

# On the origin of South Saami *edtjedh* ‘shall, will’

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## 1. Introduction

The South Saami verb *edtjedh* ‘shall, will’ belongs to a set of auxiliaries, the members of which typically accompany a lexical verb to add modal meaning to a clause. Other auxiliaries of this category express meanings such as obligation: *byöredh*, *sjödtedh*; ability and possibility: *maehtedh*; desire: *sijhtedh*; necessity: *tjoeredh*, *tjoeveridh*; permission: *åadtjodh*, *fihkedh*.

Like the other auxiliaries, *edtjedh* typically appears in combination with a verb in the infinitive, which it most commonly precedes. Its meaning usually applies to an action or event, which is posterior to the time of reference of the sentence. Depending on context, the verb may express different modal meanings. It may express, as in example (1), a deontic meaning:

- (1) *Datne edtjh darjodh guktie manne.*  
you shall.PRS.1SG do.INF how I  
‘You shall do as I do.’ (SaaS, Mattsson Magga 2016: 119)

In this article, however, the capacity of the verb to express future, as either intention or purpose, is in focus. It is in this capacity the verb displays interesting correspondence with the supine, which has been attested in Ume, Pite, Lule and North Saami (Korhonen 1974: 197), and the potential, which has been attested in all Saami languages (Korhonen 1967: 97).

In Saami linguistics, the supine refers to an infinite verb form which typically occurs in combination with a finite verb to express purpose, as in example (2), where the supine *borazit* (< *borrat* ‘eat’) denotes the purpose of the departure. The potential refers to specific finite verb forms, which can express uncertainty, but which also, as in example (3), may express future.

- (2) *Sii vulge dohko boražit.*  
 they leave.PST.3PL there eat.SUP  
 ‘They went there in order to eat.’ (SaaN, Svonni 2019: 128)
- (3) *Vuobditjá má idet bijlav?*  
 sell.POT.2SG probably tomorrow car.ACC  
 ‘You will sell the car tomorrow, right?’ (SaaL, Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 151)

The correspondence between *edtjedh*, the supine and the potential is not only semantic, but there also exists a clear phonetic correspondence. This article paper promotes the idea that *edtjedh* shares a common origin with both the supine and the potential, and that *edtjedh* has evolved through a process of degrammaticalization, as the Finno-Saamic<sup>1</sup> suffix *\*-ŋsí<sup>2</sup>* in South Saami and adjacent varieties transformed into an auxiliary. Degrammaticalization is a relatively uncommon phenomenon in general, but it is not unheard of in Saami. Saami has even played an important role in the degrammaticalization debate (Nevis 1986; Norde 2009: 207–209; Ylikoski 2016b). Already in 1992, Bergsland suggested the etymological affinity between *edjedh* and the supine (Bergsland 1992: 11). Ylikoski also discussed the possible affinity, including the potential, in a lecture held in Levanger in 2019<sup>3</sup>.

The article is structured as follows: Section 2 and 3 outline the semantic features of *edtjedh* pertaining to intention and purpose respectively. Section 4 discusses morphological and phonetic features of the verb. Section 5 is a survey of intentional and purposive expressions in North, Lule, Pite and Ume Saami. Section 6 presents a discussion about the affinity between the Supine and the potential, whereas Section 7 contains a discussion about the origin of *edtjedh* and some concluding remarks.

## 2. *Edtjedh* in expressions with intentional meaning

In the framework of this article, intention refers to a commitment to perform an action, as in *I will go to town*. In this meaning *edtjedh*, as in example (4), appears in combination with an infinitive in a main clause (Bergsland 1994: 72), but there are also instances where the verb alone constitutes the predicate

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion about the notion Finno-Saamic, see Aikio (2012).

<sup>2</sup> Korhonen (1981: 252), in addition, reconstructs a form with palatal dental affricate: *\*-ŋci*, whereas Sammallahti (1998: 213) and Aikio (2012: 68) have *\*-ŋši*.

<sup>3</sup> I would like to thank Jussi Ylikoski for sharing parts of his manuscript from the lecture and for drawing my attention to Bergsland’s article. I’m also grateful to Torgny Hedström and Olle Kejonen for valuable comments.

of the clause (5). The commitment not to perform an action is expressed by negating *edtjedh* (6).

- (4) *Maam*                      ***edtjebe***              *gaskebeajjan*    *byöpmedidh?*  
 what.ACC                      will.PRS.1PL    dinner.ILL       eat.INF  
 ‘What will we have for dinner?’ (SaaS, NDB s.v. *edtjedh*)
- (5) *Gåabph*                    ***edtjh***                *datne?*  
 where                            will.PRS.2SG    you  
 ‘Where are you going?’ (SaaS, NDB s.v. *edtjedh*)
- (6) *Im*                            ***edtjh***                *dejnië*              *vajmedh.*  
 NEG.PRS.1SG                  shall.CONNEG    that.COM            lament.INF  
 ‘I shall not lament that.’ (SaaS, Kuvlje)

In this respect, the usage of the verb very much resembles the intentional usage of the Norwegian auxiliary *skulle* ‘shall, will’ (Faarlund et al. 1997: 604), and, in Swedish, the auxiliary *skola* (cf. SAG II 283). This is illustrated by the Norwegian translations of the examples above, where *skal* (< *skulle*) appears as counterpart to forms of *edtjedh*, both when combined with a main verb or functioning as the predicate alone (5). In the latter example, an implicit verb of motion could be assumed, just as the case is in Norwegian and Swedish (SAG IV 906; cf. Faarlund et al. 1997: 527). The status of *edtjedh* as a verb of intention is also highlighted in the translation of the Norwegian verb *skulle* ‘shall, will, should, ought to’ in Mattsson Magga’s Norwegian–South Saami dictionary (NSO s.v. *skulle*). The dictionary mentions *edtjedh* in combination with Norwegian clauses that express intention: *jeg skal dra (dra i vei)* ‘I will leave’ (7), *vi to skal dra, la oss dra* ‘let us two go, let’s go’ (8), *han sa han skulle hjelpe til* ‘he said that he would help’ (9). The deontic and epistemic meanings of the Norwegian verb, on the other hand, have translations that include *galkedh* ‘should, must’ and *byöredh* ‘ought to, should’ (ibid.). In his grammar of northern South Saami, Nilsson-Mankok (1975: 12–13) deviates partly from this analysis, ascribing the verb *edtjedh* ‘shall, will, must, must have the possibility to’ both intentional and deontic meaning, whereas *galkedh*<sup>4</sup> ‘shall, will’ is treated as a temporal auxiliary with future reference.

<sup>4</sup> The verbs have the forms *etjet* and *galket* in Nilsson-Mankok’s orthography.

- (7) **Edtjem**                      *vuelkedh.*  
 shall.PRS.1SG                  leave.INF  
 ‘I shall leave.’ (SaaS, NSO s.v. *skulle*)
- (8) **Edtjien**                      *vuelkedh.*  
 shall.PRS.1DU                  leave.INF  
 ‘We two shall leave/Let’s leave.’ (SaaS, NSO *ibid.*)
- (9) *Dihte jeehti,                  satne                  edtja                  viehkiehtidh.*  
 he        say.PST.3SG        he.himself        will.PRS.3SG        help.INF  
 ‘He said that he will help.’ (SaaS, NSO *ibid.*)

### 3. *Edtjedh* in expressions with purposive meaning

Besides the intentional usage, *edtjedh* also commonly appears in constructions that express the desired result of an action. This purposive meaning is illustrated in the sentence *I go to town in order to buy food*, where the subordinate construction (*in order to buy food*) denotes the purpose of the subject’s trip to town. In its purposive meaning, the verb *edtjedh* has a similar function as the subordinating conjunction *in order to*, which precedes the infinitive phrase in the English example above. In this function, the verb typically initiates the subordinate construction and combines with the main verb in the infinitive, as in examples (10) and (11). It should be pointed out that the two finite verb forms in the examples are not instances of conjunctionless coordination, which is common in South Saami (cf. example 12).

- (10) *Dihte vöölki                  edtja                  viehkiehtidh.*  
 he        leave.PST.3SG        will.PRS.3SG        help.INF  
 ‘He went away in order to help.’ (SaaS, NSO s.v. *for*)
- (11) *Jih dle                  vuelkieh                  edtjeh                  minnedh*  
 and        then                  leave.PRS.3PL        will.PRS.3PL        go.INF  
*håagkodh.*  
 fish.INF  
 ‘And they leave in order to go fishing.’ (SaaS, Bergsland 1994: 82)
- (12) *Dah tjåadtjoeh                  vuartasjeh.*  
 they        stand.PRS.3PL        watch.PRS.3PL  
 ‘They stand and watch.’ (SaaS, Jaahkenelkien 1993: 30)

The ability of *edtjedh* to express both intention and purpose is quite salient. Already Lagercrantz (LW 3) points out that *edtjedh* has these two functions and gives several examples of both, using the German verb *sollen* ‘shall, will’ as equivalent in the former function and the subordinate conjunctions *um zu* ‘in order to’ and *damit* ‘idem’ in the latter.<sup>5</sup>

In South Saami, negative purpose may be also expressed with an asyndetic clause. Such constructions include the imperative forms of the negative verb (Bergsland 1994: 82). The negative verb has two imperative forms, based on the stems *aellie-* and *olle-*, the former of which expresses prohibition and the latter a warning (Bergsland 1994: 44). Both may express negative purpose, as in (13) and (14). Purpose may also be expressed by means of the subordinate conjunction *juktie* (15).

- (13) *Tjoerh*                      *geehthedh*      *aellieh*              *tjaajenh*.  
 must.PRS.2SG              watch.out.INF    NEG.IMP.2SG    get.lost.CONNEG  
 ‘Watch out lest you get lost.’ (SaaS, Bergsland 1994: 82)
- (14) *Manne raajem*              *varke*              *olkese,*              *olles*  
 I              run.PRS.1SG    quickly              out              NEG.IMP.3SG  
*dihte*    *båvvesh*.  
 it              perish.CONNEG  
 ‘I run out quickly [to take care of the calf] lest it dies.’ (SaaS, Mattsson Magga 2016: 114)
- (15) *Bööremes*                      *liegkedidh*      *juktie*              *barkose*  
 good.SUPERL              rest.INF              in.order.to      work.ILL  
*madtjeles*                      *sjidtedh*.  
 prepared                      become.INF  
 ‘One had better rest in order to get prepared for work.’ (SaaS, NDB s.v. *juktie*)

#### 4. The verb *edtjedh* and its forms

The verb *edtjedh* (Table 2) displays features of a parisyllabic, or, to be more specific, a disyllabic verb. South Saami disyllabic<sup>6</sup> verbs are usually divided

<sup>5</sup> For a generative approach on *edtjedh* and “as the exponent of subjunctivity” in null subject clauses see Vinka (2022).

<sup>6</sup> I will henceforth use the term disyllabic, since it is the far most common type of parisyllabic verbs and since it is more relevant in the discussion about *edtjedh*.

into six groups (I–VI). The division is based on the quality of the vowel in the second syllable and refers to rows I–IV in the umlaut table (see Table 1). Verbs of group I, II and IV regularly undergo umlaut, as opposed to verbs of the other groups. The second syllable vowel of a disyllabic verb corresponds to one of the vowels in the second column from the right in table. The far-right column shows how these vowels are realized in trisyllabic feet. The indexes 4–6 refer to vowels that, for historical reasons, induce umlaut in different ways. The columns 1–7 refer to umlaut series and present different qualities that a first syllable vowel of a word possibly can have. The South Saami umlaut has occurred as an instance of regressive assimilation: the quality of the first syllable vowel is dependent on the quality of the second syllable vowel.

Table 1. Umlaut in South Saami, based on Magga & Magga (2012: 27; superscripts refer to the groups).

	Umlaut series							Vowel of the second syllable	Vowel of the second syllable of trisyllabic feet
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
I	<i>i</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>ie</i>	<i>ae</i>	<i>äe</i>	<i>ue</i>	<i>ie</i>	<i>e</i> <sup>1</sup> or <i>i</i> <sup>1</sup>
II	<i>ä</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>å</i>	<i>ea</i>	<i>aa</i>	<i>åa</i>	<i>åa</i>	<i>oe</i>	<i>o</i>
III	<i>ä</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>å</i>	<i>ea</i>	<i>aa</i>	<i>åa</i>	<i>ua</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i> <sup>3</sup> or <i>i</i> <sup>3</sup>
IV	<i>ï</i>	<i>a</i> [ <i>â</i> ]	<i>o</i> ( <i>å</i> )	<i>ïe</i>	<i>aa</i>	<i>åa</i>	<i>oe</i>	<i>e</i> <sup>4</sup> or <i>i</i> <sup>4</sup>	<i>e</i> <sup>4</sup> or <i>i</i> <sup>4</sup>
V	<i>y</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>yö</i>	<i>åå</i>	<i>åå</i>	<i>åå</i>	<i>e</i> <sup>5</sup>	<i>e</i> <sup>5</sup>
VI	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i> [ <i>ï</i> ]	<i>u</i>	<i>ee</i>	<i>ee</i> [ <i>ææ</i> ]	<i>öö</i>	<i>öö</i>	<i>e</i> <sup>6</sup> or <i>i</i> <sup>6</sup>	<i>e</i> <sup>6</sup> or <i>i</i> <sup>6</sup>

The initial vowel of the infinitive *edtjedh* (phontactically trisyllabic), the present tense 1DU *edtjien*, 2DU *edtjeden*, 1PL *edtjebe*, 2PL *edtjede*, 3PL *edtjieh* would suggest that the verb, like the verb *vedtedh* ‘give’ in Table 3, belongs to group I. However, the present tense 1SG *edtjem*, 2SG *edtjh*, 3SG *edtja* show that the verb, unlike verbs in group I, is not subject to umlaut, and the present tense 2DU *edtjijidien*, 3DU *edtjijægan*, 1PL *edtjijibie*, dissimilarly to group I verbs, do not have *-ie-* in the second syllable (cf. Table 2 and 3). Thus, the verb *edtjedh* appears to be irregular. NDB defines it as belonging to verb group IV (s.v. *edtjedh*), which seems correct judging from the personal suffixes. The South Saami verb handbook *Verbh* (Frändén et al 2007: 11, 26–27), on the other hand, lists it as an irregular verb, due to its lack of umlaut. Other verbs of group IV, with a first syllable vowel belonging to column 2 (see Table 1), regularly display an *a* in the first syllable of the infinitive, and of all present tense forms, except for the 1<sup>st</sup> person dual and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural forms (Magga & Magga 2012: 23), cf. *edtjedh* and *barkedh* in Table 2 and 4.

Table 2. The present tense forms of the verb *edtjedh* ‘shall, will’.

	singular	dual	plural
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>edtjem</i>	<i>edtjien</i>	<i>edtjebe/edtjijibie</i> <sup>7</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>edtjh</i>	<i>edtjeden/edtjijidien</i>	<i>edtjede</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	<i>edtja</i>	<i>edtjijægan</i>	<i>edtjieh</i>

Table 3. The present tense forms of the verb *vedtedh* ‘give’.

	singular	dual	plural
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>vadtam</i>	<i>vedtien</i>	<i>vedtebe/vedtiejibie</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>vadtah</i>	<i>vedteden/vedtiejidien</i>	<i>vedtede/vedtiejidie</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	<i>vadta</i>	<i>vedtiejægan</i>	<i>vedtieh</i>

Table 4. The present tense forms of the verb *barkedh* ‘work’.

	singular	dual	plural
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>barkem</i>	<i>berkien</i>	<i>barkebe/barkijibie</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>barkh</i>	<i>barkedden/barkijidien</i>	<i>barkedede/barkejidie</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	<i>barka</i>	<i>barkijægan</i>	<i>berkieh</i>

The standard orthographic form of the infinitive *edtjedh* suggests the pronunciation [et̪ːæt̪], with a short initial vowel followed by a long affricate. In records where non-standard forms of the verb appear, there are instances where the phonetic forms of the verb differ quite significantly from the standard. Lagercrantz (LW 2–3), Hasselbrink (SW s.v. *addjeb*) and Halász (1891 s.v. *ača*) report a variation between front and back vowels in the first syllable and a variation of quantity in the stem consonant. In *Sámien lukkeme-gärjá* from 1957, written in the former South Saami orthography, the verb is given an initial back vowel, e.g., *ažžem* ‘I will’ (Bergsland & Hasselbrink 1957: 21). Hasselbrink mentions that the initial vowel often is reduced to [ə]. In Andersson’s *Maam dah soptsestamme* (1992), a collection of South Saami tales from the 1940s, the forms of the verb are in the majority of cases even transcribed without the initial vowel at all, as in examples (16) and (17), which underlines the reduced nature, or even lack, of the initial vowel. This feature appears regardless of whether a vowel or a consonant precedes the auxiliary. Halász (1891: s.v. *ča*) also reports forms lacking an initial vowel.

<sup>7</sup> Disyllabic verbs may have a trisyllabic stem, which includes *-j-*, in present tense 1PL, 2DU and 2PL. Forms appearing in the table have been retrieved from NDB.

- (16) *Nov tjem manne dijem vuesiehtidh.*  
 so will.PRS.1SG I you.ACC.PL show.INF  
 ‘So I will show you.’ (SaaS, Andersson 1992: 31)
- (17) *Manne tjoekim dellie dahkoe jih*  
 I ski.PST.1SG then there and  
*kroehkim tjim veartasjidh, mij*  
 dig.PST.1SG will.PST.1SG see.INF what  
*lij dennie boernesne.*  
 be.PST.3SG that.ATTR.INE storage.pit.INE  
 ‘Then I skied there and dug in order to see what was in the storage pit.’  
 (SaaS, Andersson 1992: 27)

Lagercrantz mentions that the verb is “structurally weakened (Ger. *strukturell abgeschwächt*)” (LW 2) and that its consonant center is not realized as a full geminate, which would otherwise be expected in a position after a short vowel. Lagercrantz and Hasselbrink mention that the stem consonant either appears as a half-long or as a short fricative and indicate that this variation is due to the verb’s position and prominence in the clause, seemingly implying that it is shorter when it appears as an enclitic. The view that the verb may appear as an enclitic finds support in Lagercrantz (1923) and in SW, where it is transcribed as an enclitic attached to pronouns. Lagercrantz (61) gives the form *mannatjeb*<sup>8</sup> ‘I will’ and Hasselbrink *mannadtjem* (s.v. *addjeb*). In the standard South Saami orthography, the sequence is rendered *manne edtjem* I will.PRS.1SG ‘I will’ (See also Korhonen 1967: 107). The enclitic-like nature of the verb also appears in combination with the negative verb, where the two verbs may form a phonological word: *immetjh* (LW 182), *immotj(h)*<sup>9</sup> (Collinder 1943: 47), cf. standard SaaS *im edtjh* NEG.PRS.1SG shall.CONNEG ‘I shall not’. See Halász 1891: 94 s.v. *ča*, for more examples of the enclitic use of *edjedh*.

Interestingly, both Lagercrantz and Hasselbrink mention that the verb lacks an infinitive. The usage of the infinitive of modal auxiliaries is *per se* limited, since auxiliaries typically appear in finite forms and combine with the infinitive of another verb. However, for the modal auxiliaries *galkedh* ‘shall, should’ and *tjoeveridh* ‘must’, both Lagercrantz and Hasselbrink mention

<sup>8</sup> The transcriptions of Lagercrantz and Hasselbrink have been adapted to the standard South Saami orthography. The final bilabial stop in Lagercrantz’s example, as opposed to *-m* in the standard orthography, reflects a feature of northern South Saami.

<sup>9</sup> Collinder’s example is from Härjedalen. The transcription has been adapted to the standard orthography. His example does not reflect the final *h* of standard South Saami connegatives, hence the parenthesis.

infinitives (SW s.v. *galgedh*, *tjuoveridh*; LW: 236, 113). However, on page 143 in SW Hasselbrink mentions the infinitive *addjedh*. In modern South Saami dictionaries, the headword is always the infinitive *edtjedh* (NDB s.v.; ÅDB s.v.; SS s.v.). A search for the lemma *edtjedh* in the SIKOR database indicates that the usage of the infinitive still today is very limited: out of more than 10 000 occurrences, less than 10 are in the infinitive.

## 5. Intentional and purposive expressions in North, Lule, Pite and Ume Saami

### 5.1 Intentional expressions

In North, Lule and contemporary Pite Saami, there seem to be no attested cognates to *edtjedh* among the auxiliary verbs. Instead, the North Saami verbs *áigut* ‘will, intend’ and *galgat* ‘have to, must, shall’, and its cognates in Lule, *ájggot*, *galggat* (LLO s.v.) and Pite, *ájggot*, *gallgat* (BB s.v.), appear to be the closest equivalents to the South Saami verb in its intentional meaning, cf. examples (18–20). Magga (1982: 21), who labels the North Saami verb *áigut* a dynamic epistemic auxiliary, mentions that the verb *galgat* may paraphrase *áigut* in some contexts, as in example (17), adding that, for *galgat*, a deontic reading often is possible along with the dynamic epistemic reading (Magga 1982: 28; cf. Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 430; Koskinen 1998: 43).

- (18) *Mun áiggun gilvit nisuid duon*  
 I intend.PRS.1SG sow.INF wheat.ACC.PL that.ATTR.ILL  
*beldui.*  
 field.ILL

‘I will sow wheat on that field.’ (SaaN, NDS s.v. *áigut*)

- (19) *Gánda áigu vuolgit dan skiippa*  
 boy intend.PRS.3SG leave.INF that.GEN ship.GEN  
*lusa borjjastit.*  
 to sail.INF

‘The boy intends to go to the ship to sail away.’ (SaaN, Magga 1982: 21<sup>10</sup>)

<sup>10</sup> Magga’s example is from Qvigstad (1927: 340).

- (20) *Son maid galggai beassat oastit*  
 she also will.PST.3SG get.INF buy.INF  
*juoidá.*  
 something.ACC  
 ‘She would also get to buy something.’ (SaaN, Magga 1982: 28<sup>11</sup>)

In Ume Saami the corresponding verbs are *ájgguot* ‘intend’, *galggat* ‘will’ (BG s.v.). In Ume Saami the verbs *ussjadit* ‘think, mean, intend’ and *adtjat* ‘shall, will’ (idem s.v.) also express intention. The latter is cognate with *edjedh* in South Saami (21).

- (21) *Ij adtjh vuan.*  
 NEG.PRS.3sg shall.CONNEG PTCL  
 ‘He should not, should he?’ (SaaU, BG s.v. *adtjat*)

In addition to the verbs mentioned above, Lule Saami has the verb *gehkat* ‘intend’ (LLO s.v. *kāhkat*) as a verb of intention. In South Saami *galkedh*, the cognate of North Saami *galgat*, may also express intention (22). South Saami also has the noun *aajkoe* ‘intention’, which is etymologically related to North Saami *ájgut* etc., and similarly to Ume Saami *ussjadit* the South Saami cognate *ussjedidh* ‘think’ may also be used to express intention (23).

- (22) *Manne galkem oktegh vaedtsedh sjaltan.*  
 I shall.PRS.1SG alone walk.INF village.ILL  
 ‘I shall go to the village alone.’ (SaaS, Mattsson Magga 2016: 10)

- (23) *Datne aaj ussjedh sjaltan vuelkedh?*  
 you also think.PRS.1SG village.ILL go.INF  
 ‘Are you also thinking of going to the village?’ (SaaS, Mattsson Magga 2016: 21)

In Lagercrantz’s records of Pite Saami from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there is another verb with intentional meaning (24). The verb lacks an attested infinitive in his records. He refers to it by the form *atjav* (1926: 24), which is the first person singular of the present tense. Apart from the German equivalent *sollen* ‘shall, will’, he also formulates translations such as “muss ich” (‘must I’) and “ich möchte” (‘I would like’) in his examples. Lehtiranta (1992) consistently uses the Finnish equivalent *täytyä* ‘must’ in his

<sup>11</sup> Magga’s example is from Jernsletten & Hatle (1975: 70).

translations of the verb<sup>12</sup>, which, judging from Lagercrantz’ translations, seems a little simplistic. The form and function of the verb indicate an etymological relation to *edtjedh* and *adtjat* in South and Ume Saami (see Section 5.2).

- (24) *Mij atjap muättkiev giesset.*  
 we will.PRS.1SG isthmus.ACC pull.INF  
 ‘We will pull [the boat] across the isthmus’ (SaaP, Lagercrantz 1926: 24)

Before leaving the discussion, it is worth mentioning that lexical verbs in the present tense also may express intention, as in example (25) from North Saami; for the future reference of the potential, see Section 6.

- (25) *Goas don finat min geahčen?*  
 when you visit.PRS.2SG we.GEN at  
 ‘When will you come and visit us?’ (SaaN, Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 270)

## 5.2 Purposive expressions

North, Lule, Pite and Ume Saami altogether display several ways of expressing purpose. The constructions may include the supine (26–27, 32, 35), a verb of motion and an infinitive (30–31), an auxiliary verb (33, 34) or a subordinate conjunction (36–39). For this paper, constructions with the supine and constructions including an auxiliary are of the most interest.

- (26) *Sii vulge dohko boražit.*  
 they leave.PST.3PL there eat.SUP  
 ‘They went there (in order) to eat.’ (SaaN, Svonni 2019: 128)
- (27) *Ulmütja båhtin suv gehtjatjit*  
 people.PL come.PST.3PL he.ACC watch.SUP  
*ja gulldalittjat.*  
 and listen.SUP  
 ‘People came in order to look at and listen to him.’ (SaaL, Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 147)

<sup>12</sup> In one example, which Lehtiranta has from Halász (1893: 276), he gives the Finnish equivalent *jotta* ‘in order to’ (Lehtiranta 1992: 95).

In Lule Saami, where the supine is a common feature, the supine is, in the standard language, marked by the suffix *-tjit* [tʃit] in parisyllabic and contracted stems, and *-ittjat* [itʃ:at] in imparisyllabic stems. In the spoken language, however, the quality of the final and penultimate vowel of imparisyllabic verbs vary, e.g., *málestattjit* ~ *málestattjat* ~ *málestittjat* (LLO 1886; cf. also Kejonen, this volume). In Lule Saami, the usage is not restricted to the purposive use, as in example (27), but the supine may also appear in constructions that convey other non-purposive meanings (Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 147; cf. Spiik 1989: 106). In example (28) the supine functions as a modifier to the adjective and corresponds to expressions in English like *be* adj *at* + continuous form. It may also appear in constructions together with a finite form of the verb *liehket* ‘be’. These constructions have future reference and may appear in intentional expressions (Ylikoski 2016a: 221–226), as in example (29).

- (28) *Áhpadiddje*                      *lij*                      *tjuorbbe*                      *tjieggitjit.*  
 teacher                              be.PST.3SG              bad                              explain.SUP  
 ‘The teacher was bad at explaining.’ (SaaL, Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 147)

- (29) *Dánna la*                      *gus*                      *dán*                      *tjáhkkáhattjat?*  
 here    be.PRS.2SG    Q                      you                              sit.SUP  
 ‘Do you intend to sit here?’ (SaaL, *ibid.*)

In North Saami, where the use of the supine is limited to the western dialects (Collinder 1949: 51; Svonni 2019: 128; Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 68; for the negative supine, see below), the supine seems to be restricted to purposive expressions, as in example (26). In standard North Saami the supine suffix is rendered *-žit* [tʃit] in parisyllabic and contracted stems, and *-eažžat* [itʃ:at] in imparisyllabic stems (Svonni 2019: 129). In many North Saami dialects, the supine of other verbs than the negative verb is not in use (Korhonen 1974: 197–198, 204). Instead, the infinitive, as in example (30), has the same function (cf. examples 50–51). This type of construction is also possible in South Saami (31).

- (30) *Son*                      *bodii*                      *sisá*                      *biepmu*                      *viežžat.*  
 he                              come.PST.3SG    in                              food.ACC                      fetch.INF  
 ‘He came in to pick up food.’ (SaaN, Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 301)

- (31) *Dih̄te j̄ååktan v̄öölki ryöjnesjidh.*  
 he yesterday leave.PST.3SG herd.INF  
 ‘He went off to herd [the reindeer].’ (SaaS, Magga & Mattsson Magga 2012: 183)

From Pite and Ume Saami there are some records of the supine. According to Lehtiranta the usage is rare (1992: 103) and he mentions the possibility that forms identified as the supine *giehtjatjit* (< *gähttjat* ‘see’) actually could be the infinitive of diminutive verbs, cf. *giehtjatjit* ‘see a little’. The rareness, or the possible lack, is also emphasised by the fact that Wilbur’s grammar on contemporary Pite Saami (2014) does not mention the supine at all (cf. however Korhonen 1974: 197; Sjaggo 2015: 18, 21). Lehtiranta mentions a construction (32) which indicates that the supine in Pite, as in Lule Saami, not only appears in purposive constructions, when in use.

- (32) *Giesátjit lin máj dajt.*  
 pull.SUP be.PRS.1DU we.two those.ACC  
 ‘We two must pull those.’ (SaaP, Lehtiranta 1992: 103)

Korhonen (1974: 198) defines the southern border of the supine as the border between Pite and Ume Saami, meaning that the single mention of the supine *guulahtjit* in (Schlachter 1958 XVIII), with its deviating pre-aspirated affricate as marker, indicates that the supine was not in use when Schlachter made his recordings in the 1950s. Calleberg’s recordings of Ume Saami from the early 1920s also display deviating forms. From Maskaur (ULMA 2860) he records the supine *l̄ö̀k̄ätit* (< *l̄ö̀k̄æt* ‘read’, cf. standard SaaU *luhk̄kat*) with the Swedish translation ‘f̄ör att läsa’, and from Malmesjaur (ULMA 2966) he noted *l̄ö̀k̄ætum* followed by Swedish “läst” in parenthesis. The former translation, ‘in order to read’, is in line with the semantic properties of the supine in Lule and North Saami, whereas *läst* renders a form which according to standard Swedish linguistic terminology is called *supinum* (≠ supine; SAG I 228), which functionally correspond to the perfect participle in Saami. On the other hand, Ume Saami, in line with South Saami, has the verb *adtjat* ‘shall, will’, which typically initiates purposive subordinate constructions (33). The verb is attested with a full paradigm (*ät̄š̄ä̀* ‘in order for me to’ etc.) in Calleberg’s recordings from Malmesjaur (ULMA 2966).

- (33) *Adtjuv m̄anna d̄ájđđiet.*  
 will.PRS.1SG I know.INF  
 ‘In order for me to know.’ (SaaU, BG s.v. *adtjat*)

A cognate verb is also reported from Pite Saami in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lagercrantz (LW 3; cf. Lagercrantz 1926: 122) mentions, with reference to his records from Arjeplovve (Swe. Arjeplog; see example 34), that the verb, like its South Saami cognate, displays variation between a longer and a shorter stem consonants. According to Lagercrantz’s transcription, the forms presented for Pite Saami all have half short stem consonants (rendered as a single affricate in example 34). The past tense form *itjij* (shall.3SG) in example (34) only contrasts with the corresponding form of the negation verb in that the stem consonant is shorter, cf. *ittij* NEG.PST.3SG (cf. LW 183). The form *ačai* (PST.3SG) in Halász 1893 (276) translated by means of the Hungarian conjunction *hogy* ‘that’ (idem 277), refers to the same word (cf. Lehtiranta 1992: 92).<sup>13</sup>

- (34) *Dä härrá budij itjij suv*  
 Then priest come.PST.3SG shall.PST.3SG he.ACC  
*vuojjelit.*  
 chase.away.INF  
 ‘Then the priest came in order to chase him away.’<sup>14</sup> (SaaP, LW 3)

Lagercrantz also treats the verb *atjav* (PRS.1SG) in connection to what he calls “optative clauses” (1926: 22–23). He states that the suffix *-atja-*, which appears in such constructions with an optative particle (Ger. *Hilfswort*), originate (Ger. *zurückgeht*) in the verb *atjav*. Lehtiranta (1992: 88), on the other hand, identifies the examples given by Lagercrantz, e.g., *råkiertitjip-mi* ‘plane down’, as forms of the potential with enclitic pronouns. According to Lagercrantz, an optative meaning may also be expressed without an optative particle, with forms such as *mujjtetatjav* ‘I will probably remember it, I would like to remember it’<sup>15</sup> (< *mujjtet* ‘remember’). Such forms are according to Lehtiranta (ibid.) the result of agglutination, involving the verb *atjav*.

In addition to the supine discussed above, there is also a negative supine, which expresses the purpose of an action to avoid something (Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 301). In North Saami, the negative supine is based on the stem *ama-*, to which the possessive suffixes are attached, thus yielding a paradigm of nine different forms (Svonni 2019: 129). The negative supine

<sup>13</sup> In the Pite Saami text collection *Alvos giehto* (Halász 2023), a selection of tales from Halász’s *Svéd-lapp nyelv 5*, the editors Inger Fjällås och Peter Steggo have substituted forms of the verb *atja-* with forms of the verb *gallga-* ‘shall’, which indicates that the former verb nowadays is considered obsolete in Pite Saami (Kejonen 2024: 201).

<sup>14</sup> Lagercrantz’s German translation is ‘Dann kam der Priester, (“er sollte”, d.h.) um ihn zu verjagen’.

<sup>15</sup> Lagercrantz’s German translation is ‘ich werde wahrscheinlich, ich möchte: mich daran erinnern’. The examples given by Lagercrantz are only in the first person singular.

combines with an infinitive (31). The third person singular form, *amas*, has in some North Saami varieties been lexicalised as a subordinating conjunction (Korhonen 1981: 311–312; Sammallahti 1998: 87); in combination with the negative verb it is used to express negative purpose (36). Constructions based on *ama-* do not appear in the whole of the North Saami speech area; instead, combinations of the subordinate conjunction *vai* ‘in order to’, which is discussed below, and the negative verb are used (37).

- (35) *Leage*                      *várrugas*              *go*                      *váccát*  
 be.IMP.2SG                      careful                      when                      walk.PRS.2SG  
*amat*                                      *gahččat.*  
 lest.2SG                                      fall.INF  
 ‘Be careful when you walk lest you fall.’ (SaaN, Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 301)

- (36) *Vácece*                      *jaska,*                      *amas*                      *mánát*  
 walk.IMP.2SG                      silently                      lest                      child.PL  
*eai*                                      hear.CONNEG  
 NEG.PRS.3PL                      *gula!*  
 ‘Walk silently lest the children hear.’ (SaaN, idem 204)

- (37) *Sii*              *mannet*              *stobu*              *sisá*                      *vai*  
 they              go.PRS.3PL              cottage.GEN              into                      in.order.to  
*eai*                                      *galbmo.*  
 NEG.PRS.3PL                      get.cold.CONNEG  
 ‘They went into the cottage in order not to get cold.’ (SaaN, Svonni 2019: 129)

The only cognate of North Saami *ama-* in Lule Saami is possibly the subordinate conjunction *abma~abme* ‘lest’, which according to Harald Grundström (LLO s.v.) only appears in the literary language. In Pite Saami and in Ume Saami, the cognate subordinate conjunctions *amá* ‘so that you don’t’ (BB s.v.) and *ammá~abmá* ‘idem’ (BG s.v.; Schlachter s.v. *abmaa*), as in example (38), appear with a similar function. Lehtiranta (1992: 84) also has *vaj amaah*<sup>16</sup> ‘in order not to’ from Pite Saami, where the subordinate conjunction *vaj* ‘so that’ is combined with *amá*.

<sup>16</sup> Lehtiranta’s orthography.

- (38) *Ammá dâdna galgh bâhtiet.*  
 lest you will.PRS.2SG come.INF  
 ‘Lest you will come.’ (SaaU, BG s.v. *ammá*)

In Lule Saami purposive constructions may include the subordinate conjunctions *vaj* ‘in order to’, as in example (39) (Spiik 1989: 94; Tuolja & Kuoljok 2013: 232), or *ahte* ‘idem’ (LLO s.v.). The Lule Saami conjunction *vaj* has cognates with the same function in North, *vai* (Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 403), and Ume Saami, *vaj* (BG s.v.; Schlachter s.v. *vai*). In contemporary Pite Saami, the conjunction *ahte* ‘in order to’ appears in purposive constructions (Wilbur 2014: 190). In Ume Saami, the cognate *ahttie* and in North Saami *ahte* may have purposive meaning (BG s.v.; Schlachter s.v. *àhtè*; Nielsen s.v. *âttě*). In addition, Lule Saami has *vaják* ‘in order to’ (Korhonen 2006: s.v.). Lehtiranta, who cites recordings made by Israel Ruong in 1939 and 1944, reports for Pite Saami both the form *vaj* (1992: 170; cf. Halász 1893; 136) and *vajaah* (1992: 181), of which the latter corresponds to Lule Saami *vaják*.

- (39) *Rabá uvsav, vaj mán*  
 open.IMP.2SG door.ACC so.that I  
*besav ålgus.*  
 can.get.PRS.1SG out  
 ‘Open the door so that I can get out.’ (SaaL, LLO s.v. *vai*)

### 5.3 The word *atja* in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century sources

In the grammar section of the Saami-Swedish-Latin dictionary *Lexicon Lapponicum* (LL), Öhrling treats the words *atja*, which also appears in the form *attja* (s.v.), and *abma* as subordinate conjunctions (LXXIX; cf. Korhonen 1981: 297). The words appear in combination with both personal verbal inflectional suffixes and possessive suffixes, but *atja*, as far as the singular and plural forms are concerned, combines to a greater extent than *abma* with verbal suffixes<sup>17</sup>. For *abma* only the forms in the second person singular, *abmah*, and plural, *abmabet* and *ammabet*, display verbal suffixes. For the second person singular the form *ammata*, possibly with a possessive suffix, is also mentioned. The word *abma* is clearly cognate with the Ume Saami conjunction *ammá~abmá*, and corresponding words in North, Lule and Pite Saami, and *atja*, with South Saami *edjtjedh*, Ume Saami *aditjat* and the

<sup>17</sup> The comparison was made in relation to the possessive suffixes in *Lexicon Lapponicum* (XLVII–XLIX).

Pite Saami cognate (see Sections 5.1 and 5.2). The function and meaning of *atja*, as seen in (40), emphasize its functional and semantic relation to *edtjedh* and *adtjat*.

- (40) *Hålå*                                      *munji*,                      *atjab*                      *tetet*.  
 speak.IMP.2SG                      I.ILL                      will.PRS.1SG                      know.INF  
 ‘Tell me, so that I will know.’ (LL: LXXX)

Qvigstad (1947: 31–32), in his analysis of Olaus Stephani Graan’s *Manuale Lapponicum* (ML) from 1669, discusses the word *uggu-*, which he relates to *edtjedh*<sup>18</sup>. From the examples given by Qvigstad, it appears that the word can express both purpose (41) and intention (42)<sup>19</sup>.

- (41) *Uggus*                                      *sii*                                      *denehied*                      *kalgeh*.  
 will.IMP.3PL                                      they                                      serve.INF                                      shall.PRS.3PL  
 ‘In order that they serve.’ (Qvigstad 1947: 32)

- (42) *Kåbbagiam*                                      *tij*                                      *sijtewet*                                      *uggum*  
 who.of.two.ACC                                      you.PL                                      want.PRS.2PL                                      will.PRS.1SG  
*mon tiies*                                      *luewes*                                      *vuebded?*  
 I                                      you.ILL.PL                                      free                                      give.INF  
 ‘Who of the two do you want me to release?’ (ibid.)

Graan’s *uggu-* must be cognate to *uggie-/uggiu-*, which occurs in Lars Rangius’s translation of the gospel of Mark from 1713. Wilson identifies the form as a verb, meaning ‘must, shall, will’ (2008: 108). Graan’s <gg> (Qvigstad 1947: 19) and Rangius’s <ggi> (Wilson 2008: 107) correspond to <dtj> in modern standard Pite, South and Ume Saami orthography. In both Graan’s and Rangius’s texts, the stems frequently combine with an *-s* when referring to a third person subject. This is also a feature of *atja* in *Lexicon Lapponicum*, where the form *atjas* appears (LXXIX). The *-s* is most probably identical with the third person singular possessive suffix, which, besides appearing in possessive constructions (cf. SaaP *áhttje-s* ‘her/his father’), also combines with verbal stems to form imperatives of the third person (cf. Sammallahti 1998: 79). In Saami third person imperatives can express an optative or permissive meaning (Wiklund 1915: 114; Korhonen 1981: 256; Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 278; Svonni 2019: 106), and it seems the forms

<sup>18</sup> The reference is made to the entry *ečem* ‘I will, shall’ in LW (2).

<sup>19</sup> Qvigstad’s examples are from page 230 and 264 in ML. Qvigstad has omitted some words of the original text in the former example.

ending in *-s* (*uggus*, *uggies*, *atjas*) have a similar function in Graan's and Rangius's texts. Rangius also uses the third person imperative marker with other verbs, of which the forms *galges* (cf. SaaU *galggat* 'shall, will'), *allos* and *ollos* (both imperatives of the negative auxiliary) are the most frequent (Wilson 2008: 103). The use of *allos* and *ollos* corresponds to that of imperatives of the negative auxiliary in South Saami (see examples 13 and 14 in Section 3).

Fjellström (GL 56) mentions that the auxiliary *uggiub/agieb* (1SG) functions as a causal conjunction corresponding to Latin *ut* and *quo*, both of which the meaning is 'in order to, so that', as in example (43).

- (43) *Hweset*                      *agiab*                      *hweidnet!*  
 show.IMP.2SG                      shall.PRS.1SG    see.INF  
 'Show so that I see!' (GL 56)

Fjellström gives a paradigm of all grammatical persons in singular and plural of both stem variants, *uggiu-* and *agie-/agia-*. The two different stems display variation concerning both vowel quality and consonant quantity. He does not mention how the stem variants relate to his division of Saami into a southern (Ume Saami) and northern (Pite Saami) dialect (Larsson 2018: 34), but one can establish that the latter variant corresponds to forms in Pite and Ume Saami which have been attested in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Section 5.2). Information from Halász 1891 possibly indicates that forms with an initial close back vowel may have a southern distribution. His examples are from Stensele (44), in the southern Ume Saami area, and from Frostviken (45), in the northern South Saami area (cf. the negated form *immojt(h)* in Section 4). From the information in Halász's examples, it is impossible to discern any personal suffix, hence the glossing. Judging from the translations, *uč'*, like its cognates, has future reference, possibly with intentional meaning.

- (44) *Koqpp*    *uč'*                      *mennet?*  
 where    will                      go.INF  
 'Where will you go?' (Halász 1891: s.v. *uč'*)

- (45) *Tuh*      *uč'*                      *waccet.*  
 they      will                      walk.INF  
 'They will walk.' (ibid.)

The *Lexicon Lapponicum* also displays forms that phonetically relate to Fjellström's *uggiu-*: *udtjub* 1SG, *udtjubet* 2PL, *udtjus* 3SG (LL s.v.). It also

presents the forms *ádtjob* and *ádtjos* (s.v.) with reference to *udtjus* and not to the following entry *ádtjot* ‘receive’. Fjellström defines forms ending in *-s* (*uggius*, *agies*) as third person plural forms, as opposed to Rangius, who has *uggius* both for third person singular and plural (Wilson 2008: 103).

## 6. The supine and the potential

Since the potential mood shares both morphological and semantic features with the supine (Korhonen 1981: 298; Sammallahti 1998: 222), the potential is of interest for the topic of this article. The potential in Saami, which is historically related to the conditional mood in Finnish (Sammallahti 1998: 83), is usually described as a mood which, in the view of the speaker, expresses possibility, assumption or uncertainty of an event (Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 273; Svonni 2019: 103). Even though widely attested in Saami (Korhonen 1974: 97; Bartens 1980: 1–99), it is quite low in frequency, and in some varieties, if in use at all, it only appears in the copula (< PS *\*lea- ~li- ‘be’*), which also may function as a temporal auxiliary and an existential verb. In the *Lexicon Lapponicum* Öhrling uses the Swedish term *konjunktiv* ‘subjunctive’ when referring to the category. To the clause *Mon etsitjab* (I love.POT.1SG), he gives the Swedish translation ‘Jag må älska’ (I may love, I must love’; LL: LXVII), which reflects a way of expressing optative meaning in Swedish. Halász, following Lönnrot (1856: 156–57), labels the potential “Indefinitivus”, meaning that the term better signifies the category than the subjunctive, since “its value is indefinite” (Halász 1881: 52) and it commonly appears in imperative- or concessive-like constructions.

In Standard North Saami the marker is *-ž-* [t̪] for parasyllabic verbs, *bođežan* ‘I will probably come’ (< *boahit* ‘come’), and *-žž-* [t̪:] for imparisyllabic verbs, *muitalažžá* ‘he probably will tell’ (< *muitalit* ‘tell’), which phonologically corresponds to the Lule *-tj-/-ttj-* and Pite Saami marker *-tj-/-dtj-* (cf. Sjaggo 2015: 20–33). Concerning contemporary Pite Saami, Wilbur (2014: 152–153) states that the potential mood is very little in use<sup>20</sup>. According to Bartens (1980: 303) the use of the potential is limited south of Pite Saami. Schlachter (1958: XVIII) states that forms of the conditional and the potential mood are very difficult to obtain from his Ume Saami informant Lars Sjulsson. However, Calleberg (ULMA 2966) reports full paradigms of present tense potential from Malmesjaur in his Ume Saami recordings from 1922. In South Saami, instances of the potential mood are mostly attested (as

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<sup>20</sup> In a personal comment Wilbur (2021-09-13) told me that this may be due to the limited dataset of his study.

in 46) with the verb *lea-* ‘be’ (SW: 143), but Bergsland (1994: 91) mentions the possibility to use the mood also with other verbs (47). Lagercrantz (1923: 7), from whom Bergsland probably copied his example, has several other examples of forms in the potential with different verbs. The use of the potential mood, however, seems to be very rare in modern South Saami. An indication of this is that NDB treats *ledtjie* as an adverb meaning ‘maybe, might, perhaps’ and not as the potential present of the third person singular.

(46) *Dagke dihte ledtjie baaateme.*  
 maybe he be.POT.3SG come.PTCCP  
 ‘Maybe he has come.’ (SaaS, Bergsland 1994: 91)

(47) *Vööjnetje dle maam vööjnetje.*  
 see.POT.3SG then what.ACC see.POT.3SG  
 ‘He will see what he will see.’ (SaaS, *ibid.*)

The semantic correspondence between the potential mood and the supine has its basis in the categories’ future reference. This circumstance is most obvious if one compares the supine with potentials of the present tense. Events or actions denoted by the potential typically occur, or might occur, at a point in time that follows the time of utterance (cf. examples 48 and 49). By the use of a potential perfect construction, it is possible to place the action before the time of utterance, as in example (46). This phenomenon, however, has more to do with the properties of the perfect tense to put actions in the past, than of properties of the potential. The semantic component of uncertainty, however, remains in the perfect.

(48) *Baláv da muv lastutja .*  
 fear.PRS.1SG that.PL I.GEN willow.bark.PL  
*luvátji.*  
 get.wet.POT.3PL  
 ‘I am afraid that my willow bark might get wet.’ (SaaL, Tuolja & Angéus Kuoljok 2013: 148)

(49) *Na gal don dal oaččut*  
 well surely you now get.PRS.2SG  
*dan beannot čuohtái, go juo*  
 it.ACC one.and.a.half hundred.ILL if already  
*válddežat.*  
 take.POT.2SG

‘You nevertheless get it for 150, if you would take it.’ (SaaN, Nickel & Sammallahti 2011: 273)

The supine, at least in its most widely attested use (see examples 26 and 27 in Section 5.2), has future reference too, but, unlike the potential, it typically denotes a planned action in the future. As such, it does not explicitly denote uncertainty, but since the future always brings certain amount of uncertainty, one can ascribe uncertainty to supine constructions too. Dixon states that future time, because of the uncertainty of the future, may be shown by modalities within irrealis (2012: 7). Korhonen (1974: 200–201) illustrates this uncertainty of a supine construction (50), taken from Qvigstad (1929: 500), by comparing it to a corresponding infinitive construction (51). According to Korhonen, example (51) quite objectively states that the boy went off to fetch his mother, whereas in example (50), there exists the possibility that the boy never fetched his mother even though it was the purpose to begin with.

(50) *De vulggii bárdni eatni-s*  
then leave.PST.3SG boy mother.ACC-PX.3SG  
*vieččažit.*  
fetch.SUP.

‘So the boy went off in order to fetch his mother.’ (SaaN, Korhonen 1974: 200–201)

(51) *De vulggii bárdni eatni-s*  
then leave.PST.3SG boy mother.ACC-PX.3SG  
*viežžat.*  
fetch.INF

‘So the boy went off to fetch his mother.’ (SaaN, idem 201)

Formally, it is perhaps possible to deduct such a semantic discrepancy between the two sentences, especially if the sentences are in the past tense. The corresponding sentences of the present tense, on the other hand, would present a scenario where both the infinitive and the supine have future reference, and, accordingly, a similar portion of uncertainty that the future brings about. Hence, it seems that the infinitive and the supine in many contexts can be exchanged with each other, and, this would perhaps partly explain why the supine today is lacking in many North Saami dialects, even where it has been attested earlier (cf. Korhonen 1974: 198–199). The impression from Lule Saami is that the supine is the default choice in constructions such as that found in example (27). Importantly, however, at

some point in time, the semantic properties of the supine must have motivated its systematic use, both where the use is present today and where it has disappeared.

Bartens, in his thorough investigation of the semantic properties of the potential in Saami (1980: 1–99), points out that the potential in many cases has foremost a temporal meaning and that the modal component in many cases is very weak, if existing at all. As far as the present tense potential is concerned, as in Bartens's examples (idem 24–25), it is often included in statements with future meaning: declaration of intent, promise, announcement and prediction (Ger. *Absichtserklärung*, *Versprechen*, *Ankündigungen*, *Voraussage*). These types of statements put the potential semantically closer to the supine than the meaning described in Saami grammars (cf. examples 48 and 49). Sammallahti also describes the future reference of the potential stating that it “is sometimes used as kind of future form which is otherwise lacking in Saami” (1998: 82–83).

The etymologies of the potential and the supine clearly support a common origin. Sammallahti (1998: 215, 222; cf. Korhonen 1981: 298) points out the Finno-Saamic *\*-ŋsi-tAk* as the origin of supine, the former component being identical with the suffix, which developed into the potential marker in Saami and the conditional marker in Finnish. The component *\*-tAk* is identical with the Finno-Saamic infinitive marker. Accordingly, the supine could be described as the infinitive of the potential.

Regarding semantics, it has been suggested that the potential originates in a derivational suffix which has been ascribed frequentative-continuative (Lehtinen 2007: 92) and diminutive (Korhonen 1981: 252) properties. It is not within the scope of this article to discuss earlier semantic components of the suffix; however, the identification of a common derivational suffix, implies that the relation of the potential and supine is, or at least at some point was, that of a finite and non-finite verb forms based on the same suffix.

## 7. Discussion and concluding remarks

The auxiliary *edtjedh* in South Saami and its cognates in Ume and in Pite Saami do not seem to have cognates among auxiliary verbs in any other Saami variety. From a functional and semantic point of view, however, the verbs show striking similarities with the supine. The supine, which is best preserved in Lule Saami and in western North Saami varieties, is typically used in purposive constructions (see examples 26–27), which is one of the main functions of the South Saami verb *edtjedh* as well (see examples 10–11). Besides the functional and semantic correspondence, there is also a

conspicuous phonetic correspondence, since both *edtjedh* and the supine are formed with a postalveolar affricate as its core. A closer analysis of the potential shows similar semantic, phonetic and functional correspondences.

Although there are semantic discrepancies between the potential, the supine and the verb *edtjedh*, they are, in my opinion, not distinct enough to rule out a historical cognation (see Section 6). However, to include *edtjedh* in the etymology, one must first explain the circumstance that *edtjedh* is a verb in its own right, and that the other two possible cognates, the supine and the potential, are morphological markers. Since suffixes mark the supine and the potential in Saami and the conditional in Finnish, it seems more plausible that *edtjedh* developed from an original suffix than vice versa. This assumption implies that *edtjedh* appeared as an auxiliary verb through the process of degrammaticalization, or, more specifically, through a process of debonding (see Norde 2009: 186), when the originally bound morpheme transformed into an auxiliary.

A possible first step in the process of degrammaticalization could have been that the suffix, in an inflectional form, started to adhere to categories other than verb stems. From Pite Saami there is evidence of the cognate verb *atjav* attaching to infinitives (see Section 5.2), and in South Saami it is attested how *edjedh* merges with pronouns (see Section 4). These two instances give an indication of how the suffix may have separated from verb stems. When separated from the lexical verb stem, the constituent starts acquiring the syntactic properties of an auxiliary. The next step in the development towards a verb would be that the form starts to appear as a separate word, thus as an auxiliary in its own right. The evidence from Pite Saami shows that cognates in the form of the auxiliary verb, of the supine and of the potential existed side by side (see Section 5.3).

Another circumstance which points to the verb's origin in a suffix is the variation concerning the quality of the initial vowel (see section 4). The variation indicates a reflection of different vowels, which, depending on the quality of the verb stem, precede the consonant of the suffix. A similar variation, for instance, appears today in the following Lule Saami first person potential forms: *javl-a-tjav* < *javlla-* 'say', *váld-i-tjav* < *vállde-* 'take', *jáhtál-ttjav* < *jáhtál-* 'move, migrate'. From *Lexicon Lapponicum*, the first person singular potential forms *ets-i-tjab* (LXVII) < *etse-* 'love' (cf. SaaS *iehtsie-*, SaaU *eähtsie-* 'idem') and *jukk-a-tjab* (LXXVI) < *jukke-* 'drink' (cf. SaaS *jovke-*, SaaU *juvka-* 'idem') may serve as an illustration of this vowel variation as well.

The stress in Saami falls on the first syllable. That implies that a verb like *vööjnetje* 'he will see' (cf. example 43), yields an unstressed vowel in second

syllable. When a constituent formed of the two last syllable nuclei and the intermediate consonant detaches from the rest of the word, which this article also suggests has happened, the initial vowel inherits some properties of the unstressed vowel. The outcome of such a process would explain the attested prosodic weakness and the reduced quality, or even complete lack, of the first vowel. The tendency of South Saami auxiliaries to be unstressed and pronounced as monosyllabic words, e.g., *gem* instead of *galkem* ‘I shall’ (Bergsland 1994: 82), may also have contributed to the occurrence of forms without an initial vowel (see example 14).

In earlier stages of South Saami, potential forms of the parisyllabic verb *vuejnedh* ‘see’ and the imparisyllabic verb *byöpmedidh* in the present singular could, somewhat speculatively, be assumed to have been *\*vööjne-tjem* 1P, *\*vööjne-tjh* 2P, *vööjne-tje* 3P (cf. example 35) and *\*byöpmed-adtjem* 1P, *\*byöpmed-adtjh* 2P, *\*byöbmed-adtja* 3P. In the process of degrammaticalization, the verb adopted the morphology of a parisyllabic verb from the imparisyllabic potential forms, and on basis of the potential inflection, the verb came to be associated with verb group IV (see Tables 1 and 2), with which it had most inflectional correspondence.

Since the potential in Saami has the same origin as the conditional in Finnish, it seems plausible that they have developed from a category that had modal properties. It is of course not possible to exactly pinpoint the category’s modal properties, which quite plausibly also could have been quite varied, but judging from the semantic properties of the potential and supine in Saami and the conditional in Finnish, it would possibly have had a modal meaning which could be labelled *irrealis*. In Saami this category developed into the potential and the supine, the supine being the potential suffix plus the infinitive suffix. In the course of its development, the semantic properties of the conditional must have interplayed with those of the potential, at which point the two categories gained their modal status (cf. Korhonen 1981: 254).

The semantic properties of expressions of intention and of purpose are similar. They both involve an aim and have future reference. The possibility to express either intention (Section 2) or purpose (Section 3) with *edtjedh* is essentially conditioned by syntax. Typically, when in a main clause, it combines with the other constituents of the clause to express intention, and, when in a subordinate construction, it combines with other constituents of the construction to express purpose. It is its function similar to that of a purposive subordinator, which is the most conspicuous, since, with the exception of Ume and (earlier) Pite Saami, no other Saami languages display a verb with similar function, and, interestingly, neither do the most influential contact languages Norwegian and Swedish. However, purposiveness is found in constructions

with the supine, which, initially, possibly has motivated its function as a purpose marker, when it started to appear as a separate verb. The rise of *edtjedh* as a purpose marker may also have caused the displacement of the supine, which would explain why the supine is poorly attested in South Saami. In addition, one should note in this context that expressions of negative purpose in South Saami, also may be initiated by finite constructions (see examples 13 and 14). The Norwegian *skulle* and the Swedish *skall* could possibly have affected the semantic extension of the verb so that it can also express deontic meaning (see example 1).

Even though South Saami has a lot in common with the other Saami languages, it also possesses features in several linguistic domains that make it stand out from them (see, e.g., Magga 2012). The auxiliary verb *edtjedh*, may not be unique for South Saami, but, owing to its high frequency and its central role as a modal auxiliary verb, it is quite emblematic for the language. In addition, the verb with its historical background provides an interesting example of degrammaticalisation, which is a quite rare feature (see Norde 2009).

### Abbreviations

ACC—accusative; ATTR—attributive; COM—comitative; CONNEG—connegative; DU—dual; GEN—genitive; Ger. —German; ILL—illative; IMP—imperative; INE—inessive; INF—infinitive; NEG—negation verb; Nor. —Norwegian; PL—plural; POT—potential; PPTCP—past participle; PRS—present tense; PST—past tense; PTCL—particle; PX—possessive suffix; Q—question participle; SG—singular; SUP—supine; SUPERL—superlative; Swe.—Swedish.

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