

# On past participles and their external arguments

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## Abstract

Swedish makes a morphological distinction between participles used in perfect contexts, *perfect participles*, and participles used in passive contexts, *past participles*. In most contexts, the former appear with the external argument as a subject DP, while the latter realize the external argument as an adjunct PP. In this paper I argue that past participles are however not restricted to passive contexts but can appear in active structures with the external argument taking the form of a DP subject. Unlike temporal *ha* ('have'), which selects a perfect participle, and passive *vara* and *bli* ('be'/'become'), which select passive past participles, aspectual *få* ('get') selects an active past participle.

## 1 Introduction

In English and many other languages, what appears to be the same participle can appear in either a perfect or a passive context:

- (1) a. John has **written** a book.
- b. The book was **written** by John.

Unlike these languages, Swedish makes a morphological distinction between participles appearing in the complement of *ha* ('have'), i.e. in the perfect, and in the complement of *vara/bli* ('be'/'become'), i.e. in the passive:<sup>1,2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The perfect participial morpheme is glossed as SUP (standing for 'supine') and the past participial morpheme as PPTC.

<sup>2</sup>This distinction is also made in some dialects of Norwegian. In *Nynorsk*, for example, past and perfect participles thus have different forms:

- (1) a. Mari har **skrivi**/**\*skrivn** artikkelen.  
      Mari has write-SUP/write-PPTC paper-DEF  
      'Mari has written the paper.'

- (2) a. Johanna har **skrivit** en bok.  
 Johanna has write-SUP a book  
 ‘Johanna has written a book.’
- b. Boken blev **skriven** av Johanna.  
 book-DEF became write-PPTC by Johanna  
 ‘The book was written by Johanna.’

In general, these two types of participle differ in how they realize their external argument. In the perfect, the external argument appears as a DP in the subject position, while in the passive, it takes the form of an adjunct PP allowing for the underlying object to raise to the grammatical subject position instead.

However, the picture is more complex than this. As discussed in Larsson (2009, 11), some past participles have an active reading. The subject of these participles is the same as in the corresponding perfect construction and there is thus no argument demotion involved:

- (3) a. Katten är bortsprungen.  
 cat-DEF is away.run-PPTC  
 ‘The cat has run away/is missing.’
- b. Katten har sprungit bort.  
 cat-DEF has run-SUP away  
 ‘The cat has run away.’

The past participle in (3a) is formed from an intransitive verb with an incorporated resultative particle. Larsson takes the underlying verb in participles of this kind to be unaccusative. The grammatical subject is in other words analyzed as a raised object even in these cases.

In the following, I will argue that the phenomenon of past participles with active interpretation is actually not restricted to intransitive participles of the type in (3a). Instead, in fact *almost* all past participles can get an active reading in the right context. More precisely, as an alternative to having their

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- b. Artikkelen er **skriven**/\***skrivi** av Mari.  
 paper-DEF is write-PPTC/write-SUP by Mari  
 ‘The paper was written by Mari.’

external argument realized in the usual way as a PP adjunct, past participles in the complement of *få* ('get') can also realize their external argument as a DP subject. These two possibilities are illustrated in (4a)–(4b):<sup>3</sup>

- (4) a. **Per** fick skrivet en hel del igår.  
 Per got write-PPTC quite a lot yesterday  
 'Per got quite a lot written yesterday.'
- b. Olle fick fönstren tvättade **av sin granne**.  
 Olle got windows-DEF wash-PPTC by his neighbour  
 'Olle got/had the windows cleaned by his neighbour.'

In (4a), *Per* is interpreted as the Agent writer, i.e. as the external argument of the participle. In (4b), in contrast, the Agent washer appears in the form of an *av*-phrase ('by'-phrase) and the grammatical subject, *Olle*, is interpreted either as a Causer or a Beneficiary (see Klingvall, In prep, for distinctions between these two readings). Interestingly thus, both (4b) and (4a) feature a past participle, although their external arguments surface in different forms.<sup>4</sup>

The sentences in (4a)–(4b) beg the question of how external arguments are licensed in participial contexts. The sentences show that the presence of (past) participial morphology does not necessarily have to be linked to demotion (or complete absence) of an external argument (for early analyses of such a relation, see Jaeggli, 1986; Baker et al., 1989). In other words, then, past participles are not confined to being passive or unaccusative.

In this paper, I look at this issue in connection with *få*-constructions of the types in (4a)–(4b). I propose that these constructions are multiply ambiguous because *få* can be a causative verb, a benefactive verb or an aspectual verb. These verbs select different types of complement.

<sup>3</sup>Also in Norwegian, past participles appear in *få*-constructions and are multiply ambiguous (see Christensen and Taraldsen, 1989; Taraldsen, 1995; Lødrup, 1996). Although Swedish and Norwegian *få*-constructions differ with regard to the possible word orders, they share the crucial property of employing a past participle with active interpretation. I leave a systematic comparison of *få*-constructions in the two languages for future research.

<sup>4</sup>In some dialects, a perfect rather than past participle is used in agentive constructions like the one in (4a) (see Ljunggren 1934, 47–53 and Larsson 2009, 407–408). The analysis in the present paper, however, accounts for the pattern in Standard Swedish, where only a past participle is well-formed in these contexts.

The general idea is that external argument assignment is uniformly taken care of by Voice (see e.g. Kratzer, 1996, and many others) and that Voice can take a verbal participial complement. If the external argument of the participle appears as a DP in the specifier of Voice, as in active constructions, the result is an active past participle. If it instead takes the form of a PP, adjoined to Voice, a passive past participle is formed. In the latter case, Voice is itself selected by a functional head, Pass, that satisfies the selectional requirements of Voice (see Bruening, to appear). The technicalities are elaborated on in detail in section 4.

If past participles have the possibility of realizing their external argument as a subject DP, the question arises as to how these active past participles differ from perfect participles. Larsson (2009, 61ff) argues that participles differ in their tense properties: although all participles are non-finite, perfect ones have a past tense value, while past participles (active and passive ones alike) have no tense. Constructions with perfect participles are therefore biclausal, including both an embedded non-finite TP with the value [PAST] and a matrix finite TP. In this paper, I would like to relate this tense difference between perfect and past participles to their difference in morphological agreement. Depending on whether V comes with or without a tense feature, it will show more ‘verb-like’ or more ‘adjective-like’ behavior. V underlying a past participle lacks a tense feature and can therefore be selected by an agreement projection, similarly to an adjective. Even in this case, however, V will retain some of its verbal behavior (i.e. it is not indistinguishable from an adjective) and can therefore in turn be selected by Voice. In this way, the (in)ability to agree morphologically could be argued to be related to the tense properties of the participles.

The three participles are thus the spell-out of different syntactic structures:

- (5) a. Perfect participle: T + Voice +  $V_{past}$
- b. Active past participle: Voice + Agr + V
- c. Passive past participle: Pass + Voice + Agr + V

The fact that the participles co-occur with different auxiliaries can be captured in terms of selection: *vara/bli* ('be'/'become') selects Pass (i.e. a passive past participle), while *ha* ('have') selects T (i.e. a perfect participle) and aspectual *få* selects tenseless Voice (i.e. an active past participle).<sup>5</sup>

That participles can be of different type is of course old news. Since at least Wasow (1977), past participles are known to be either verbal or adjectival. While Wasow analyzed these as being formed in different components (the syntax and the lexicon, respectively), many subsequent studies have argued that they differ in their internal structure, rather than in their place of formation (see e.g. Abney, 1987; Embick, 2004; Kratzer, 2000). These authors also make finer distinctions between the participles, recognizing not only eventive (verbal) and stative (adjectival) ones, but also an intermediate resultative participle. In this paper, I leave the aspectual interpretations of past participles aside (but see e.g. Lundquist, 2008; Larsson, 2009), and instead focus on their interaction with Voice and their realization of an external argument.

The outline of the paper is the following: In section 2, I look at perfect and past participial forms from the point of view of morphology, distribution, and argument realization. In section 3, I turn to past participles that show active-like behavior and discuss them in relation to passive and perfect ones. Section 4 sketches an analysis and 5 offers concluding remarks.

## 2 Two forms: perfect and past participles

Verbs in Swedish can be grouped into a number of conjugations, one of which consists of strong verbs. Strong verbs use different morphemes for the perfect (also referred to as the *supine*) and past participial forms: *-it* for the perfect, and *-et* for the past participial form (Teleman et al., 1999, Vol II, 58–59):

- (6) a. skrivit, knutit, sjungit, vunnit  
 write-SUP, tie-SUP, sing-SUP, win-SUP  
 'written', 'tied', 'sung', 'won'

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<sup>5</sup>*Få* has other selectional properties in causative and beneficiary constructions because *få* itself is not the same verb in these cases. See section 4.

- b. skrivet, knutet, sjunget, vunnet  
 write-PPTC, tie-PPTC, sing-PPTC, win-PPTC  
 ‘written’, ‘tied’, ‘sung’, ‘won’

In spoken language, some dialects make a distinction between perfect and past participles also for weak verbs. The final *-t* is left out in the perfect form but retained in the past participial form (see also Larsson, 2009, 418–419):

- (7) a. Dom har laga midda.  
 they have cook-SUP dinner-DEF  
 ‘The’ve prepared dinner.’  
 b. Middan är lagad.  
 dinner-DEF is cook-PPTC  
 ‘The dinner is ready.’

The perfect participle appears in the complement of the temporal auxiliary *ha* (‘have’), while the past participle appears with *vara* (‘be’) or *bli* (‘become’).

While the perfect form is invariable, (8a)–(8b), the past participle agrees morphologically with the subject in number and gender, (9a)–(9c).<sup>6</sup> Morphologically, the past participle thus behaves like an adjective and the perfect participle like a verb (see Platzack, 1980).

- (8) a. Per har strukit skjortan/skjortorna/örngottet.  
 Per has ironed shirt-DEF/shirts-DEF/pillowcase-DEF  
 ‘Per has ironed the shirt/shirts/pillowcase.’  
 b. Pojkarna har strukit skjortan/skjortorna/örngottet.  
 boys-DEF have ironed shirt-DEF/shirts-DEF/pillowcase-DEF

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<sup>6</sup> In impersonal passives, it could either be argued that the participle agrees with the expletive subject or, alternatively, that it takes the default form. In the latter case, agreement would be dependent on overt movement of the underlying object. Even in impersonal passives, however, the object can move across the participle, with optional agreement on the participle:

- (1) a. Det blev struket ett par skjortor igår.  
 it became iron-PPTC a couple shirts yesterday  
 ‘A couple of shirts were ironed yesterday.’  
 b. Det blev ett par skjortor struket/strukna igår.  
 it became a couple shirts iron-PPTC/iron-PPTC.PL yesterday  
 ‘A couple of shirts were ironed yesterday.’

‘The boys have ironed the shirt/shirts/pillowcase.’

- (9) a. Skjortan är struken/ren.  
shirt-DEF is iron-PPTC.NONNEUT/clean  
‘The shirt is (has been) ironed/clean.’
- b. Skortorna är strukna/rena.  
shirts are iron-PPTC.PL/clean-PL  
‘The shirts are ironed/clean.’
- c. Örngottet är struket/rent.  
pillowcase-DEF is iron-PPTC.NEUT/clean-NEUTR  
‘The pillowcase is ironed/clean.’

Furthermore, like adjectives, past participles can function as the predicate of a Small Clause with the underlying object as its subject (i.e. obligatorily appearing to its left). Perfect participles, on the other hand, lack this ability:

- (10) a. Jag fick se [artikeln omarbetad/klar/\*färdigskrivit]  
I got see paper-DEF PTC.work-PPTC/ready/PTC.write-SUP  
igår.  
yesterday  
‘I saw the paper rewritten/ready yesterday.’
- b. Med [artikeln skriven/klar/\*skrivit] kunde hon ta  
with paper-DEF write-PPTC/ready/write-SUP could she take  
ledigt några dagar.  
holiday some days  
‘With the paper written she was able to take a few days off.’

Perfect and past participles also differ in their ability to undergo morphological passivization. In this respect too, the perfect participle has a more verbal behavior<sup>7</sup> in being able to form a morphological passive, while the past participle is more adjective-like, in lacking this ability:

<sup>7</sup>The infinitive, present tense, past tense and perfect participial forms can undergo morphological passivization: (*att*) *skrivās* (‘to be written’ lit. to write-PASS), *skrivs* (‘is (being) written’ lit. write-PRES.PASS), *skrevs* (‘was written’ lit. write-PAST.PASS), (*har*) *skrivits* (‘has been written’ lit. has write-SUP.PASS)

- (11) Skjortan har strukits/\*strukets.  
 shirt-DEF has ironed-S/iron-PPTC.S  
 ‘The shirt has been ironed.’

Even when the perfect form is passivized, it appears in the complement of *have*, as seen in (11).

As mentioned in section 1, past and perfect participles differ in how their external argument is expressed. Perfect participles appear in structures where the external argument is the subject DP, (12a), while past participles are found in structures where it takes the form of an *av*-phrase (‘by’-phrase), (12b):

- (12) a. Pelle har strukit/\*struket örngottet.  
 Pelle has ironed/iron-PPTC pillowcase-DEF  
 ‘Pelle has ironed the pillowcase.’
- b. Örngottet blev struket/\*strukit av Pelle.  
 pillowcase-DEF was iron-PPTC/ironed by Pelle  
 ‘The pillowcase was ironed by Pelle.’

The perfect participle is thus used in active, perfect constructions while the past participle is employed in periphrastic passive structures.

Finally, as discussed by Larsson (2009, 69), past and perfect participles have different tense properties. The perfect participle is inherently past tense, while the past participle has no inherent tense. Constructions with perfect participles will therefore have complex tense, while those with past participles will have simple tense. In (13a), thus, the writing of the book will be finished by Monday, while in (13b), the writing will take place on Monday:

- (13) a. På måndag kommer jag att ha skrivit boken.  
 on Monday will I to have write-SUP book-DEF already  
 ‘On Monday I will have written the book.’
- b. På måndag kommer boken att bli skriven.  
 on Monday will book-DEF to be write-PPTC  
 ‘The book will be written on Monday.’



### 3 A mismatch

As shown in the section above, perfect participles appear in active sentences with the external argument as the subject (except when the perfect form is itself passivized), while past participles appear in passive sentences where the external argument takes the form of a PP. In certain cases, however, also past participles realize their external argument as a subject DP. That is the case with a particular type of intransitive participle (see example (3a) above) and, more generally, with participles in the complement of *få* ('get'). In the complement of *få* ('get'), past participles can thus either show an active or a passive behavior:

- (14) a. Per fick fönstren utbytta.  
Per got windows-DEF replace-PPTC  
'Per got the windows replaced.'
- b. Maria fick cykeln förstörd.  
Maria got bike-DEF destroy-PPTC  
'Maria's bike got destroyed.'
- c. Petra fick en massa saker gjorda.  
Petra got a lot things do-PPTC  
'Petra got a lot of things done.'

Sentences with *få* and a past participle can in principle have three different interpretations (see Klingvall, In prep). The sentence in (14a), for instance, can mean that Per replaced the windows, that he made someone else (or himself) replace the windows, or that someone else replaced Per's windows without his knowing anything about it. On the first reading, Per is an Agent, on the second a Causer, and on the third a Beneficiary. (In general, it seems that the causative reading is often more difficult to get and requires more from the context.) In (14b), the most plausible interpretation is that Maria suffered from someone else's destroying her bike, making Maria a Maleficient (i.e. the negative correspondence to a Beneficiary). The sentence in (14c), finally, is interpreted with Petra as an Agent, so that what is understood is that Petra got a lot of things done by doing them herself.

The three readings of *få*-constructions arise, I would like to argue, because *få* is a different verb in the different cases. Causative readings result when *få* is a causative verb, licensing a Causer subject. This verb can take either an active or a passive complement:

- (15) a. Petra fick Olle att måla fönstren.  
 Petra got Olle to paint windows-DEF  
 ‘Petra made Olle paint the windows.’
- b. Petra fick fönstren målade (av Olle).  
 Petra got windows-DEF paint-PPTC (by Olle)  
 ‘Petra got the windows painted (by Olle).’

In (15a), *få* is followed by a DP and a *to*-infinitive, while in (15b), it is followed by a DP and a past participle. Notably, however, the participial structure can also be expanded into a *to*-infinitive with a passive complement:

- (16) Petra fick fönstren att bli målade (av Olle).  
 Petra got windows-DEF to become paint-PPTC (by Olle)  
 ‘Petra got the windows painted by Olle.’

Since also the participial structure can take the form of a *to*-infinitive, it seems reasonable to assume that causative *få* is always followed by this type of complement but that *att bli* (‘to become’) need not be pronounced in the passive case. If that is the case, the sentences in (15a)–(15b) can get a uniform analysis involving object control. In both cases, causative *få* selects for an object DP and an infinitival clause. The object DP controls PRO in the embedded clause.<sup>8</sup>

- (17) Causative *få* = CAUSE  
 $[_{vP} DP_{Causer} CAUSE DP_i [_{CP} att PRO_i VP ]]$

The infinitival VP can be active or passive. In the former case, PRO is the logical subject of the embedded VP, while in the latter, it is the logical object moved to the embedded subject position in the passivization operation. The

<sup>8</sup>Since causative *få* takes both a DP and an infinitival clause as complement, it should probably be analyzed as a V+v combination, where the infinitival clause appears in the complement of V, the DP object in its specifier, and the Causer subject in the specifier of v.

causative structure is bivalent, involving a causing event as well as a caused event.

With *att bli* spelled out, the sentence in (16) is unambiguously causative and thus no longer has a beneficiary reading. Unlike the causative, the beneficiary reading involves only a single event. Therefore, the beneficiary construction cannot take an infinitival clause in the complement of *få*. The idea is thus that causative and beneficiary *få* are two distinct verbs (see Klingvall, In prep).<sup>9</sup> Beneficiary *få*-constructions are similar to sentences with *få* as a main verb with the meaning ‘get’ or ‘receive’. If we analyze main verb *få* on a par with English *get*, *få* is a complex verb, consisting of BECOME and P<sub>HAVE</sub> (see Harley, 2002, 2004; Alexiadou, 2005):

- (18) Recipient *få* = HAVE + BECOME  
 $[_{vP} \text{BECOME} [_{PP} \text{DP}_{\text{Recipient}} \text{P}_{\text{HAVE}} \text{DP}]]$

Beneficiary *få*-constructions would then differ minimally from the Recipient structures in selecting not a DP but a participial phrase as a complement of P<sub>HAVE</sub>.<sup>10</sup>

- (19) Beneficiary *få* = HAVE + BECOME  
 $[_{vP} \text{BECOME} [_{PP} \text{DP}_{\text{Beneficiary}} \text{P}_{\text{HAVE}} [_{PtcP} \text{DP Ptc}]]]$

As seen in (19), I take the beneficiary reading to be a variant of the Recipient reading. In other words, the Beneficiary and Recipients arguments are assigned by the same head. In coordinated structures, the same argument can therefore be interpreted as a Recipient in one conjunct and a Beneficiary in the other:

- (20) Pelle fick tänderna lagade och en ny tandställning.  
 Pelle got teeth-DEF repair-PPTC and a new brace  
 ‘Pelle got a new brace and his teeth repaired.’

<sup>9</sup>The causative but not beneficiary *få*-construction can appear in the complement of a control verb. Similarly, the causative construction can appear in the imperative, while the beneficiary cannot (see Klingvall, In prep).

<sup>10</sup>In (19) and (21), DP+past participle has been labelled PtcP as a short-hand for more complex structures that will be discussed in section 4.

Crucially, the Beneficiary and Recipient arguments are subjects of a stative predicate,  $P_{HAVE}$ . In that respect, these arguments differ substantially from Agents and Causers, which are subjects of non-stative predicates. Although both Agents and Causers play an active role in the carrying out, or bringing about, of an event, they appear in different types of  $f\ddot{a}$ -constructions.

Agentive readings of  $f\ddot{a}$ -constructions should be distinguished from those causative readings on which the Causer is co-indexed with the Agent. If such a reading is at all available for (14a), for instance, it has it that Per made himself replace the windows. The agentive reading of this sentence, in contrast, does not give rise to any idea about Per specifically causing himself to do anything, but is neutral with regard to that. Like the beneficiary construction, but unlike the causative one, the agentive construction is monoclausal, involving one single event. In other words, while  $f\ddot{a}$  is a causative verb with a Causer subject on the causative reading, it is more like an aspectual auxiliary on the agentive reading (see e.g. Christensen and Taraldsen, 1989; Taraldsen, 1995, for this view on the Norwegian data).

- (21) Agentive  $f\ddot{a}$  = ASP  
 $[_{AspP} ASP [_{PtcP} DP_{Agent} Ptc DP ]]$

The agentive structure differs crucially from the causative and beneficiary ones. More precisely, the causative and beneficiary readings of the sentences in (14) can be shown to involve passive structures in the sense that they can appear with agentive *av*-phrases ('by'-phrases):

- (22) Per fick fönstren utbytta av hyresvärden.  
 Per got windows-DEF replace-PPTC by landlord-DEF  
 'Per got/had the windows replaced by his landlord.'

On the agentive readings of these sentences, in contrast, *av*-phrases are not well-formed. In these cases, the subject is interpreted as the Agent of the participle, as already mentioned, and the illicitness of an *av*-phrase is therefore expected:<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup>*Av*-phrases are allowed in sentences where the object follows rather than precedes the participle (see section 3.1 below). In these sentences, however, they do not *name* an Agent

- (23) \* Petra fick en massa saker gjorda av sig själv.  
 Petra got a lot things do-PPTC by herself

The agentive sentence is different from the causative and beneficiary ones also in other respects, as will be shown below.

### 3.1 Word order

The agentive sentence allows for a variation in word-order: the object can appear either to the left or to the right of the participle. In fact, the order on which the object follows the participle is in many cases preferred (see the discussion in Hedlund, 1992).<sup>12</sup> This is the only word order possible in the corresponding perfect construction, (24b). In passives, the object can appear to the right of the participle if the subject is an expletive element, (24c) (but see footnote 6).

- (24) a. Per fick (en hel del) skrivet (en hel del) igår.  
 Per got (quite a lot) write-PPTC (quite a lot) yesterday  
 ‘Per wrote quite a lot yesterday.’
- b. Maria har (\*en hel del) skrivit en hel del.  
 Maria has (quite a lot) write-SUP quite a lot  
 ‘Maria has written quite a lot.’

but say of the Agent that it did something ‘of its own accord’. In fact, such *av*-phrases are licit also in simple active sentences:

- (1) a. Petra fick gjort en massa saker av sig själv.  
 Petra got do-PPTC a lot of things by REFL self  
 ‘Petra got a lot of things done of her own accord.’
- b. Petra gjorde en massa saker av sig själv.  
 Petra did a lot of things by REFL self  
 ‘Petra did a lot of things of her own accord.’

<sup>12</sup>While the DP-Ptc order in Swedish allows for all three interpretations, the Ptc-DP order strongly favors the agentive reading (see main text below). In Norwegian *få*-constructions, the pattern is somewhat different. According to Taraldsen (1995, 208–209), the DP-Ptc order does not allow the agentive reading (but thus only the causative and beneficiary), while the Ptc-DP order can get all three readings. See also Christensen and Taraldsen (1989); Lødrup (1996).

- c. Det blev lagat en massa mat i helgen.  
 it became cook-PPTC a lot of food this weekend  
 ‘A lot of food was cooked this weekend.’

When the object precedes the participle, the sentence is multiply ambiguous, as discussed above. On closer inspection however, the ambiguity seems to disappear when the object instead follows the participle. Recall that causative *få* always selects DP+*to*-infinitive but that *att bli* need not be overtly expressed. When *att bli* is spelled out, however, the order on which the object DP appears to the right of the participle is ungrammatical:

- (25) a. Per fick mycket (att bli) gjort.  
 Per got a lot (to become) do-PPTC  
 ‘Per got a lot done.’  
 b. Per fick (\*att bli) gjort mycket.  
 Per got (to become) do-PPTC a lot  
 ‘Per got a lot done.’

The ill-formedness of (25b) could be due to causative *få* lacking an object and embedded PRO therefore not being controlled or being controlled by the object to its right. The latter would be a case of backwards control.

The ability of the agentive sentence to have the object to the right of the participle also makes it possible to distinguish it from the Beneficiary structure. As shown above, a Beneficiary *få*-construction can be combined with a Recipient one because their subjects are variants of the same type. With the order on which the object follows the participle, the coordination becomes odd because one conjunct is interpreted as having an Agent subject while the other has a Recipient subject (speakers vary in their judgements of (26b)):

- (26) a. Anna hade fått cykeln stulen och massor av  
 Anna had got bike-DEF steal-PPTC and a lot of  
 blåmärken.  
 bruises  
 ‘Anna had got her bike stolen and a lot of bruises.’

- b. ?? Anna hade fått stulet cykeln och en massa blåmärken.  
 Anna had got steal-PPTC bike-DEF and a lot of bruises  
 ‘Anna had stolen the bike and got a lot of bruises.’

As shown, then, when the object follows the participle, the agentive reading is strongly preferred and, in some cases, actually the only possible reading. In the following sections, I look at properties of *få*-constructions that have this inverse order. These are then properties applying to the agentive *få*-construction.

### 3.2 Definite DPs

Although passives can appear with the object to the right of the participle if the subject is an expletive element, this possibility is restricted to contexts where the object is indefinite or headed by a weak quantifier, as shown in (27a). In the case of the agentive *få*-construction, on the other hand, there is no such restriction, (27b). Any type of object is thus fine, precisely as in the perfect, (27c):<sup>13</sup>

- (27) a. Det blev överlämnat några presenter/en  
 it became give-PPTC some presents/a  
 present/\*presenten vid avtackningen.  
 present/present-DEF at farewell ceremony  
 ‘Some presents/A present was given at the farewell ceremony.’
- b. Per fick överlämnat några presenter/en present/presenten  
 Per got give-PPTC some presents/a present/present-DEF  
 vid avtackningen.  
 at farewell ceremony  
 ‘Per gave some presents/a present/the present at the farewell ceremony.’

<sup>13</sup>As discussed in section 3.1 above, the causative reading is almost always unavailable when the object follows the participle. The sentence in (27b), for instance, very strongly resists a causative reading. If an expletive element in the object position of *få* is inserted and *att bli* is spelled out, the causative reading is however fine. Notably, as in the passive structure in (27a), the DP to the right of the participle cannot be definite. The definiteness effect thus arises here too, precisely as in other passive contexts with expletive subjects.

- c. Per har överlämnat några presenter/en present/presenten.  
 Per has give-SUP some presents/a present/present-DEF  
 ‘Per has given some presents/a present/the present.’

When the DP stays in situ in the passive, an expletive element has to fill the subject position and a type of existential construction is formed. Such constructions are subject to a definiteness restriction. In the *få*-construction, in contrast, the subject is always referential and the order between the participle and object DP is irrelevant. There is therefore no definiteness effect in the agentive *få*-construction.

### 3.3 Reflexives

Although an object can stay in situ in an impersonal passive, it can never take the form of a reflexive pronoun. This is what we expect, given that there is no DP to bind it, the expletive not being an appropriate binder. Importantly, the presence of an agentive *av*-phrase does not help, (28a).<sup>14,15</sup> The agentive *få*-construction, (28b), in contrast, behaves like simple and perfect active constructions in allowing the object to be a reflexive pronoun, (28c)–(28d):

- (28) a. \*Det blev rakat sig (av Olle) innan det var dags  
 it became shave-PPTC REFL by Olle before it was time  
 att gå.  
 to go
- b. Per fick rakat sig innan det var dags att gå.  
 Per got shave-PPTC REFL before it was time to go  
 ‘Per shaved before it was time to leave.’
- c. Per rakade sig innan det var dags att gå.  
 Per shaved REFL before it was time to go  
 ‘Per shaved before it was time to leave.’

<sup>14</sup>While impersonal morphological passives normally resist *av*-phrases (see Engdahl, 2006), periphrastic ones do not seem to do that to the same extent.

<sup>15</sup>The reflexive data are evidence against a Collins-type analysis of passives in Swedish. Collins (2005) argues that the external argument of the passive is merged as a DP (not a PP), precisely as in the active. External arguments in actives and passives are therefore predicted to behave alike, both being DPs. As seen in (28), however, that is not the case in Swedish.



- d. Per har rakat sig.  
Per has shave-SUP REFL  
'Per has shaved.'

### 3.4 Particles

Verbal particles appear as free elements to the right of the verb in the perfect, (29a), but incorporate into the participle in the passive, (29b)–(29c). In the agentive *få*-construction, however, they can remain unincorporated, (29d):

- (29) a. Per har rensat ut/\*utrensat några böcker.  
Per has cleared PCL/\*PCL-cleared some books  
'Per has cleared out some books.'
- b. Några böcker blev utrensade/ \*rensade ut.  
some books became PCL-clear-PPTC/ clear-PPTC PCL  
'Some books were cleared out.'
- c. Det blev utrensat/ ??rensat ut några böcker.  
it became PCL-clear-PPTC/ clear-PPTC PCL some books  
'Several books were cleared out.'
- d. Per fick rensat ut/ \*utrensat några böcker.  
Per got clear-PPTC PCL/ PCL-clear-PPTC some books  
'Per got the books cleared out.'

In impersonal passives, like the one in (29c), particle incorporation is possible but not obligatory. While incorporation is obligatory if the object moves across the participle, the particle thus can, but need not, incorporate if the object remains to the right of the participle.<sup>16</sup>

To sum up so far then, although the agentive *få*-construction employs a past participle, it behaves more like an active than a passive construction. In addition to realizing the external argument as a DP in the subject position, the object can freely stay in situ (to the right of the participle), need not be an indefinite (or weakly quantified) DP and can take the form of a reflexive pronoun.

<sup>16</sup>See e.g. Svenonius (1996) and Josefsson (1998) for analyses of particle incorporation.

## 4 Towards an analysis

As described in the previous sections, *få*-constructions have several interpretations. The causative and beneficiary *få*-constructions behave like complex passive structures while the agentive *få*-construction does not. The latter has an agentive subject, which is interpreted as being the subject of the participle, and does not require its object to move to the left of the participle. Participles in the complement of agentive *få* are morphologically of the past participial type but in other respects share properties with perfect participles. I refer to these agentive participles as active past participles.

There are three cases, then, to account for: perfect participles, passive past participles, and active past participles. As we have seen, these differ along two dimensions: morphological agreement and form of the external argument. Perfect participles lack agreement and realize the external argument as a DP. Passive past participles represent the inverse situation in that they show agreement but realize their external argument as a PP and not a DP. Active past participles, finally, show agreement and have DP external arguments:<sup>17</sup>

- (30) a. Perfect participle: –agr, +DP subj  
 b. Passive past participle: +agr, –DP subj  
 c. Active past participle: +agr, +DP subj

Having properties of both perfect and passive participles, the active past participle can be described as an intermediate type.

As for agreement, I propose to relate it to another property differentiating between perfect and past participles. Following Larsson (2009, 69), I take perfect and past participles to differ in their tense properties. Both participle types are non-finite but the perfect participle has a tense specification lacking in past participles. The former is obligatorily past tense, as was shown in section 2. The contrast is repeated in the examples in (31a)–(31c), below. Thus, unlike the past participles in (31b)–(31c), the perfect participle in (31a) refers

<sup>17</sup>As pointed out by Platzack (p.c.), the fourth possible combination, i.e. –agr, –DP subject, is descriptively the one applying to perfect participles that have undergone morphological passivization.

to a point in time that is prior to the point of time referred to by ‘next week’. In other words, (31a) states that the writing will be finished by some point in time next week, while (31b)–(31c) state that the writing will take place next week. Note that the matrix verb is in the present tense in all sentences:

- (31) a. Nästa vecka har jag skrivit boken redan.  
 next week have I write-SUP book-DEF already  
 ‘Next week, I will have written the book already.’  
 (i.e. the book will already be written)
- b. Nästa vecka blir boken skriven (\*redan).  
 next week becomes book-DEF write-PPTC (already)  
 ‘Next week, the book will be written.’  
 (i.e. the writing will take place next week)
- c. Nästa vecka får jag skrivet boken (\*redan).  
 next week get I write-PPTC book-DEF (already)  
 ‘Next week I will write the book.’  
 (i.e. I will manage to finish it next week)

Larsson argues that perfect constructions are biclausal, with the participle appearing in an embedded clause including T. The tense feature on the participle is checked against that of T. In the following, I adopt the biclausal analysis of the perfect, but my proposal would in principle also be compatible with a monoclausal structure. Following Larsson, I thus take perfect participles to have past tense while past participles are unmarked for tense. On my proposal, the tense specification is a feature on V. A V that is part of a perfect participle will thus come with a tense feature, while V forming a past participle will have no tense feature. I suggest that in Swedish this difference in tense is also directly linked to their difference in morphological agreement. A V that lacks a tense feature behaves like an adjective in the sense that it can be selected by an agreement head. The agreement head has gender and number features but crucially not person features. Even in closely related languages like Icelandic and German which have verbal agreement, gender agreement is restricted to adjectives and past participles. Low agreement heads, then, select either a projection of A or of tenseless V. Since V in the perfect case has a tense

feature it won't be selected by the agreement head, and will therefore never have morphological agreement marking.<sup>18</sup>

Next, we turn to the question of what syntactic form the external arguments of these participles take. If we assume external arguments to be licensed in Voice (Kratzer, 1996), we expect differences between passive past participles, on the one hand, and active past participles and perfect ones, on the other hand, to be found in Voice.

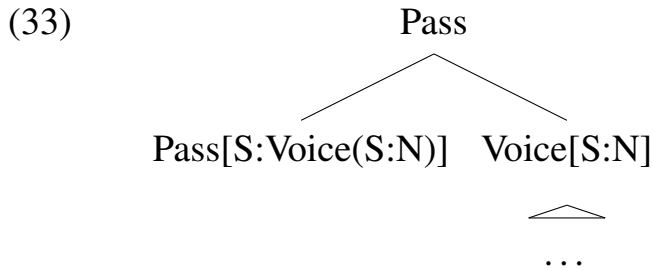
Bruening (to appear) implements such an analysis. On his analysis, the *by*-phrase in the passive is a Voice adjunct. While adjuncts select the category they adjoin to, they do not change the feature content of that category. Following ideas in Adger (2003), Bruening takes selection to be feature driven. Heads have selectional categorial features which project until they are checked off by a projection with the corresponding categorial feature. A verb selecting an object is thus formalized as a V with a selectional N feature (indicated as [S:N]) that is checked off when V merges with a projection of N:



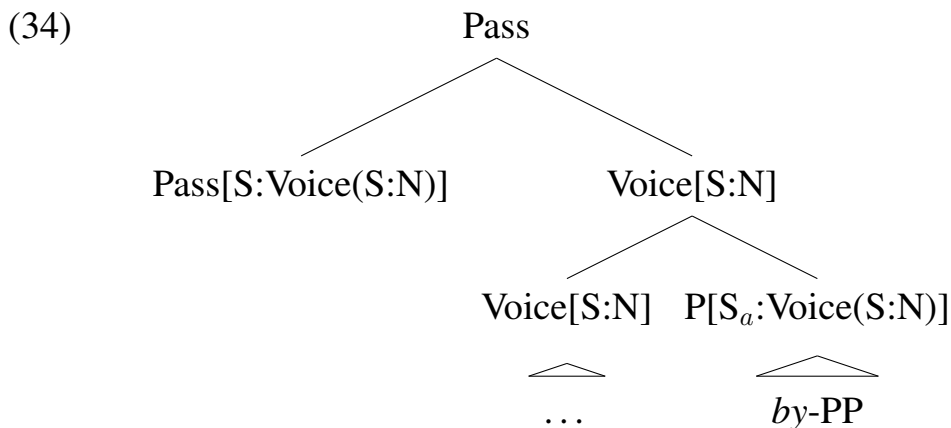
External arguments are introduced by Voice. Selecting a verbal complement and a DP specifier, Voice thus has the following specification: Voice[S:V,S:N]. In the active, the N feature on Voice is checked off by merger of a DP in the specifier of Voice. In the passive, however, merger of a DP in the specifier of Voice does not take place and Voice therefore still has an unchecked N feature. Voice specified in this way (i.e. Voice[S:N]) is itself selected by a functional head, Pass. When Pass merges with Voice, the unchecked N feature of Voice is checked off (see Bruening, to appear, example 84):

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<sup>18</sup>Only non-finite verbs can come without a tense feature. If the absence of a tense feature on V can be related to the possibility of morphological agreement, we seem to be forced to say that infinitival verb forms have a tense feature. In fact, that seems plausible. Based on their temporal properties, Larsson (2009, 98) concludes that infinitival forms appear in structures with unvalued (or deficient T). They can in other words be analyzed as coming with a tense feature, although the feature does not have a value. See also Wiklund (2007).



In the absence of a *by*-phrase, *Pass* saturates the external argument of *Voice* by existentially binding it.<sup>19</sup> Existential binding does not take place when there is a *by*-phrase present. The *by*-phrase selects *Voice* with an unsaturated external argument, and has the same feature specification as *Pass*. Unlike *Pass*, however, the *by*-phrase, being an adjunct, does not check the N feature in *Voice*. As in the short (i.e. *by*-phrase-less) passive, this will instead be done by *Pass*. The difference between the long and short passive is thus that *Pass* does not existentially bind the external argument when there is a *by*-phrase present, since the argument has been saturated by this phrase (see Bruening, to appear, example 91):



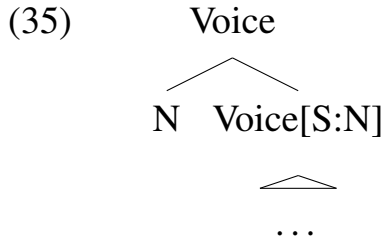
In contrast to the passive past participle, perfect and active past participles

<sup>19</sup>Short passives involve existential quantification over an implied argument. The implicit argument cannot be bound or controlled (see Bruening (to appear, ex 79a–b), who refers to Williams (1987); Partee (1989)):

- (1) a. John wants Mary to be seen. (cannot mean ‘John wants to see Mary’)  
 b. Every journalist<sub>*i*</sub> wants the president to be interviewed. (cannot mean ‘by him<sub>*i*</sub>’)

Instead, (1a) means, ‘John wants Mary to be seen *by someone*’, and (1b) ‘Every journalist wants the president to be interviewed *by someone*.’

are likely to have the structure given for active verbs (Bruening, to appear, example 83). That is, they have a Voice head whose N feature is checked off immediately:



The differences between the participles are thus located to Voice and V. As proposed above, depending on whether V has a tense feature or not, it will be selected by an agreement head. Since the agreement projection is subsequently selected by Voice, it should probably be analyzed as a type of verbal head,  $V_{agr}$ .<sup>20</sup> The agreement head selects a verbal complement and, in addition, causes displacement of the DP embedded in its complement. Importantly, thus,  $V_{agr}$ 's N feature will be checked by movement of a DP rather than by external merge.  $V_{agr}$  differs from other heads with an N feature in not having semantic content and therefore does not assign a thematic role to the projection of N. In this way,  $V_{agr}$  is similar to, for instance, T. Like T,  $V_{agr}$  probes its c-command domain for a goal with interpretable  $\phi$ -features. As a consequence of the agreement relation established between Agr and the object DP, the DP moves to the specifier of  $V_{agr}$ .  $V_{agr}$ 's N feature is thus something like an EPP feature.

(36)  $V_{Agr}: [S:V, S:N^*]$

$V_{Agr}$  is not obligatorily present. If it is absent, the object does not agree with the participle and does not move across it. With the object in situ, a passive can still be formed if an expletive element is merged to fill the subject position. Since the result is a type of existential construction, however, the object cannot be a definite DP. Since  $f\ddot{a}$ -constructions have referential subjects, on

<sup>20</sup>Alternatively, Agr is category transparent, so that it simply inherits the category of its complement. What is important is that a verbal projection headed by the agreement head can be distinguished from an adjectival projection, since only the former can be selected by Voice.

the other hand, they are not subject to such a restriction. Having a referential subject, they are also able to license a reflexive pronoun in the object position. Furthermore, in the absence of the  $V_{Agr}$ -phrase, there is no trigger for particle incorporation.

With these properties in place, the participial structures fall out as follows:

- (37) a. Perfect participle: T + Voice +  $V_{past}$   
 b. Active past participle: Voice +  $V_{Agr}$  + V  
 c. Passive past participle: Pass + Voice +  $V_{Agr}$  + V

The tense feature on V in (37a) is inherited by Voice. At the level of Voice, perfect participles are thus different from active past participles in being specified as past tense, while passive past participles are different from the other two types in that the Voice head still has an unchecked N feature. The passive past participle is a projection of Pass, the active past participles a projection of Voice and the perfect participle a projection of T (or tensed Voice, if a monoclausal analysis is adopted). The fact that, for instance, perfect participles always appear in the complement of temporal *ha* and not of *vara/bli*, and that passive participles have the opposite distribution can be analyzed in terms of selectional features on these matrix verbs. Temporal *ha* selects a projection of T with past tense (or a tensed Voice projection), (38a), while *vara/bli* select for Pass, (38b). What  $f\grave{a}$  selects, on the other hand, depends on whether it is causative, beneficiary or aspectual. Aspectual  $f\grave{a}$  selects a tenseless projection of Voice,<sup>21</sup> (38c), while beneficiary  $f\grave{a}$  selects Pass, (38d), and causative  $f\grave{a}$  selects, in addition to a DP, a CP that can itself include Pass, (38e) (I analyze causative  $f\grave{a}$  as v+V):

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<sup>21</sup>As seen in (38c), I take  $f\grave{a}_{asp}$  not to license a subject of its own. The verb seems to contribute a meaning that is essentially aspectual, and does not seem to assign a thematic role to the subject, distinct from that assigned by the participle. Interestingly, however, aspectual  $f\grave{a}$ -constructions do not appear with inanimate subjects. An alternative analysis, suggested by Larsson (2009), would be to assume a control analysis, whereby the subject of  $f\grave{a}$  controls a PRO subject of the participle. In that case, however, the construction has to be analyzed as bi-clausal, involving an embedded T. From the perspective of the tense interpretation, there does not seem to be any support for an embedded T. I leave this issue for future research.

- (38) a.  $ha[S:T]$  (or  $ha[S:Voice_{past}]$ )  
 b.  $vara/bli[S:Pass]$   
 c.  $f\grave{a}_{asp}[S:Voice]$   
 d.  $f\grave{a}_{benef} = BECOME + P_{HAVE}$ :  
      $BECOME[S:P_{HAVE}]$  and  $P_{HAVE}[S:Pass, S:N]$   
 e.  $f\grave{a}_{cause} = v + V$ :  
      $v[S:V, S:N]$  and  $V[S:CP, S:N]$

## 5 Concluding remarks

As proposed by Bruening (to appear), external argument licensing can be analyzed structurally as the checking of an N feature on Voice. The feature is checked off if a DP is merged in the specifier of Voice or, alternatively, if a PP is adjoined to Voice and the Voice projection is itself selected by a functional head Pass. In the former case, an active sentence is the result, while in the latter case, we get a passive. The checking of the N feature in Voice is, in principle, independent of what type of complement Voice takes. I have proposed that this is of particular importance in the context of participles.

In Swedish, perfect participles appear in active sentences with DP external arguments. Although past participles are found in passives, they are not, I argue, restricted to these contexts. In other words, a past participle can appear as the complement of an ‘active’ Voice projection with a DP external argument as well as of a ‘passive’ one where the external argument appears in an adjunct PP. Active past participles are found in agentive  $f\grave{a}$ -constructions. Although both active past participles and perfect participles are selected by ‘active’ Voice, they are not used interchangeably because the matrix verbs they appear with have specific requirements on their complements. Perfect but not past participles come with a past tense feature that needs to be checked by T (see Larsson, 2009). *Ha*, thus, selects for a tensed (but non-finite) T projection, i.e. a perfect participle, while  $f\grave{a}$ , if it is an aspectual rather than beneficiary or causative verb, selects for a tenseless Voice projection, i.e. an active past participle. The difference in tense between past and perfect par-



ticiples could also, I suggest, be related to their difference in morphological agreement. That is, a V that lacks a tense feature will behave like an adjective morphologically while a V with a tense feature won't. Past, but not perfect, participles can therefore show morphological agreement.

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