The perfect participle and the supine in two chronolects of Danish

Eva Skafte Jensen, The Danish Language Council

Abstract: Modern Standard Danish distinguishes between a perfect participle and a supine. The perfect participle is an adnominal non-finite form of the verb, ascribing properties to a referent (as do the prototypical adjectives) and morpho-syntactically agreeing with this referent. The supine is an indeclinable non-finite form of a verb, ending in *-t*, used as a component in periphrastic verb forms. Outside the attributive position, the perfect participle is used in complement constructions with the copula verbs *være* 'be' and *blive* 'be'/'become'; the supine is used in perfective constructions and periphrastic passives with the auxiliaries *have* 'have', *få* 'get', *være* 'be' and *blive* 'be'/'become'. In Modern Standard Danish, the perfect participle has restricted use (it is the marked member of the paradigm *perfect participle* vs. *supine*); the supine has a wider domain of usage (it is the unmarked member of the paradigm). In the nineteenth century, this was different. Back then, the perfect participle was the unmarked form with a wide usage domain, whereas the supine had a more restricted use. This paper presents a study of these verb forms in two corpora representing different chronolects of Danish, one corpus consisting of texts from the nineteenth century, one of texts from Modern Standard Danish.

1. Introduction

Consider the examples in (1) and (2) from Modern Standard Danish.

(1)   *de   er   løbet   væk*
       they   are   run   away
       'they have run away'

(2)   *sømmene   er   brugt*
       the.nails   are   used
       'the nails are used'

In these, we find the non-finite forms *løbet* (cf. infinitive *løbe* 'run') and *brugt* (cf. infinitive *bruge* 'use') as part of predications with a finite form of the verb *være* 'be'. In Danish, complements agree with a referent, and, in both examples, we see subject referents in the plural; yet, the word forms *løbet* and *brugt* are not in the plural, even though they look remarkably like perfect participles. This is because they are, in fact, not perfect participles.[1] Instead, they are so-called supines of the verbs in question, i.e. a non-declined verbal form (the morpho-syntax of supines is shown in section 2).

A perfect participle can be seen in an example like (3).

(3)   *sømmene   er   brugt-e*
       the.nails   are   used-PL
       'the nails are used'

In (3), the form *brugte* agrees with the subject referent (both words are in the plural), and therefore the example in (3) must be analysed as a complement construction – the nails were of the used kind, not the unused or new kind. Both (2) and (3) are grammatical in Modern Standard Danish, but they represent two different constructions, and the difference between them is manifested through the selection of the two forms *brugt* and *brugte*. It is not possible to make a construction with a declined form corresponding to (1). Example (4) is ungrammatical in Modern Standard Danish.

---

[1] The term *perfect participle* is used in many works on Scandinavian grammar, e.g. Diderichsen 1944, 1946; Telemann et al. 1999; Hansen & Heltoft 2011; Faarlund et al. 1997.

Research article

(4)   **de   er   løbn-e   vœk*
        they   are   run-PL   Away

However, in the nineteenth century, examples with declined forms (*løbn-e* 'run-PL' and *brugt-e* 'used-PL') agreeing with a subject referent in the plural were easily found, e.g. (5)-(6).[2]

(5)   *alle ..   var   løbn-e   bort*   (Bergsøe 1869)
        all ..   were   run-PL   away
        'everyone had run away'

(6)   *en ..   stor   Bygning ..   hvoraf ..   Stenene   var-e*[3]   (Hauch 1839)
        a   big   building   where   the.stones   were-PL
        brugt-e   til   det   ny   Slots   Opførelse
        used-PL   to   the   new   castle's   erection
        'a large building, where the stones were used to build the new castle'

As already shown by (4), an example like (5) would not be acceptable in Modern Standard Danish, but neither would (6). Example (6) is a periphrastic passive, not a complement construction – the subject referent in (6) is not of the used kind as opposed to some other kind. Examples like (1)-(6) show that, with respect to the use of non-finite forms, Danish grammar is not the same in the nineteenth century as it is today.

This paper presents a study of the perfect participle and the supine in the two chronolects of nineteenth-century Danish and Modern Standard Danish. In Modern Standard Danish, the participle is restricted to constructions with the adjectival function of ascribing properties to a referent, i.e. in complement constructions; in all other constructions, the supine is used. In the nineteenth century, the participle had a wider usage domain than now. It could also be used in constructions where the adjectival function of ascribing properties to a referent was not an issue, even in perfective constructions like (5).

The analyses concerning the nineteenth century are based on a corpus of texts compiled from a selection of literature from that time, publicly accessible through the site belonging to the Archive of Danish Literature (ADL), and private letters made accessible through the site of the Royal Danish Library (DB). The corpus contains approximately 2.75 million running words. In addition, nineteenth-century grammars and style guides to Danish were consulted.

Sections 2 and 3 give a description of perfect participles and supines in Modern Standard Danish. Section 4 is concerned with the perfect participle and the supine in earlier stages of Danish. A summary of the differences between Modern Standard Danish and Danish of earlier times, with special regards to the nineteenth century, is given in section 5. In section 6, the situation in Danish is compared with other languages and it is concluded that the properties of the perfect participle are not identical across languages.

2. The perfect participle and the supine in Modern Standard Danish
In the Scandinavian grammar tradition, it is common to distinguish between the perfect participle and

---

[2] All examples representing nineteenth-century Danish are authentic; the original orthography is maintained.

[3] The form *vare* is preterite plural of the verb *være* 'be'. The plural forms of finite verbs were receding at least since the seventeenth century, and finally abandoned during the nineteenth century. Since then, Danish does not distinguish in number in the finite verbs. A neutralized form based on an old singular now covers the whole functional domain. In this paper, in the glosses, only the plural forms are glossed as such. The neutral form is not glossed as the singular, because this form does not exclusively mean 'singular'.

a so-called supine.[4] Morpho-syntactically and semantically, the perfect participle and the supine differ in a number of ways. The perfect participle is a non-finite form of a verb with nominal inflection (which is in line with the traditional categorization of participles as word forms that "participate" in both verbal and nominal domains, e.g. Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 673); it has adjectival functions and the supine verbal functions (Nielsen 2016: 417; Schack 2018). The adjectival function of the perfect participle is found in the attributive position as well as the complement function, but in this paper, the attributive one is of no concern.

In general, the morphological features relevant to prototypical adjectives are also relevant to perfect participles, namely gender, number, comparison and definiteness. In the complement function, prototypical adjectives are declined for number, comparison and gender, perfect participles just for number and comparison. The feature of comparison has no bearing on the issues in this paper, and, thus, we need only to concern ourselves with the feature of number, cf. Table 1.

Table 1: The number declension of Danish perfect participles in complement function

singular	-(*e*)*t*-Ø/-*t*-Ø
plural	-(*d*)-*e*/-(*t*)-*e*

The allomorphy (forms with and without -*e*- before the -*t*) in the singular – e.g. *bemand-e-t* 'staffed' vs. *brug-t* 'used' – depends on verb class, and so does the allomorphy (forms with -*d*- or -*t*-, respectively, before the -*e*) in the plural, e.g. *bemande-d-e* 'staffed' vs. *brug-t-e* 'used' (Nielsen 2016: 23).

In comparison, the supine is a non-declinable form which always ends in -(*e*)*t*,[5] e.g. *bemand-e-t* 'staffed' vs. *brug-t* 'used'. A moot point is whether the -*t* in supines is a derivational suffix, an inflectional desinence or something not fitting into these two boxes. Nielsen (2012, 2014, 2016) consistently calls it "the -*t* element". Please note that the supine ending is homographic and homophonic to the perfect participle in the singular, shown in Table 1. In this paper, the important point is whether a form ends in a -*t* (in which case it could be a participle or a supine) or in an -*e* (in which case it could be only a participle).

A perfect participle ascribes a property to a referent; it functions as a nominal modification (Nielsen 2016: 417; Schack 2018). In this capacity, a perfect participle agrees with this referent in number, cf. (7)-(8).

---

[4] In the Danish tradition, the term goes back for centuries. Høysgaard (1747: 350) uses it for the verb forms used in the periphrastic tense "Perfectum" (in combination with the auxiliary *være* 'be' or *have* 'have'). The term became more commonly used from late in the nineteenth century (Wiwel 1901: 183, 184, with reference to Lefolii 1871; Diderichsen 1944, 1946: 68-70; Skautrup 1947: 200, 356; Becker-Christensen 2001: 138; Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 205; Nielsen 2012, 2014, 2016: 387-431; Schack 2018). In Baden (1785: 137), the term supine is used for both the declined and the non-declinable form, cf. Diderichsen 1944: 265. It should be noted that some descriptions of Danish grammar do not use the term, e.g. Mikkelsen 1911; Aa.Hansen 1967; Lundskær-Nielsen & Holmes 2010. The Scandinavian use of the term supine should not be confused with the term used for a certain non-finite form in Latin, cf. Johnny Christensen in lex.dk, lemma *supinum*.

[5] Outside the standard, there is a supine ending in -(*e*)*n* (e.g. *det er bleven koldt* 'it has turned cold (lit.: it.N is become.SUP cold)'; *de har funden hjem* 'they have come home (lit.: 'they have found.SUP home')). In modern time, this supine is associated with the dialects of Funen and Jutland (e.g. Jensen & Maegaard 2012), but once, it was not restricted to these dialects, and it was used by people of all social classes, cf. Diderichsen 1944; Jensen & Schack 2022. Historically, the -(*e*)*n*-supine is homographic and homophonic to the common gender of perfect participles of the strong conjugations in the singular.

(7)   *stationen   er   bemandet-Ø*
        the.station   is   staffed-SG
        'the station is attended'

(8)   *toiletterne   er   bemanded-e*
        the.toilets   are   staffed-PL
        'the toilets are attended'

In (7), we are informed that the station is of the attended kind (not the unattended) and the same goes for the toilets in (8).

In comparison, the supine is simply not part of the nominal paradigms. Instead, it is a component in a number of verbal constructions, most notably perfectives and periphrastic passives (see Nielsen 2014 for an overview). In Danish, perfectives and periphrastic passives have several things in common. Both are constructed by combining an auxiliary with a main verb (the valence verb) in the supine. In perfectives, the most common auxiliaries are *have* 'have', *være* 'be' and *få* 'get', cf. (9)-(11).

(9)   *han   har   arbejdet   længe   på   sagen*
        he   has   worked.SUP   long   on   the.case
        'he has been working on the case for a long time'

(10)   *hun   er   gået*
        she   is   gone.SUP
        'she left'

(11)   *de   får   underskrevet   dokumenterne*
        they   get   signed.SUP   the.documents
        'they get the documents signed'

In periphrastic passives, the most common auxiliaries are *være* 'be', *blive* 'be'/'become' and *få* 'get', cf. (12)-(14).

(12)   *omstændighederne   er   omtalt   ovenfor*
        the.circumstances   are   mentioned.SUP   above
        'the circumstances are mentioned above'

(13)   *vinduerne   bliver   malet*
        the.windows   are/become   painted.SUP
        'the windows are being/become painted'

(14)   *hun   fik   tildelt   et   stipendium*
        she   got   awarded.SUP   a   scholarship
        'she was awarded a scholarship'

Semantically, perfectives always involve the feature of retrospectivity. As illustrated by examples (12)-(14), periphrastic passives also often involve this feature, but not always, as shown by (15), cf. also Becker-Christensen 2001; Nielsen 2012: 185; Laanemets 2017; Schack 2018.

(15) *Erling   bliver   beundret   af   sine   kolleger*
     Erling   is   admired.SUP   by   his   colleagues
     'Erling is admired by his colleagues'

An important difference between the perfectives and the periphrastic passives concerns the argument structure. In perfectives like (9)-(11), the expression subject corresponds to Argument 1 (i.e. the same as the content subject); in the periphrastic passives such as (12)-(15), the expression subject corresponds to Argument 2 or Argument 3 (i.e. various kinds of content objects), cf. Nielsen 2014, 2016: 409-416.

As stated, the supine is a non-declinable form. It does not have an adnominal function and it cannot agree with a referent. Empirically, it complicates matters that the supine is homographic and homophonic to a perfect participle in the singular, e.g. *stjålet* 'stolen' and *saltet* 'salted', cf. Table 1. Another complication is that the auxiliaries *være* 'be' and *blive* 'be'/'become' of the periphrastic passive coincide with the copula verbs in complement constructions. Consequently, in some instances, the structure is open to two interpretations, cf. (16)-(17).

(16) *bilen   er   stjålet/stjålet-Ø*
     the.car   is   stolen.SUP/stolen-SG
     'the car is stolen'

(17) *kødet   bliver   saltet/saltet-Ø*
     the.meat   becomes/is   salted.SUP/salted-SG
     'the meat becomes/will be salted'

In (16) and (17), without context, it cannot be determined whether *stjålet* 'stolen' and *saltet* 'salted' are participles in a complement structure, ascribing properties to the respective subject referents, or if the words are supine forms and part of periphrastic passives.

In other constructions, there can be no doubt as to which form is in use, e.g. in constructions where agreement is an analytical impossibility. In perfectives with the auxiliary *have* 'have', the form of the verb is invariably the supine, cf. (18).

(18) *de   har   taget   en   taxi*
     they   have   taken.SUP   a   taxi
     'they took a cab'

The same applies to examples like (19), where the subject is in the plural, and the form of the verb is not; thus *malet* 'painted' must be a supine.

(19) *bænkene   er   malet*
     the.benches   are   painted.SUP
     'the benches are painted'

Because the supine always occurs in the non-declinable form (ending in *-t*), a form ending in *-e* can only be a perfect participle, cf. *malede* 'painted' in (20).

(20) *bænkene   er   maled-e*
     the.benches   are   painted-PL
     'the benches are painted'

A summary of this section and the points to carry on to section 3 are:
- The *-e*-form means plural; it is only used in cases of the verb form in question being a perfect participle, i.e. fulfilling an adnominal function.
- A *-t*-form is a perfect participle in the singular, or it is a supine.
- A form combined with the auxiliaries *have* 'have' or *få* 'get' never has the option of agreeing with a nominal referent, accordingly, it is always a supine.

3. When to choose the perfect participle or the supine

The distributional rules of how and when to use the supine and the participles, respectively, have been the subject of many studies (e.g. Wiwel 1901: 166-189; Mikkelsen 1911: 209-210, 415-420, 423-425; Diderichsen 1944, 1946: 68-70, 130-136; Karker 1972; E.Hansen 1988: 58-61; Becker-Christensen 2001; Schack 2018). Examples with two possible analyses, one with perfective meaning and one with complement meaning, i.e. constructions with *være* 'be' and *blive* 'be'/'become' (cf. section 2), prove to be particularly difficult. The distributional rules rely on an intricate interaction between construction type (cf. section 2) and the meaning potential of a verb stem (i.e. of lexicon).

In an extensive study, Schack (2018) maps out the rules concerning constructions with the verb *være* 'be' (and to some extent *blive* 'be'/'become'). In his study, he distinguishes between two sets of verb stems in Modern Standard Danish and four different situation types. The two sets differ in that the verbs in one set are always non-declinable in non-attributive position, while the verbs in the other set can be either declined or non-declinable in non-attributive position. Thus, the verbs in the first set only have a supine form, while the verbs in the other set have both a supine and a participle form. These two sets are labelled A and B, cf. Table 2 for a small selection.

Table 2: Two sets of verb stems (in lemma forms)

A: verb stems without declension	B: verb stems with or without declension (depending on construction type)
aflyse 'cancel'	*bejdse* 'stain'
anholde 'arrest'	*bemande* 'staff'
bekendtgøre 'announce'	*beundre* 'admire'
bortkomme 'vanish'	*bruge* 'use'
drukne 'drown'	*forvirre* 'confuse'
dræbe 'kill'	*frygte* 'fear'
drøfte 'discuss'	*koge* 'boil'
dømme 'judge'	*male* 'paint'
forsvinde 'disappear'	*marinere* 'marinate'
hente 'collect, fetch'	*nedslide* 'wear down'
løslade 'release'	*overraske* 'surprise'
modtage 'receive'	*skramme* 'scratch'
nå 'reach'	*skuffe* 'disappoint'
omkomme 'die'	*slynge* 'sling'
opfylde 'fulfil'	*trykke* 'push'
ophøre 'end'	*vansire* 'disfigure'

The choice of declined and non-declined form depends on how the verb stems, shown in Table 2, interact with Vendler's (1957) four situation types:

I.   achievements (situations of *immediate change of state*)
II.   activities (situations of *process*)

III.   states (situations of *state*)
IV.   accomplishments (situations of *progressive change*)

Verbs verbalizing achievements or activities only allow the reading as components in periphrastic verb forms (they are undeclined), e.g. (21) and (22). Verbs verbalizing states or accomplishments have adjectival potential and allow a reading as a component in complement structures (they can be declined) as well as the reading as components in periphrastic verb forms, e.g. (23) and (24).

(21) *naboerne*   *er*   *flyttet/*flytted-e*   (achievement)
      the.neighbours   are   moved.SUP/*moved-PL
      'the neighbours have moved'

(22) *min-e*   *skatteforhold*   *er*   *undersøgt/*undersøgt-e*   (activity)
      my-PL   tax.circumstances   are   inspected.SUP/*inspected-PL
      'my taxes have been inspected'

(23) *husene*   *er*   *beboet/beboed-e*   (state)
      the.houses   are   inhabited.SUP/inhabited-PL
      'the houses are inhabited'

(24) *gulvene*   *er*   *bejdset/bejdsed-e*   (accomplishment)
      the.floors   er   stained.SUP/stained-PL
      'the floors are stained'

In (23) and (24), the situation type allows for the adjectival interpretation of the verb stem as one of ascribing a property to the subject referent. Choosing the declined form evokes the complement structure, i.e. the adjectival function of classifying the houses (the subject referent) in (23) as inhabited, as opposed to uninhabited; similarly, the floors in (24) are classified as the stained kind as opposed to, for instance, the painted or the varnished kind.

4. The expansion of the supine in Danish
The system described by Schack applies to Modern Standard Danish. However, not too long ago, the system was slightly different. The declined forms were much more common, and they occurred easily in constructions which, to a native speaker of Modern Standard Danish, simply sound wrong. In (25)-(32), a small selection of authentic and typical examples from the nineteenth century is shown, cf. also (5)-(6).

(25) *Hvorledes .. er   disse   Breve   komn-e   i   deres   Hænder?* (Blicher 1828)
      How   are   these   letters come-PL   in   their   hands
      'How did they get these letters?'

(26) *Mange   grublende Dage   er-e   gaaed-e   forud*   (Schack 1857)
      Many   pondering days   are-PL gone-PL   before
      'Many pondering days were spent in beforehand'

(27) *de ..   fik   dem   satt-e   i   Værk*   (Bergsøe 1869)
      they   got   them   set-PL   in   work
      'they got them put into action'

(28) *Skovene*   *var-e*   *lige* *udsprungn-e*   (Schandorph 1878)
    The.forests   were-PL   just   out.sprung-PL
    'The leaves in the woods had just unfurled'

(29) *de*   *Bekjendtest-e*   *Aristokrater* *blev-e*   *indbudn-e*   (Heiberg 1800)
    the   bestknown-PL   aristocrats   were-PL   invited-PL
    'the best-known aristocrats were invited'

(30) *hun ..* *havde* *faaet* *sin-e* *Klæde-r* *revn-e* *itu*   (Gyllembourg 1833)
    she   had   got   her-PL   clothes-PL torn-PL asunder
    'she had had her clothes ripped'

(31) *Vi*   *blev-e*   *paa*   *det*   *venskabeligste* *modtagn-e*   (Wulff 1837)
    We   were-PL   on   the   most.friendly   received-PL
    'We were received in the most friendly manner'

(32) *hans* *Klæde-r ..* *var-e*   *blevn-e*   *brændt-e*   (Bergsøe 1877)
    his   clothes-PL   were-PL   were-PL   burnt-PL
    'his clothes were burnt'

Examples (25)-(28) show cases of perfectives; (29)-(32) show examples of periphrastic passives. They all have something in common – they verbalize situations of achievements (: type I, situations of *immediate change*), i.e. a situation type that in Modern Standard Danish rejects the use of declined forms (cf. section 3).

Early in the nineteenth century, the declined form was still the neutral choice in all periphrastic verb forms, if the auxiliary was *være* 'be', *blive* 'be'/'become' or *få* 'get', not only in constructions with property ascribing. It was, in fact, the prescribed norm at the time to maintain the declension of all 'participles' in periphrastic verb forms with these auxiliaries (cf. Jacobsen 2019: 99).[6]

However, all this was changing. During the nineteenth century, the supine became more widely used,[7] and the issue was debated in grammars and elsewhere. In 1834, the celebrated intellectual and author Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791-1860) explicitly called the declined forms in sentences like the one cited in (33) a "language error".[8]

(33) vi *er-e* *gaaed-e*
    we are-PL gone-PL

Heiberg was not the only influential person to question the norm. Half a century later, not only did grammarians write detailed accounts of when and how to use the declined and non-declinable forms, they included examples of what *not* to do – something that may be taken as a symptom of the issue not being straightforward (e.g. Matzen 1893: 271-274). A more direct opposition came from a group of teachers of Danish who argued that the curriculum in the schools ought to reflect contemporary

---

[6] *Få* 'get' as an auxiliary in passives was rarely mentioned in the debate.
[7] The supine is attested in the sixteenth century both in perfectives and in periphrastic passives (Diderichsen 1944: 276). It may very well be older. In some grammars of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, it was simply stated that 'participles' (as they were sometimes called, regardless of the constructions they were part of) were declined like adjectives, e.g. Baden 1785: 137.
[8] In "Kjøbenhavns Flyvende Post" vol. 12, 1834, a journal edited by Heiberg himself. He also insisted on non-plural forms in examples like *Vi ere draget* (not *dragne* in the plural) *til Syden* 'we are gone (lit.: drawn) to the south' and *Vi ere reist* (not *reiste* in the plural) *til Frankrig* 'we are traveled to France'.

language, not obsolete structures of earlier times. The most important protagonist in these endeavours was Axel Sörensen, who tirelessly discussed this and other grammatical matters with the officials of the Ministry of Education. In the late nineteenth century, he and people of like mind finally convinced the Ministry that it should no longer be mandatory to use the plural forms in the *finite* verbs (cf. also footnote 3). But, in the promulgation to this effect (ratified in 1900), the officials had entered a stipulation regarding agreement in participles of such conservative orientation that Axel Sörensen and his followers immediately protested against it.[9] Among other actions of protest, Sörensen published a small monograph (1902) documenting the widespread use of the supine among authors of "high repute" (an example is given in (34)), and gave an outline of the distributional rules based on verbal and adjectival use.

(34) *Gangene*   *blev*   *stukket*   *af*   (Wied 1899)
      The.gardenpaths were   cut.SUP   off
      'The edges of the garden paths were straightened'

The stipulation from the Ministry was revoked 1902, and since then, it has been the accepted and neutral behaviour to use the declined forms in "adjectival functions" and the non-declinable forms in "verbal functions".[10]

5. Summary

These past 200 years, the division of labour between the perfect participle (in non-attributive position) and the supine has changed. The perfect participle was once the unmarked (extensive) form, i.e. a form that could be used in all constructions with the verbs *være* 'be', *blive* 'be'/'become' and *få* 'get', i.e. in perfectives, periphrastic passives, and complement constructions. Back then, the participle was not restricted to serve the adjectival function of ascribing properties to a referent, cf. the examples in (25)-(32), where they are simply parts of periphrastic verb forms. In comparison, the supine appears to have been used exclusively in constructions with a feature of retrospectivity, i.e. perfectives and some passives (cf. the examples in section 4, including footnotes 7-9); thus, it was the marked (intensive) form.[11] This is illustrated by the brackets in (35).

(35)   [perfect participle [supine   ]]
       [unmarked   [marked   ]]

The brackets in (35) show the relationship between the two forms in the nineteenth century. The supine had a restricted usage domain in comparison to the perfect participle; in its turn, the usage domain of the perfect participle was wider than the one for the supine as it could be used in more constructions than the supine, including the contexts where the supine could be used (cf. Hjelmslev's notion of participation, see Hjelmslev 1939; Jensen 2012).

The situation is different in Modern Standard Danish. Here, the use of a perfect participle always serves the adjectival function of ascribing properties to a referent, cf. section 2. This means that the use of a perfect participle in non-attributive contexts inevitably results in a complement construction. The supine is used in all other constructions. In Modern Standard Danish, the supine is the unmarked form, and the participle is the marked form. This is illustrated by the brackets in (36).

---

[9] Examples like *fuglene er fløjn-e* 'the.birds are flown-PL' and *tyvene er bleven fangn-e* 'the.thieves are become caught-PL' with explicit plural forms were included in the promulgation.
[10] See Jacobsen 2010: 516-521 for more details.
[11] The terms marked and unmarked are used in the traditional manner employed by Jakobson and Hjelmslev, cf. Jensen 2012.

(36)   [supine   [perfect participle   ]]
        [unmarked   [marked   ]]

This shows that the relationship between two forms is not necessarily identical in two different languages, *in casu* the two different languages of nineteenth-century Danish and Modern Standard Danish.

6. Further perspectives

This paper presents a study of how the division of labour between two forms (the perfect participle and the supine) changes over time. One conclusion to draw from the study is that the properties of the perfect participle and the supine are not identical in the two chronolects chosen for the study. An outlook to other languages reveals that, also in these, the properties of the perfect participle and a non-declinable form (such as the supine) are not identical to those of Modern Standard Danish.

In Swedish, for example, a perfect participle is declinable in the same adjectival categories as in Modern Standard Danish, but it has a much wider usage than in the latter language in that it is the form to be used in periphrastic passives; these are always constructed with the verbs *vara* 'be' and *bli* 'be'/'become' (Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson 1999: 551-552 ff., 581-610; Nielsen 2012; Laanemets 2012). In constructions with the auxiliary *ha* 'have', the non-finite verb form is invariably the supine which, by definition, is non-declinable.[12]

In Modern Standard Danish, the perfect participle always evokes an adjectival meaning. In Swedish, this is not so. According to Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999: 583-584 ff.), in this language, some participles are categorized as adjectival and some verbal, respectively, based on how much – or little – the word in question evokes the notion of an activity. In (37), the participle *berömd-a* 'famous-PL' is categorized as an adjectival participle; in (38) and (39), the participles *ankomn-a* 'arrived-PL' and *anställd-a* 'hired-PL' are categorized as verbal.

(37)   *sångarna   är   berömd-a*
        the.singers   are   famous-PL
        'the singers are famous'

(38)   *sångarna   är   ankomn-a*
        the.singers   are   arrived-PL
        'the singers have arrived'

(39)   *sångarna   blev   anställd-a*
        the.singers   became   hired-PL
        'the singers were hired'

In all the examples (37)-(39), the participles agree with the subject referent; they are all in the plural. In Modern Standard Danish, the supine (*kommet* 'come.SUP'; *ansat* 'hired.SUP') would be used in constructions like (38) and (39) (cf. also Nielsen 2012 on the difference between the Danish and Swedish supine).

Similarly, in Italian, in constructions with *essere* 'be', a participle is declined in the nominal categories of number and gender (Forsberg 1998: 182).[13] In (40) and (41), the participles are in the plural, thus agreeing with a nominal referent in the plural.

---

[12] In the Swedish grammar tradition, the distinction between the perfect participle and the supine also goes back centuries, cf. SAOB, lemma *supinum*.

[13] In constructions with *avere* 'have', the non-finite form of the main verb is normally not declined.

(40) *i   pomodori   sono   cott-i*
    the   tomatoes   are   baked-PL
    'the tomatoes are baked'

(41) *sono   arrestat-i*
    are   arrested-PL
    'they are arrested'

In corresponding constructions in Modern Standard Danish, only the word form after *sono* in (40) could be declined for number (*bagt-e* 'baked-PL'), and if it were declined for number, the plural form would signal an adjectival function – the tomatoes were of the baked kind (not, for instance, of the fried or pickled kind); a supine (*bagt* 'baked.SUP') would signal a verbal function. In (41), only the supine *anholdt* 'arrested.SUP' would be possible in Modern Standard Danish. Example (41) shows that, just like in Swedish and in nineteenth-century Danish, in Italian, the perfect participle is not restricted to constructions where property ascribing is the issue.

    This all shows that the way we use perfect participles in different languages and at different times is not identical and that perfect participles have different properties in different languages. In Modern Standard Danish, the properties of the perfect participle are adnominal and the use of perfect participles in periphrastic verb forms always results in complement constructions. The supine is used in all other periphrastic verb forms. In comparison, in nineteenth-century Danish, the perfect participle was not restricted to a use in complement constructions. In that respect, it resembles the modern languages of Swedish and Italian. In these two languages, the perfect participle is not restricted to complement constructions but can also be used in periphrastic passives and perfectives. The same was true of Danish in a not-so-remote past. But today, use of a perfect participle is only compatible with an adjectival interpretation.

Acknowledgment

References
ADL, *Arkiv for Dansk Litteratur* ('Archive of Danish Literature') stored in The Royal Danish Library: https://tekster.kb.dk/text?editorial=no&f%5Bsubcollection_ssi%5D%5B%5D=adl&match=one&search_field=Alt.

Baden, Jacob (1785). *Forelæsninger over det Danske Sprog, eller Resonneret Dansk Grammatik*. København: Horrebow.

Becker-Christensen, Christian (2001). 'Den grædte pige og lignende historier. Om perfektum participium efter *blive* og *være* og som adled'. In Pia Jarvad, Frans Gregersen, Lars Heltoft, Jørn Lund & Ole Togeby (eds.), *Sproglige åbninger. E som Erik, H som 70*. København: Hans Reitzel. 119-139.

DB, *Danmarks Breve* ('Letters of Denmark') stored in The Royal Danish Library: https://tekster.kb.dk/text?editorial=no&f%5Bsubcollection_ssi%5D%5B%5D=letters&match=one&search_field=Alt.

Diderichsen, Paul (1944). 'Perfektparticipium – Supinum – Verbaladjektiv i Dansk og Svensk'. *Arkiv för nordisk filologi*, 58: 263-283.

Diderichsen, Paul (1946). *Elementær Dansk Grammatik*. København: Gyldendal.

Forsberg, Flemming (1998). *La grammatica. Italiensk grammatik*. København: Gyldendal.

Faarlund, Jan Terje, Kjell Ivar Vannebo & Svein Lie (1997). *Norsk referansegrammatikk*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Hansen, Erik (1988). *Rigtigt dansk*. København: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Hansen, Erik & Lars Heltoft (2011). *Grammatik over det danske sprog*. København & Odense: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab & Syddansk Universitetsforlag.

Hansen, Aage (1967). *Moderne Dansk. Vol. III*. København: Grafisk Forlag/Det danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab.

Heiberg, Lohan Ludvig (1834). *Kjøbenhavns Flyvende Post*. København: Own publ.

Hjelmslev, Louis (1939). 'Note sur les oppositions supprimables'. *Essais linguistiques* (*Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Copenhague*, 12). Copenhague: Nordisk Sprog- og Kulturforlag. 82-88.

Høysgaard, Jens Pedersen (1747). 'Accentuered og raisonnered grammatica'. *Danske Grammatikere fra Midten af det syttende Aarhundrede til Midten af det attende Aarhundrede*, IV. København: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab 1920, 1979. 249-488.

Jacobsen, Henrik Galberg (2010). *Ret og skrift. Officiel dansk retskrivning 1739-2005*. Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag.

Jacobsen, Henrik Galberg (2019). 'Yngre nydansk'. In *Dansk Sproghistorie*, 3. *Bøjning og bygning*. København og Århus: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab/Aarhus Universitetsforlag. 93-111.

Jensen, Eva Skafte (2012). 'Markedness, participation and grammatical paradigms. Jakobson and Hjelmslev revisited'. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics*, 35 (2): 145-168.

Jensen, Eva Skafte (in press). 'What's in an -*n*? The part played by indexicality in morpho-syntactic change'. In Peter Juul Nielsen & Maria Sol Sansiñena Pascual (eds.), *Indexicality*. Place (?): De Gruyter Mouton.

Jensen, Eva Skafte & Jørgen Schack (2022). 'Perfektum participium i attributiv stilling. Diakroni og synkroni'. *Ny forskning i grammatik*, 29. 84-102. doi: https://doi.org/10.7146/nfg.v1i29.132901

Jensen, Torben Juel & Marie Maegaard (2012). 'Past participles of strong verbs in Jutland Danish: A real-time study of regionalization and standardization'. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics*, 35(2): 169–195. doi: 10.1017/S0332586512000182

Karker, Allan (1972). 'Er vi bundne?'. *Nyt fra Sprognævnet,* 8: 1-5.

Laanemets, Anu (2012). *Passiv i moderne dansk, norsk og svensk. Et korpusbaseret studie af tale- og skriftsprog. Dissertationes Philologiae Scandinavicae Universitatis Tartuensis*, 2. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/14495315.pdf

Laanemets, Anu (2017). 'The choice of the perfect auxiliary in contemporary spoken Danish'. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia*, 49(2): 232-254. doi: https://doi.org/ 10.1080/03740463.2017.1369689

Lefolii, Hans Henrik (1871). *Sproglærens Grundbegreber*. København: C.A. Reitzels Forlag.

Lex.dk (n.d.). *Danmarks nationalleksikon*. Retrieved on October 6th 2024.

Lundskær-Nielsen, Tom & Philip Holmes (2010). *Danish: a comprehensive grammar*. 2nd ed. London & New York: Routledge.

Matzen, Matz (1893). *Modersmaalets Sproglære, udførligt og almenfatteligt fremstillet*. København: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag.

Mikkelsen, Kristian (1911). *Dansk ordföjningslære med sproghistoriske tillæg. Håndbog for viderekomne og lærere*. København: Hans Reitzels Forlag 1975.

Nielsen, Peter Juul (2012). 'Supinum i dansk og svensk'. *Ny forskning i grammatik*, 19: 181–198. doi: https://doi.org/10.7146/nfg.v20i19.23659

Nielsen, Peter Juul (2014). 'Supinum versus perfektum participium i dansk. Indholdsdifferentiering, mulige bøjningsvalg og andenordensnul'. *Ny forskning i grammatik*, 21: 177-192. doi: https://doi.org/10.7146/nfg.v22i21.23569

Nielsen, Peter Juul (2016). *Functional Structure in Morphology and the Case of Nonfinite Verbs.*

Theoretical Issues and the Description of the Danish Verb System. Leiden & Boston: Brill.

SAOB, *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok*, saob.se. Retrieved on October 6th 2024.

Schack, Jørgen (2018). 'Perfektum participium som adjektivisk prædikativ'. *Danske Studier* 2018. 5–29.

Skautrup, Peter (1947). *Det danske sprogs historie* 2. København: Gyldendal.

Sörensen, Axel (1902). *En Ariadnetråd gennem en sproglig Labyrinth i Spørgsmålet om Førtids-Tillægsmåderne: til velvillig Overvejelse for vaklende*. København: Lehmann & Stage.

Teleman, Ulf, Staffan Hellberg & Erik Andersson (1999). *Svenska Akademiens Grammatik* 2. Norstedts Ordbok.

Vendler, Zeno (1957). 'Verbs and Times'. *The Philosophical Review*, 66(2): 143-160.

Wiwel, Hylling Georg (1901). *Synspunkter for dansk Sproglære*. København: Det nordiske Forlag.