unnecessary'; one should instead use the infinitive. Eskeland (1954: 26), quoted in Sandøy (1991: 259), was puzzled by the fact that in

² Data from Eide (2005: 374).

³ Data from Julien (2003). Similar examples are found in Sandøy (1991: 256).

⁴ Data from the Fosen dialect in Sør-Trøndelag, fieldwork by Pål K. Eriksen in September (2009).

⁵ This auxiliary is glossed as INF because it is formally indistinguishable from the infinitive, although it functions as a finite form; cf. section 4.4 below.

⁶ Data from the Oppdal dialect in Sør-Trøndelag, recent fieldwork; Van Ommeren (forthcoming).

⁷ According to Sandøy (1991), Faroese also uses the supine (i.e. past participle) form in many of the same constructions as Norwegian dialects, most prominently in irrealis contexts.



spoken Norwegian, people often employ a participle preceded by the infinitival marker *å* 'to', a mysterious fact if this were in fact a garden-variety participle. In writing, however, the infinitival marker is often replaced with homophonous *og* 'and'. Moore Smith (1910: 346–7) notes that *have* is sometimes omitted before a past participle in Elisabethan English syntax (e.g. *Fore God, I would have sworn the pulling girl would willingly accepted Hammon's love*⁸) and refers to Jespersen's (1905: 83)⁹ claim that this construction exists in Scotch, and that it 'has an exact parallel in Danish' and other Scandinavian languages.

Thus, at least some of the constructions I investigate in this paper have attracted some, albeit modest, attention, and different authors have remarked on different aspects. Sandøy (1991) discusses these constructions under the broader concept of 'supine attraction' in Norwegian and Faroese. The term 'supine attraction' signifies that the feature supine spreads from one supine form to the

form that follows. According to Sandøy, supine attraction is found in a smaller set of constructions in the south and south-west of Norway (cf. the map)¹⁰ below the line on the map. He concluded this after conducting a survey of native speakers of Norwegian dialects asking them to judge the grammaticality of different kinds of supine attraction in their dialect. Supine attraction subsumes a range of constructions, some of which have no counterfactual or hypothetical reading. For instance, it occurs with perfective constructions in some dialects; cf. (4a) found in the Romsdalen/North Sunnmøre dialects (Møre og Romsdal) and apparently occurring solely with the adjective *ferdig* 'finished'. The construction in (4b), where the participle follows a deontic modal participle, likewise has a perfective reading, but is much more widely distributed (Sandøy 1991: 252); it is likely used in the entire northern area (the data are given in *Nynorsk*).

⁸ Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Act III: scene 3.

⁹ §80 p.77 in Fryd's edition of Jespersen's *Growth and Structure of the English Language*.

¹⁰ http://www.habu.no/digimaker/pictures/norgeskart_a3IBdbrt.gif

- (4) (a) Han er heilt ferdig å stroke kleda, han.
He is completely finished to ironPTCPL clothesDEF, he
'He has completely finished ironing the clothes, he has'
(b) Eg har måtta retta mange stilar kvar veke.
I have mustPTCPL correctPTCPL many essays every week
'I have had to correct a number of essays every week'

Wiklund (2005, 2007) likewise discusses a range of constructions where we find 'supine copying' without any counterfactuality, as in the Swedish data in (5).

- (5) (a) Lars hade börjat o läst boken
Lars had beginPTCPL to readPTCPL bookDEF
'Lars had begun to read the book'
(b) Jag har hunnit läst hela boken
I have managePTCPL readPTCPL whole bookDEF
'I have managed to read the whole book'

The participle-for-infinitive construction thus includes much more than pure counterfactual or hypothetical constructions. Sandøy (1991: 261) speculates that an irrealis construction later leads to supine attraction or supine copying even in dialectal perfective constructions. He also suggests that the origin of the irrealis supine is the Old Norse subjunctive, an assumption I will adopt and discuss in more detail. One work devoted mostly to the counterfactual participle-for-infinitive constructions is Julien (2003), and I will adopt several of her proposals in what follows. One of Julien's objectives is to argue that one needs to keep the participle-for-infinitive construction separate from other constructions where morphological markings of tense or finiteness seem to be spreading from one form to another, as in (5). The participle-for-infinitive construction should be treated as a non-standard morphological marker of counterfactual, hypothetical or irrealis propositions, unlike the pseudo-coordination structures in (5) that typically carry aspectual information.

In addition to the participle-for-infinitive construction, I will examine what appears to be a non-finite perfect counterfactual and a participle-for-preterit construction;¹¹ cf. the data in (3). These constructions occur in non-standard Norwegian dialects, but they are productive. The participle-for-preterit construction has a natural place in this paper because it is the old subjunctive retained in the relevant dialects; it looks like a participle simply because the subjunctive and the participle collapsed into one form in these dialects. As for the non-finite auxiliary construction with a counterfactual meaning in (3a), I will discuss whether the participle is what carries the subjunctive meaning, leaving the preterit marking on the auxiliary redundant. I believe that even these constructions can be better described with reference to the development of the subjunctive participle in Norwegian dialects.

The constructions investigated in this paper employ what morphologically looks like a supine, i.e. a past participle, in a syntactic function where you would expect a different form, such as a preterit or an infinitive. Semantically, these constructions display a subjunctive reading such as counterfactuality or irrealis.

¹¹ Julien (2003) also mentions the latter.

There are thus morphological, syntactic and semantic criteria that render this a coherent data set. We allow for one exception: the construction that looks like a non-finite counterfactual, (3a), complies with the morphological and semantic criteria only. Since the supine in this case follows a perfect auxiliary, there is nothing unexpected about it. The lack of overt finiteness marking on the auxiliary is what is exceptional.

2. The preterit subjunctive

What we call ‘subjunctive’ in modern Norwegian is a descendant of the old Indo-European optative (cf. Næs 1972: 267). Contemporary (standard) Norwegian shows no significant traces of the old preterit subjunctive, according to Næs (1972: 266). The term ‘preterit subjunctive’ is in some sense a misnomer since there is a general consensus that the difference between the present subjunctive (subjunctive 1) and the preterit subjunctive (subjunctive 2) in Germanic languages is not one of tense, but of mood, the relative perceived distance to reality; cf. e.g. Iversen (1972: 142) on Old Norse. In the words of Thieroff (2004: 319)

[T]he subjunctive 1 and the subjunctive 2 do not differ with regard to time reference. For example, both *er singe* and *er sänge* have non-past time reference and differ only with regard to their modal meaning. In contrast, in the indicative the present form *er singt* has non-past time reference, whereas the preterite form *er sang* has past time reference. [The] same behaviour holds for the subjunctive forms in all Germanic (and in most other European) languages.

I will use the term ‘preterit subjunctive’ in spite of the temporal connotations since this is the term employed in most traditional works on the subject.

2.1 Preterit subjunctive in Old Norse

In Old Norse, the subjunctive was quite productive and occurs frequently in the old saga texts. The two types of subjunctive, present and preterit, split the domain of subjunctive meanings roughly in half: the present subjunctive expressed optative meanings (desires, wants, wishes, demands) and the preterit subjunctive expressed more hypothetical or potential meanings (Haugen 1998: 274 ff).

- (6) (a) Friðr sé þér með öllum börnum þínum
Peace bePRESSUBJ you with all children yours
‘Peace be with you and all your children’
- (b) Væri nú svá vel með oss sem þá er bezt hefir verit
BePRETSUBJ now so well with us as when it best have been
‘Might it be as good between us as when it was at its best’

In matrix clauses, the preterit subjunctive most frequently occurred in combination with modals and copulas. In clauses embedded under verbs of saying or believing, the subjunctive expressed the speaker's lack of commitment regarding the truth of the embedded proposition. This was also the case in quotative contexts and in reporting of counterfactual situations such as dreams. Restrictive relative clauses and adverbial conditional clauses also occurred with subjunctive morphology.

- (7) (a) Beri þeir sigr af qðrum í dag, er sá guð vill.
GetPRESSUBJ they victory of other today, he who God will
'May he conquer today who God will'
- (b) Ef hann væri þér líkr í skaplyndi, þá mynda ek lítt seinka
If he bePRETSUBJ you like in mind, then might I little hesitate
'If he had had a mind like yours, I would not hesitate for long'

These functions are expressed in contemporary standard Norwegian by different means, including the two modals *skulle* 'should' and *måtte* 'must' and constitute one specialized domain for the two modals (cf. Eide 2005: 44).

- (8) (a) De situasjoner som måtte/*skulle oppstå...
The situations that mustPRET/should occur
'Those situations that might occur...'
- (b) Skulle/*måtte en slik situasjon oppstå
Should/mustPRET a such situation occur
'Should such a situation occur...'

The preterit subjunctive in Germanic was originally expressed by a subjunctive suffix (cf. Dørum, 2000; in Old Norse *-i* for 3rd person singular and plural, *-ir*, *-im*, *-ið* for 2nd person singular, 1st person plural and 2nd person plural, respectively). The Umlaut (i.e. vowel variation), which later came to be associated with the subjunctive, started out as a phonetically determined variation triggered by these suffixes, cf. e.g. the verbs *gefa* and *vera* in Table 1 (data from Haugen 1998: 178 ff).¹²

INFINITIVE	PRESENT	PRET IND PL	PRET SUBJ	SUPINE	GLOSS
kasta	kastar	køstuðu	kastaði	kastat	'throw'
dóma	dómir	dómdu	dómði	dómt	'judge'
fylgja	fylgir	fylgðu	fylgði	fylgt	'follow'
bíta	bítr	bitu	biti	bitit	'bite'

¹² Thanks to Ivar Berg for checking the Old Norse facts, and for other comments and suggestions.

gefa	gefr	gáfu	gæfi	gefit	‘give’
vera	er	váru	væri	verit	‘be’
telja	telr	taldu	teldi	talt	‘count’

[Table 1]

Dørum (2000: 156) points to the preterit indicative plural as the source for the preterit subjunctive. As can be observed from the table, the preterit indicative and the preterit subjunctive forms are often similar, more so than the preterit subjunctive and the supine, although the two latter forms usually still share the root vowel, which is crucial. One should keep in mind that when the person and number inflections are lost, the remaining system looks quite different from Table 1. For weak verbs like the *døma*-class, the dental suffix becomes *-de* (or *-te*) for the preterit and *-d* (or *-t*) for the supine, so in many classes the distinction between the preterit and the supine is maintained. For the highly productive *kasta*-class, however, the preterit and the supine eventually become identical when the *-u/-o* endings of the preterit are lost (*kasta-kasta*). In this case, the preterit, the preterit subjunctive, and the supine are identical (Dørum 2000: 159). For other classes, one might be inclined to say that the preterit subjunctive was absorbed by the preterit in some dialects and by the supine in others. However, the morphological distinctions between the subjunctive and the other forms were maintained in other ways, depending on the dialect.

2.2 Preterit subjunctive in Norwegian dialects

The development from Old Norse to contemporary Norwegian dialects took four different routes (adapted from Dørum 2000: 150).

- I. The preterit subjunctive was lost as a distinct form.
- II. The preterit subjunctive came to be expressed solely via Umlaut.
- III. The preterit subjunctive is expressed without Umlaut only with certain specialized verbs (typically with verbs meaning ‘be’ and ‘become’).
- IV. The old supine form (the non-agreeing past participle) came to be used as the preterit subjunctive.

For I–III, the preterit, the perfect and the pluperfect usually replace the preterit subjunctive to express hypothetical and counterfactual moods, with all verbs (type I), some verbs (type II), or most verbs (type III). Replace constructions with modals are also common. These are also the most widespread ways to express counterfactual and hypothetical propositions in contemporary standard Norwegian. Route IV, however, was associated with and accompanied by the old preterit subjunctive collapsing into the supine for the productive classes, i.e. the preterit subjunctive ‘takes the form of the supine’ (cf. Hægstad 1915: 120; quoted here from Dørum 2000: 158) or ‘the supine appears instead of the original subjunctive’; cf. Sørliie (1928: 114). According to Dørum, this is also the most widespread type of preterit subjunctive in Norwegian dialects. Thus, native speakers of dialects where the preterit subjunctive and the supine form collapsed into one are more likely to have kept a viable

subjunctive. A preterit subjunctive wearing the armour of the supine is evidently much more likely to have survived the potentially lethal battles with the preterit. The preterit subjunctive in these dialects is only morphologically identical to the supine; it has its own syntactic function. The supine is confined to non-finite functions, e.g. following a perfective auxiliary, whereas the preterit subjunctive occurs in finite positions, e.g. in the verb second (V2) position in declarative clauses and the verb first (V1) position in polarity questions and V1–conditionals.

- (9) (a) Dæ vøre noko tenkji på.¹³
That bePTCPL something think about
'That would be something to think about'
(b) Fått n se kji kvæmmfolk, så døytt n.¹⁴
GetPTCPL he himself not womanfolk, then diePTCPL he
'If he doesn't get himself a woman, he might die'
(c) Da fått du en helt anna opplevels.¹⁵
Then getPTCPL you a completely different experience
'Then you would get a totally different experience'

The construction is found in Hallingdal (Buskerud), Valdres (Oppland), Voss (Hordaland), Sogn and Nordfjord (Sogn og Fjordane), and in several dialects in Sør-Trøndelag, e.g. Oppdal (cf. Dørum 2000: 150; Van Ommeren, forthcoming). Although this construction is a viable and geographically widespread way of expressing the preterit subjunctive in Norwegian dialects, it has attracted little attention from the research community, according to Dørum.

Several authors have attributed this lack of interest to the inaccurate impression that this is simply a sloppy way of expressing counterfactuality. Aasen (1864: §235) suggested that although this form (which he had attested in Hordaland) might be considered to have a subjunctive use, it cannot very easily be distinguished from the supine. Since the alleged subjunctive form is similar to the supine, perhaps the underlying construction is simply a pluperfect where the auxiliary *havde*¹⁶ 'had' is omitted, i.e. (10a) is simply a sloppy way of expressing (10b).

- (10) (a) Um eg vore so rik
If I bePTCPL so rich
'If I were that rich'
(b) Um eg (havde) voret so rik
If I had bePTCPL so rich
'If I had been that rich'

This paragraph in Aasen (1964) and his view of these supine-like forms as non-satisfactory¹⁷ led him to conclude that these subjunctive forms did not belong to the

¹³ Data from the dialect of Aurdal, from Sørli (1928: 114).

¹⁴ Data from the dialect of Hallingdal, from Venås (1977: 189).

¹⁵ Data from the dialect of Oppdal, from Van Ommeren (forthcoming), recent fieldwork.

¹⁶ Note that *havde* is an archaic way of spelling the perfect auxiliary *hadde* 'had'.

¹⁷ Aasen's project was to create a new written language (the precursor to *Nynorsk*, one of the two contemporary Norwegian written standards). This language was intended to build on the genuine Norwegian language as manifested in the dialects and replace the written standard of the former

proper syntactic system. The preterit subjunctive forms in Norwegian dialects were characterized as ‘lawless’ (Dørum 2000: 147), which resulted in their being dismissed from serious investigation. However, as argued by Julien (2003: 141) for the participle-for-infinitive construction, when a morphosyntactic phenomenon occurs over such a long period of time and with this amount of geographical extension, explanations such as ‘sloppy use’ or ‘mixed up constructions’ are not useful. One should instead seek an explanation in the grammatical systems of these dialects.

There are two good reasons why Aasen’s theory of *havde*-omission is not a good explanation for this construction, one syntactic and one semantic. The syntactic reason is that the omission of *havde* would have left us with a construction where the non-finite supine is to the right of negation since only finite verbs move across negation in the relevant Germanic languages (cf. e.g. Weerman 1989: 43). Compare (9b), where the supine form has moved to the left of negation to (11ab), where the supine (11a) and the infinitive (11b) clearly occur to the right of negation; (11a) is an elliptical example of ‘*have*-omission’ or auxiliary drop, the subject is also missing.¹⁸

- (11) (a) Ikke fått deg noen hybel enda, altså?
Not getPTCPL you some studio–apartment yet, then
‘You haven’t found a studio apartment yet, then?’
(b) Jeg ikke drikke øl på en fredag? Særlig.
I not drinkINF beer on a Friday? As–if
‘Me not drink beer on a Friday? As if.’

The V2-position also allows only [+finite] verbs (e.g. Weerman 1989, Eide 2009ab). In (9c), the verb occurs in the V2 position: it is shifted across the subject (*du* ‘you’). The same finiteness requirement applies to the V1 position in V1 conditionals like (9b). Even here the verb is shifted across the subject (*n* ‘he’). This suggests that what looks like a supine form in (9) is in fact a finite form that can fulfill the finiteness requirement of the V1 and V2 positions in (9b) and (9c), respectively.

There is also a semantic reason for not accepting Aasen’s theory of *havde*-omission. Dørum (2000: 152), following Sørli (1928: 115), observes that the subjunctive in (9) cannot express counterfactual propositions about the past; the present perfect and the pluperfect are used in these instances. That is, there is a division of labor between the construction employing the supine as a finite form and the pluperfect constructions with *hadde* ‘had’. The former is used for hypothetical situations in the present and the future, the latter for hypothetical and non-realized situations in the past.¹⁹ Data from Sørli (1928: 115):

Danish overlords (the precursor of the contemporary written standard *Bokmål*). The forms chosen had to fulfil a range of requirements, e.g. comply with systematicity and obvious heritage.

¹⁸ We cannot know if the underlying word order in this particular case is a declarative *Du har ikke fått deg noen hybel enda, altså* or a polarity question *Har du ikke fått deg noen hybel enda, altså?* However, the crucial point here is the relative order of the supine and negation, which is identical in the two cases; cf. Nygård (2010) and her forthcoming doctoral thesis for a detailed analysis of auxiliary drop and other aspects of ellipsis in modern spoken Norwegian.

¹⁹ This might not be true for all dialects employing this construction. Since the construction is counterfactual, it is hard to judge in cases like (9b). From the description in Venås (1977: 189), it cannot be firmly concluded that this proposition is about the present or future and could not be used

- (12) (a) Ha'n komme før, ha e kji reist.
Has–he come earlier, have I not left
'Had he arrived earlier, I wouldn't have left'
(b) Hadde'n komme før, hadde e kji reist.
Had–he come earlier, had I not left
'Had he arrived earlier, I wouldn't have left'

Since there is a division of labor between the constructions with and without *hadde*, they are obviously not synonymous in all cases. Thus, it is less plausible that the construction in (10a) is a sloppy way of saying (10b), or that one is created by omitting the auxiliary present in the other. Instead, there are two different constructions for counterfactual situations, each with a temporal domain. The pluperfect is used about the past; in this case, the supine form is non-finite and occurs to the right of negation, as the auxiliary is the finite verb (cf. ((12)). The construction in (9), however, is used to talk about the present and future, and the supine form behaves like a finite verb syntactically, occurring in V1 and V2 positions and to the left of negation. It appears in contexts where other dialects, including the written standards, would use the preterit or the pluperfect, thus the term 'participle-for-preterit construction'. It is important to note that for the relevant dialects, this is a productive construction; the supine form in finite functions is used alongside the preterit and for the same purpose. Cf. the following paragraph from Van Ommeren's forthcoming thesis, reporting on recent field work on the Oppdal dialect (Sør-Trøndelag).

- (13) *Komme du på en arbeidsplass, for eksempel, og sport ette arbeid*
ComePTCPL you on a workplace, for instance, and askPTCPL after work

og du *kunj* tåå litte dialekt attåt for eksempel.
and you canPRET speak a–little dialect in addition for instance.

Da trur e no dæ at da *fått* du en helt anna opplevels,
Then believe I well this that then getPTCPL you a totally different experience

i stan for at en bære *prøft* å gjårrå se forstått på riksmål,
instead of that one only tryPTCPL²⁰ to make oneself understood in *Riksmål*

og engelsk og ka det no *skullj* vårrå.
and English and what it well shallPRET be

'If you walked into a workplace, for instance, and asked for employment and you could speak a little dialect in addition, for instance. Then I'd think that you would have a totally different experience, instead of one trying to make oneself

to talk about a non-realized state of affairs in the past. Since Dørum and Sørli are native speakers of the relevant dialects, their claims should be trusted.

²⁰ For this verb, the participle and the preterit are identical, but structural harmony suggests that the participle is used here. Thanks to native speaker Elfrid Fjøsne for checking the forms and readings.

understood in posh Norwegian, and English, and what have you.’

Note that the preterit form, especially of modals (*kunj* ‘could’, *skullj* ‘should’) is used alongside the supine (*komme* ‘come’, *sport* ‘asked’, *fått* ‘gotten’, *prøft* ‘tried’) to express the subjunctive, hypothetical reading, by the same person²¹ and in the same paragraph. Modals are somewhat special in their potential to express hypothetical readings, but the supine expresses the subjunctive in other verbs in this dialect. Moreover, according to Sørli (1928) and Dørum (2000), what appears to be the supine here is the actual preterit subjunctive inherited from Old Norse and retained because the preterit subjunctive and the supine form became identical for these dialects. The supine is much more frequent in the use of the past participle (Sørli 1928); this formal identity came to protect the subjunctive from annihilation in these dialects, where it is productive and viable even today.

3. The supine form as a non-finite subjunctive marker

In the constructions discussed in the previous section, the supine form appears with a subjunctive meaning in a finite function. In the remainder of this paper, I will discuss several constructions where the supine has the same subjunctive reading in non-finite functions. In the next section, I investigate constructions where the supine form appears in the place of an infinitive, participle-for-infinitive constructions. First, however, I will look into why the past participle or supine form should lend itself to this type of function in Norwegian.

3.1 The modal functions of past tense forms

The complex verbal paradigms of Old Norse encoded mood markings, person and number inflections, and tense. The contemporary standard Norwegian paradigm is a lot simpler, consisting only of morphologically encoded tense, finite and non-finite forms in a past/non-past distinction. Note that standard Norwegian encodes no person or number inflections even in finite verb forms.²² The paradigm for strong verbs and weak verbs is illustrated in Table 2, taken from Eide (2010).

	+FINITE		-FINITE	
+PAST	preterit		past participle	
	Strong verb	Weak verb	Strong verb	Weak verb
	<i>sang</i> ‘sang’	<i>likte</i> ‘liked’	<i>sunget</i> ‘sung’	<i>likt</i> ‘liked’
-PAST	present		infinitive	
	Strong verb	Weak verb	Strong verb	Weak verb
	<i>synger</i> ‘sing(s)’	<i>liker</i> ‘like(s)’	<i>syng</i> ‘sing’	<i>like</i> ‘like’

[Table 2]

²¹ The informant is a man in his sixties.

²² A distinction is maintained in Nynorsk, “at least in principle” (Askedal 1994: 238), between the 2.pers sg imperative (*køyr, gut* ‘drive, boy’) and the 2.p pl imperative (*køyre, gutar* ‘drive, boys’).

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| (b) Dette kunne være en løsning
This mayPRET beINF a solution
‘This might be a solution’ | HYPOTHETICAL ²³ |
| (c) Dette kunne vært en løsning
This mayPRET bePTCPL a solution
‘This might have been a solution’ | COUNTERFACTUAL |

As I will demonstrate, the Norwegian supine is capable of expressing a distal relation in time (past), a less controversial assumption (cf. Stowell 1996; Julien 2001), as well as a modal distal relation (hypothetical or counterfactual). It is in this particular use that the supine earns the title ‘subjunctive participle’ although it may also fulfil the syntactic function of an infinitive.

4. Participle-for-infinitive constructions

I will discuss three constructions in this section. The first is a construction where the modal is in the preterit form and the verb that follows is not the expected infinitive, but what looks like a past participle (cf. data in (1a), repeated here as (16a). This is a construction allowed even in the written standards of Norwegian. The second construction is more exotic: a present perfect construction embedding an epistemic modal with a supine form following the modal (cf. (1b), repeated as (16b). This construction is allowed at least in Sør-Trøndelag, Møre og Romsdal and Northern Norway. In the third construction, a supine form follows the infinitival marker *å* ‘to’ (cf. (2), repeated as (17)). The geographical extent of this construction is a bit uncertain, but at a minimum it flourishes in the same areas as the construction in (16b), and it may be even more widespread. In writing, the infinitival marker *å* ‘to’ is often replaced by the homophonous coordinating conjunction *og* ‘and’ (cf. 1.1. above, Eskeland 1954: 26). Prescriptive grammars tell us that the infinitival marker should only appear with the infinitive. Since writers encounter a discrepancy between their own intuition and the standard norm in these cases (Sandøy 1991: 259), the construction may be underreported.

- (16) (a) Jon skulle vært på kontoret
Jon should bePTCPLon officeDEF
‘Jon should have been in his office’
- (b) Hu har måtta vorre her
She has mustPTCPL bePTCPL here
‘She must have been here’
- (17) (a) Det hadde vært artig å sett deg igjen
It had been fun to seePTCPL you again
‘It would have been fun to see you again’

²³ In Icelandic, this is less clear-cut than in Mainland Scandinavian. Here a preterit modal +supine may encode what corresponds to the ‘hypothetical’ construction in (15b). To encode counterfactuality, *hafa* must be added (thanks to Gunnar Hrafn Hrafnbjargarson for data and judgments). Evidently, Icelandic does not have the supine-shaped ‘irrealis infinitive’ (cf. also Julien 2003: 136).

(i) Hann gæti orðið fyrir slysi He could become for accident ‘He could hurt himself.’	(ii) Hann gæti hafa orðið fyrir slysi He could have become for accident ‘He could have hurt himself.’
---	---

- (b) Har du arbeidd heile dagen utan å kokt kaffe?
Have you worked all day without to boilPTCPL coffee?
'Have you worked all day without making coffee?'

4.1 Preterit modal+ supine

Norwegian modals, like their Swedish and Faroese counterparts, productively take past participle complements, as in (17).²⁴ The perfect auxiliary *ha* can be added seemingly without changing the meaning of the expressions.

- (18) (a) Jon burde (ha) vært på kontoret.
Jon ought-toPRET (have) bePTCPL on officeDEF
'Jon ought to have been in his office.'
- (b) Marit kunne (ha) svømt.
Marit canPRET (have) swimPTCPL
'Marit could have swum.'
- (c) Pasienten måtte (ha) blitt behandlet straks.
patientDEF mustPRET (have) becomePTCPL treated immediately
'The patient had to have been treated immediately.'
- (d) Begge skulle (ha) reist i morgen.
both shallPRET (have) leavePTCPL in morning
'Both of them were supposed to have left tomorrow.'
- (e) Myndighetene ville (ha) revet huset.
authoritiesDEF willPRET (have) torn-downPTCPL houseDEF
'The authorities would have demolished the house.'

In these constructions, the auxiliary *ha* 'have' may seem to be optionally present between the modal and the perfect participle. This led several authors to dub the phenomenon '*ha*-omission'. Assuming *ha*-omission to be a phonological procedure, deleting an element that is recoverable (because the perfect participle demands to be governed by an overt or covert auxiliary), we would expect the sentences where *ha* is omitted to be synonymous with those where *ha* is retained. This is not the case. Instead, the construction without *ha* is subject to certain restrictions. Firstly, the modal must have a preterit form to allow a perfect participle complement; a present form does not license the participle and the auxiliary *ha* 'have' is obligatory.

- (19) (a) Jon bør *(ha) vært på kontoret.
Jon ought-toPRES (have) bePTCPL on officeDEF
'Jon ought to have been in his office.'
- (b) Marit kan *(ha) svømt.
Marit may (have) swimPTCPL
'Marit may have swum.'

²⁴ From Eide (2005: 374).

- (c) Pasienten må *(ha) blitt behandlet straks.
patientDEF mustPRES (have) becomePTCPL treated immediately
'The patient must have been treated immediately.'
- (d) Begge skal *(ha) reist i morgen.
both shall (have) leavePTCPL in morning
'Both of them were supposed to have left tomorrow.'
- (e) Myndighetene vil *(ha) revet huset.
authoritiesDEF want (have) torn-downPTCPL houseDEF
'The authorities will have demolished the house.'

Secondly, even if the modal has the right preterit form, it does not always licence a participle as its complement (cf. Julien 2000b). '*Ha*-omission' is only licit on a counterfactual reading of the modal; when the preterit marking signals past, not counterfactuality, the supine is illicit (observation due to Taraldsen 1984):

- (20) Han krevde at vi skulle *(ha) gjort det innen mandag.
he demanded that we shouldPRET (have) done it by Monday
'He demanded that we should have done it by Monday.'

Wiklund (1998) observes that *ha* can only be omitted if the combination of *ha* and the participle does not require 'a perfect state reading'. She supports her claims with the following Swedish sentences and their associated readings; Wiklund (1998: 15)

- (21) (a) Han skulle ha läst boken på måndag.
he should have readPTCPL bookDEF on Monday
I. 'He should have read the book on Monday.'
II. 'He should have read the book by Monday.'
- (b) Han skulle läst boken på måndag.
he should readPTCPL bookDEF on Monday
I. 'He should have read the book on Monday.'
II. '*He should have read the book by Monday.'

In Eide (2002, 2005) I explained this pattern with three assumptions. Firstly, *ha* provides the construction with an extra temporal point,²⁵ which may encode 'a state existing by Monday'. A construction lacking this temporal point (*ha*-omission) cannot bring about the perfect state reading. Secondly, present modals cannot take the participle as their complement because only preterit modals can have counterfactual readings in Norwegian (and Swedish). And thirdly, what looks like a participle in these instances is in fact not any past participle, but a subjunctive participle functioning as an irrealis infinitive. This irrealis infinitive is licensed only in counterfactual or hypothetical domains; cf. also Julien (2003).

On this view, what has been dubbed *ha*-omission is in fact no omission at all. It is a different strategy for fulfilling the selectional requirements of the modal, which

²⁵ In these works, I present a compositional theory of tense to account for the temporal construals available in modal constructions on epistemic and deontic readings (cf. also Table 2).

always requires an infinitival form of its verbal complement. Instead of selecting an infinitival auxiliary *ha* with the right matrix to mediate between the modal and the past participle, we select the irrealis infinitive directly. This infinitive looks just like the participle, but has distinct semantic requirement: it is licit only in counterfactual or subjunctive contexts.

4.2 Perfect modal + supine

The generalization that in Germanic languages a modal preceding a perfect auxiliary gets an epistemic reading, as in (22a), and a modal following a perfect auxiliary gets a root reading, as in (22b), long remained widespread and largely undisputed.²⁶

- | | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| (22) (a) | Jon må ha spist.
Jon must have eatPTCPL
'Jon must have eaten.' | Epistemic |
| (b) | Marit har måttet reise mye.
Marit has mustPTCPL travel much
'Marit has had to travel a lot.' | Root |

More recently, this generalization has been challenged by authors trying to determine its exact scope. A modal does not always get an epistemic reading in constructions like (22a). Under certain circumstances, it may receive a root reading (e.g. if you add a future-denoting adverbial clause to the expression: *før han drar* 'before he leaves').

Much less known, however, is the fact that the construction in (22b) may also give rise to an epistemic reading of the modal in numerous Germanic languages and dialects (cf. Eide 2005, 2011).²⁷ This construction is rarely found in written standards of Norwegian, but flourishes in most western and northern dialects; cf. the data from Eide (2005: 327).

- | | |
|----------|---|
| (23) (a) | Han har måtta arbeidd med det i heile natt.
he has mustPTCPL workPTCPL on it in all night
'He must have worked on it all night through.' |
| (b) | Han har skulla vorre en sjarmør i sine yngre daga.
he has shallPTCPL bePTCPL a charmer in his younger days
'He is supposed to have been a charmer in his youth' (=hear-say) |
| (c) | Hu har kunna vorre her og forre igjen.
she has canPTCPL bePTCPL here and leavePTCPL again
'She may have been here and left again.' |

²⁶ Cf. e.g. Barbiers (1995), Cinque (1999), Dyvik (1999), van Gelderen (2003), and many others.

²⁷ In an attempt to preserve the aforementioned generalization, one might argue that any modal allowing the perfect to take scope over it should be considered an alethic, not an epistemic, modal; cf. the discussion on modals and tense in Cinque (1999). This claim is weakened by the fact that in some languages a construction like (22b) is possible even for evidential modals (e.g. (23b)), which cannot very easily be construed as alethic under any circumstances. Cf. Vikner (1988) on Danish, Fagan (2001) on German, Eide (2005) on Norwegian, Boogart (2005) on Dutch.

The construction is not confined to ‘obscure’ Norwegian dialects. Vikner (1988: 7) thus provides Danish examples, in (24), originally from Davidsen-Nielsen (1988), illustrating epistemic and evidential readings of modals in the perfect, ‘which are admittedly not completely unacceptable’ (Vikner 1988: 6). Another Scandinavian dialect employing the same construction is the Finno-Swedish dialect Solv (cf. Eide 2005: 328) illustrated in (25).²⁸

- (24) (a) ?Der har måske nok kunnet være tale om en fejl.
there has maybe probably canPTCPL beINF talk about a mistake
‘It might have been a mistake.’
(b) ?Han har skullet bo i Århus.
he has shallPTCPL liveINF in Århus
‘He is supposed to have lived in Århus.’
- (25) (a) An a noo måtta/måsta arbet me e hejla natten.
he has probably mustPTCPL workPTCPL with it all nightDEF
‘He must have worked on it all night.’
(b) On a noo kona vari jeer å fori på nytt.
she has probably canPTCPL bePTCPL here and left again
‘She may have been here and left again.’

All three data sets show epistemic readings of non-finite modals, displaying a rather unusual combination of modal readings and morphology; cf. e.g. Plank (1984: 314) for an early statement of the generalization that epistemic modals cannot be non-finite in Germanic languages. There is a crucial difference, however, between the Danish examples in (24) and the Norwegian and Finno-Swedish ones: the Danish modals take well-behaved infinitives as complements, the Norwegian and Finno-Swedish modals take past participles. In some constructions where this supine occurs, it can be replaced with the infinitive (cf. next section). In this particular construction, however, replacing the supine with an infinitive yields ungrammatical results, at least for the Norwegian dialect of Fosen, the source of these data.²⁹

- (26) (a) *Han har måtta arbei med det i heile natt.
he has mustPTCPL workINF on it in all night
‘He must have worked on it all night through.’
(b) *Han har skulla verra en sjarmør i sine yngre daga.
he has shallPTCPL beINF a charmer in his younger days
‘He is supposed to have been a charmer in his youth (=hear–say)’
(c) *Hu har kunna verra her og ferra igjen.
she has canPTCPL beINF here and leaveINF again
‘She may have been here and left again.’

²⁸ These data were kindly provided by Professor Jan-Ola Östman, Helsinki.

²⁹ Twelve informants, native speakers of the local dialect, responded to my query to judge the two constructions, one with the supine and one with the infinitive. Only one of the twelve accepted both versions, all others judged the infinitive to be out (i.e. they replied ‘I would not say it’).

The obligatory occurrence of the supine or subjunctive participle in this construction makes sense if we assume that what looks like a supine is in fact an irrealis infinitive. Unlike Danish, the Norwegian (and Finno-Swedish) dialect has a ‘subjunctive participle’, i.e. an irrealis infinitival form. As an infinitive, it fulfils the selectional requirements of the modal. As an irrealis, it is licensed in a counterfactual domain, as in the hypothetical complement of an epistemic modal. And since the modal is in a (non-finite) past form, it morphologically licenses the counterfactual or hypothetical reading. Recall also from section 2.1 that in Old Norse the preterit subjunctive most frequently occurred in combination with modals and copulas in matrix clauses.

Although these constructions are non-standard and have attracted little attention, there are theories on why we find the supine form after modals in Scandinavian languages. Julien (2003) surveys a number of proposals, some more plausible than others.

- A. The supine is contracted from the form of the previous verb, it has no semantic implications.
- B. The auxiliary *ha* ‘have’ is deleted by a phonological rule.
- C. The constructions are simply mixed up.
- D. The auxiliary *ha* ‘have’ is present, but has been absorbed by the modal, so only *-a* is left.

Proposal A has been advocated by Wiklund (1998, 2005, 2007), but can be dismissed at least for the constructions we are investigating here. The form has the semantic implication of irrealis, and in data like (23) the supine cannot be replaced with the infinitive (cf. (26)). In these constructions, we cannot talk about an underlying infinitival form that happens to come out as supine. The explanation in B (suggested by Aasen, 1864 and Åfarli and Eide, 2003) might account for the data in (23), but it cannot explain the construction in the previous section (preterit modal+supine), where deleting *ha* takes away at least one meaning available for the construction with *ha* (the perfect state reading). Constructions with and without *ha* are thus not synonymous. Also, Vikner (1988: 8) shows that adding *have* ‘have’ after the modal in constructions like (24) leads to ungrammatical results, even when the following verb is a participle. Proposal C is in fact the account Vikner (1988) provides for the data in (24), referring to the phenomenon as ‘misplaced perfect’. As Julien (2003) points out, this is not a satisfactory explanation for a phenomenon as geographically and synchronically stable as this one. I wholeheartedly concur. Proposal D (Falk and Torp 1900: 211) may seem like a good place to start when we look only at dialects like the ones in (23) and (25). However, there are other dialects, including Julien’s own dialect from Solør (near the Swedish border), where the supine form of modals does not end with *-a*, but *-i*, as in *løtti* ‘mustPTCPL’. In such cases, the proposal for ‘reduced *ha*’ has less merit since *ha* is unlikely to have ended up as *-i*. Thus, for some modals in some dialects we still need a different explanation for the supine form after modals. The ‘subjunctive participle as irrealis infinitive’ analysis advocated here straightforwardly explains all the data mentioned so far and accounts for a bigger set of data than the ‘reduced *ha*’ analysis. Therefore, it should be preferred.

4.3 Infinitival marker + supine

If the subjunctive participle amounts to an irrealis infinitive in contemporary spoken Norwegian, one would expect it even after the infinitival marker *å* 'to'. Indeed, subjunctive participles following infinitival markers are quite felicitous in Norwegian, provided the construction has a counterfactual or subjunctive reading; cf. the *Bokmål*-data from Eide (2005: 374) and *Nynorsk*-data from Sandøy (1991).

- (27) (a) Det hadde vært artig å sett/se deg igjen.
it had been fun to seePTCPL/seeINF you again
'It would have been fun to have seen/to see to see you again.'
- (b) Jeg kunne ikke klart å gått/gå lenger.
I could not managePTCPL to walkPTCPL/walkINF further
'I could not have managed to walk further.'
- (c) Eg har ikkje vunne anna enn å sprunge/springe i heile dag .
I have not made other.thing than to runPTCPL/runINF in whole day
'I haven't had time for anything but running all day.'
- (d) Det hadde vore best å reist/reise no.
It had been best to leavePTCPL/leaveINF now
'It would have been best to leave now.'
- (e) Har de levd ei heil veke utan å kokt/koke kaffe?
Have you lived a whole week without to boilPTCPL/boilINF coffe?
'Have you lasted for a whole week without making coffee?'
- (f) Å sprunge/springe 60-meteren på 7,5 hadde ikkje vore nokon kunst da.
To run.PTCPL/run.INF 60-meter.DEF on 7.5 had not been any trick then
'To run 60 meters in 7.5 wouldn't have been much of a trick then.'

The data in (27) illustrate various non-finite counterfactual contexts: complements of adjectives (22a, d), negated domains (27b, c), complements of prepositions (27e), and subject clauses of counterfactuals (27f). Julien (2003: 146) notes that in all examples in (27) the subjunctive participle can be replaced by an ordinary infinitive without any significant change in meaning (cf. also Eskeland 1954: 26). As mentioned in section 1.1, there is such normative pressure to replace the subjunctive participle with an infinitive in writing that Sandøy (1991: 259) fears we are losing our language intuitions about these constructions. Aasen (1864: §324) urged the language user to employ the real infinitive, either present or perfect, instead of the supine. Eskeland (1954: 26) notes that the infinitival marker is often replaced with homophonous *og* 'and' in writing, which he finds acceptable. But, he adds, in every instance where these participles occur after infinitival markers, the infinitive is just as felicitous, and using the infinitive is therefore a lot easier (and a lot less peculiar).

Julien (2003) argues at length for Sandøy's (1991) analysis of these constructions as irrealis. Sandøy and Julien show that there can be quite a syntactic distance between the subjunctive participle and the syntactic element from which the supine form supposedly contracted. Julien argues for examining these constructions from a semantic perspective; the participles are licensed in particular semantic

domains, i.e. irrealis or counterfactual domains. That is not to say that they are in any way exempt from syntactic restrictions. Instead, the semantic licensing domains are defined on morphosyntactic features marking particular syntactic domains. We see this in data like (28),³⁰ from Julien (2003: 152), where three verbs follow the modal *ville* ‘would’: *vera* ‘be’, *ha* ‘have’, and *hjelpe* ‘help’. If the first two verbs have a supine form, the third may also have the supine form. However, if either of the first two verbs is replaced with an infinitive, all subsequent verbs must be infinitives.

- (28) (a) Det ville vori fint å hatt nokon til å hjelpt/hjelpe seg.
It would bePTCPL nice to havePTCPL someone to helpPTCPL/INF REFL
‘It would have been nice to have (had) someone to help you/me.’
- (b) Det ville vori fint å ha nokon til å *hjelpt/hjelpe seg.
It would bePTCPL nice to haveINF someone to helpPTCPL/INF REFL
‘It would have been nice to have someone to help you/me.’
- (c) Det ville vera fint å *hatt/ha nokon til å *hjelpt/hjelpe seg.
It would beINF nice to havePTCPL/INF someone to helpPTCPL/INF REFL
‘It would have been nice to have someone to help you/me.’

I referred to these data and the judgments at a seminar held at NTNU on November 9th, 2010. Not everyone in the audience (which consisted entirely of Norwegian speakers) agreed that an unbroken chain of supines is necessary for the verb that follows to take on the supine form. However, the majority shared Julien’s (2003) judgments, and these were speakers from many different parts of Norway (south, north, east, west). This suggests that the construction in (27) and (28) is quite widespread geographically and that some speakers do not require the overt syntactic licensing of the counterfactual domain to use the subjunctive participle.

4.4 ‘Non-finite’ auxiliary + supine

Eriksen (2010, forthcoming) presents data which he analyses as counterfactual constructions with a non-finite auxiliary. His data were compiled during fieldwork in Fosen (a peninsula north of Trondheim, Sør-Trøndelag) in September 2009.³¹ This is my native dialect.

- (28) (a) Tænk om æ ha vorte det!
Think if I haveINF³² becomePTCPL that
‘Imagine if I had become that!’
- (b) I så fall ha æ vorre tryllekunstner.
In that case haveINF I bePTCPL illusionist

³⁰ These data are from *Nynorsk*.

³¹ The fieldwork <http://norms.uit.no/index.php?page=fosen> was organized by NORMS (Nordic Center of Excellence in Microcomparative Syntax) directed from CASTL, Tromsø, as a part of the ScanDiaSyn Project, a project where linguists from all the Nordic countries joined forces to collect data on the dialect syntax of Scandinavian dialects. The ScanDiaSyn project is directed by Øystein Alexander Vangsnes, Tromsø University, cf. <http://uit.no/scandiasyn>.

³² Eriksen glosses these as “?”. I gloss them here as INF because they look like infinitives formally although they perform a finite function and behave like finite forms syntactically, cf. Table 3.

‘In that case I would have been an illusionist.’

The lack of overt finiteness morphology on the auxiliary in this dialect is not confined to these particular counterfactual constructions. It is seemingly due to the lack of a distinction between the present perfect and the preterit perfect, as observable in data like (29), also from Eriksen (2010). Note that both the present and the preterit of the auxiliary are identical to the infinitive.

- (29) (a) No ha æ kjøpt mæ ny bil.
Now haveINF I buyPTCPL me new car
‘Now I have bought myself a new car’
(b) [Da] såg æ at taket ha ramla ned.
[Then] seePRET I that roofDEF haveINF fallPTCPL down
‘Then I saw that the roof had fallen down.’

The lack of distinction is only confined to the auxiliary. The tense distinction between present and preterit for *ha* ‘have’ as a lexical verb is maintained although the preterit is still identical to the infinitive (Eriksen’s 2010 data).

- (30) Bil’n æ ha i fjol va ber einn den æ har i år.
CarDEF I haveINF in last.year was better than the.one I havePRES in this.year
‘The car I had last year was better than the one I have this year.’

As noted by Julien (2000a: 178, note 18) and (2001: 141), double perfects are ungrammatical in English and many other languages, including Norwegian, and more specifically the Fosen dialect, whether the finite auxiliary is present or preterit. That is, you cannot combine a participial auxiliary with a finite auxiliary, cf. (31).³³

- (31) (a) *He has/had had eaten.
(b) *Han ha hatt ete. (Fosen dialect)
He has/had hadPTCPL eatPTCPL.
‘He has/had had eaten.’

Since the auxiliary *ha* ‘have’ is never found in participial form, the forms of the auxiliary versus the full verb *ha* ‘have’ come out as in Table 3 for the dialect of Fosen.

	+FINITE		-FINITE	
+PAST	preterit		past participle	
	Full verb	Auxiliary	Full verb	Auxiliary
	<i>ha</i> ‘had’	<i>ha</i> ‘had’	<i>hatt</i> ‘had’	---
-PAST	present		infinitive	
	Full verb	Auxiliary	Full verb	Auxiliary

³³ Obviously this is different in other languages, e.g. many variants of German. In Austrian, for instance, it is quite felicitous to utter constructions like “Nachdem ich gegessen gehabt habe,..” Lit. ‘After I eaten had have’.

	<i>har</i> 'have/has'	<i>ha</i> 'have/has'	<i>ha</i> 'have'	<i>ha</i> 'have'
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[Table 3]

Table 3 depicts a paradigm reduction: the lexical verb *ha* has a common form for the infinitive and the preterit, whereas the auxiliary *ha* has a very reduced paradigm, with a single form for all available functions: infinitive, present and preterit. A comparable situation exists in several Norwegian dialects. Venås (1977: 185) remarks on the fact that in the dialect of Hallingdalen there are two forms of the verb *ha* 'have' in the present: 'They are easily distinguishable, since *ha* is the present form of the auxiliary, whereas *har* is the present form of the lexical verb'. Dørum (2000: 152) notes that the present and the preterit of the auxiliary are non-distinct in the Oppdal dialect. Eriksen (2010) asks whether the paradigm reduction in Table 3 is simply as paradigm homophony where the auxiliary has both present and preterit forms that just happen to sound alike. And he answers that this seems unlikely:

Why would there be tense homophony in a context where a main purpose of the auxiliary is to show tense, in order to distinguish between [...] the perfect and the pluperfect? The "homophony" effectively changes the TAM [Tense–Aspect–Mode] system of these dialects, reducing the perfect system to one general perfect tense. Eriksen (2010: 3)

Note that for these dialects the infinitive perfect is also homophonous with the present perfect and the preterit perfect. This leads Eriksen (2010) to assume that the auxiliaries are in fact non-finite, that non-finiteness may be an alternative way of marking counterfactuality, instead of the preterit (or more generally, past). He also suggests that this may be due to a certain influence from the geographically adjacent language Southern Sami, which also does not (obligatorily) distinguish between the present perfect and the preterit perfect; in fact, in certain constructions there is no need for a finiteness marker at all.

- (32) Manne gåårvedamme
I dress–oneselfPERFECT
'I have/had gotten dressed.'

The function of non-finiteness in counterfactual constructions, Eriksen argues, is to avoid the presupposition associated with finiteness. Finiteness presupposes some degree of truth about the event expressed, and non-finiteness allows the proposition to escape this presupposition. The past tense, where needed, may be encoded instead in the complement of the auxiliary.

My approach is a lot more syntactic–centric, so I will not assume that the auxiliaries in these constructions are non-finite. The same properties that showed us

that the participle-for-preterit in section 2.2 must be finite may shed light on these constructions. Firstly, we see that the auxiliary moves past negation, unlike non-finite auxiliaries. Secondly, we know that the V1 position of conditionals and the V2 position of declaratives allow for [+finite] verbs only.

- (33) (a) Ha itj æ likt'n, så ha itj æ kjøft'n.
HaveINF not I likePTCPL it, then haveINF not I buyPTCPL it
'If I hadn't liked it, I wouldn't have bought it.'
(b) Da ha du itj sett my.³⁴
Then haINF you not seen much
'Then you haven't/hadn't/wouldn't have seen much.'

Like Eriksen, I assume that the reduction of the auxiliary paradigm puts more responsibility for encoding the distal relation on the complement of the auxiliary, i.e. the participle. We know that the pluperfect and the preterit may license (as their complement) counterfactual domains where irrealis infinitives are felicitous (cf. data in (27), section 4.3.). Irrealis infinitives are easy to spot since they look like past participles; hence, they amount to participle forms where one would expect an infinitive. There is no such form-function discrepancy for the participles appearing as the complement of perfect auxiliaries, as in (33). However, these participles are not less likely to encode an irrealis semantics simply because they happen to appear in a form complying with the selectional requirements of the auxiliary. There may be reason to assume that these auxiliaries encode the subjunctive, in which case the participle occurs in a subjunctive domain. Certain Norwegian dialects have particular particular forms of the auxiliary for the (preterit) subjunctive, e.g. the Eidfjord dialect (Bjørkum 2002: 57), and the participle also has a subjunctive form.

- (34) Hedde du vå nùke te kar,...³⁵
HaveSUBJ you beSUBJ something of man
'If you had been a real man,...'

Other dialects, such as Hallingdalen, as pointed out by Venås (1977: 189) have a reduced form especially for the subjunctive use, or as he formulates it, the reduced form *ha* is used for situations that are non-real and thought up. Note that subjunctive *ha* is distinct from the preterit of the auxiliary in this dialect, but non-distinct of the present (and infinitival) form of the auxiliary.

- (35) (a) Ha kji e hatt bæræ vet ænn hona,...
HaveINF not I havePTCPL better sense than him

³⁴ It should be noted that in the Fosen dialect the negation word *itj* 'not' behaves like a clitic, and it may appear cliticized to the verb, as in (33a), or to the subject, as in (33b).

³⁵ This form is obviously cognate with the Övdalian counterfactual auxiliary *edd* that Eriksen (2010) discusses. Övdalian is a Swedish dialect so different from the adjacent dialects and the standard language that it might be considered a separate Mainland Scandinavian language. Eriksen gives data like the following to illustrate the particular Övdalian counterfactual auxiliary:

- (i) Ig ar kringt fundirað ur eð må edd uorteð um ig edd uorteð riktut klien
I have often wondered how it must EDD becomePTCPL If I EDD becomePTCPL really ill
'I have often wondered how it might have been if I got really ill.'

- ‘If I hadn’t had more sense than him,..’
(b) Ho haddæ jeve grise før o kåmm inn att
She havePRET givePTCPL pigsDEF before she came in again
‘She had fed the pigs before she came back in.’
(c) No ha me siti innæ i hælæ dag mæ
Now haveINF we sitPTCPL inside in whole day we
‘We have been indoors all day, we have.’

If the reduced form can be used for the preterit subjunctive of an auxiliary in a dialect where there is a distinct indicative preterit form, there is no reason to assume that the Fosen dialect could not use the reduced form of the auxiliary as a subjunctive auxiliary, even if this form is identical to the preterit (and the present, and the infinitive). Thus, the participle in counterfactuals like those in (33) is in fact a complement of a subjunctive auxiliary *ha* and should be considered a subjunctive participle even though it does not amount to a separate verb form.

Finally, many speakers of the Fosen dialect use their dialect in writing when participating in discussions on the web site of the local newspaper *Fosna-Folket*. People usually comply with the requirement of the written standards that *ha* is not a legitimate finite form and use it mostly in non-finite functions. However, they do not necessarily observe the present-preterit-subjunctive distinction in the perfect. Thus, we find a lot of examples where the written standard form *har* ‘havePRES’ (which is not the local present of the auxiliary, only of the lexical verb) covers counterfactual functions, as in (36). This is definitely a non-standard way of expressing counterfactuality, with a construction that looks exactly like the present perfect.

- (36) (a) Har Ressa Kommune fått ut fengern [...] fer læng sia,
HavePRES Rissa municipality gotPTCPL out fingerDEF for long since
‘If the municipality of Rissa had stopped procrastinating,...’
(b) har mang tå dæm mellionan vorre spart.³⁶
HavePRES many of them millions bePTCPL saved
‘many of those millions would have been saved.’
(c) Har nånn fortalt mæ om dæm
havePRES someone tellPTCPL me about them
‘If someone had told me about them (i.e. the problems)’
(d) så har æ ikke gått over te fiber.³⁷
then havePRES I not gone over to fiber
‘I would never have changed to fiber (i.e. fiber optic cables).’

Whether the auxiliary here is intended as a subjunctive or indicative (preterit), the context tells us that these constructions are clearly counterfactual. Thus, the participles occurring as complements of auxiliaries are in counterfactual domains. They should therefore be considered subjunctive participles, in a participial function, but with subjunctive semantics. They have no unexpected form, unlike the participle-for-preterit and the participle-for-infinitive. It is consistency that requires us to

³⁶ *Fosna-Folket*, open debate, March 28th, 2010.

³⁷ *Fosna-Folket*, open debate, November 3rd, 2010.

describe these participles as subjunctive, since they occur in counterfactual domains licensed by preterit or subjunctive auxiliaries.

5. Conclusion

The past participle in spoken contemporary Norwegian performs a range of functions. In addition to being a temporal participle, it functions as a passive participle and an adjective. In this paper, I focused on the subjunctive uses, which I dubbed ‘subjunctive participle’. Strictly speaking, the form deserves this label only in one of its uses, when it functions as a participle in subjunctive or counterfactual constructions. In the participle-for-preterit constructions, the participle functions as a finite verb, and in the participle-for-infinitive constructions it behaves like an infinitive.

I argued that the participle-for-preterit construction we find in some dialects (typically in the middle part of Norway) is in fact the Old Norse preterit subjunctive although its use might be different from that in Old Norse. For these dialects, the preterit subjunctive and the indicative supine merged, and the subjunctive, used as a past participle as well as a finite subjunctive, was protected from extinction because of this formal coincidence.

The participle-for-infinitive constructions come in many varieties, and only some of them are admitted into the written standard. The preterit modal+supine is very frequent even in writing, whereas the infinitival marker followed by a participle is often replaced with the coordinator *og* ‘and’. Other participle-for-infinitive constructions are confined to dialects.

Finally, consistency compels us to analyze participles occurring in counterfactual domains as irrealis since they are licensed in irrealis domains, like the participle-for-infinitive, and have the same form. One might argue that since there is no form-to-function discrepancy in this case, there is no need to assume irrealis semantics for these participles. However, there is no reason to assume non-irrealis semantics for them just because they happen to occur in a regular form.

FORM	FINITE	IRREALIS	FUNCTION	EXAMPLE
Fått	yes	yes	Finite subjunctive verb	Da fått du en helt anna opplevs Then got you a whole other experience
	no	yes	Subjunctive infinitive	Hadde vært artig å fått en sånn Had been fun to got one like-that
get PTCPL	no	yes	Subjunctive participle	Hadde vel sikkert fått en sånn da Had well surely got one like-that then
	no	no	Temporal participle	Jeg har/hadde nettopp fått en sånn I have/had just got one like-that

[Table 4]

Summing up Table 4, what looks like a past participle or supine in spoken contemporary Norwegian may be finite or not, *irrealis* or not, and perform the function of an infinitive or a finite verb in addition to subjunctive and temporal participial functions (I am ignoring the passive participle and the adjectival

participles here). Thus, Spurkland's (2002: 60) claim that the subjunctive ceased to exist as a grammatical category for Norwegian in the 16th century is not entirely accurate (cf. also Moe, 2003: 11). Instead, the Old Norse subjunctive leads a secret life, disguised as a past participle, in Norwegian dialects and spoken language, with frequent appearances in writing.

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