Title: The affective få ’get’ construction in Danish

Subtitle: Afficiaries, agentivity and voice

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ABSTRACT: As in many other Germanic languages, Modern Danish combines the verb få ‘get’ and a
semantic main verb in the supine form (the uninflected perfect participle). Three main types of the
construction are found: An agentive type typically interpreted as expressing successful intentional action and
two non-agentive types, one with a ditransitive main verb and promotion of the indirect object to subject
status, and one with a non-valency-bound subject typically interpreted as a Beneficiary. Based on a
functional framework, the paper presents a corpus study of the construction and an analysis unifying all three
main types in a common Affactive Construction whose functional contribution is the specification of the
subject as an Afficiary (Beneficiary or Maleficiary). The distinction between agentive and non-agentive
interpretation is analysed as a voice distinction between active and passive.

KEYWORDS: Affaction, beneficiary, maleficiary, ‘get’ verbs, agentivity, voice, telicity

1. Introduction

A very common construction in Danish is the combination of the verb få ‘get’ and another verb in
the supine form,¹ acting as the semantic main verb. One main type of this construction has an
agentive subject, i.e. it designates the agent of the supine verb, as in (1).

(1) Kurt fik dans-et
    K. get.PST dance-SUP
    ‘Kurt got his dancing done/did his dancing/managed to dance/danced as he had intended’

¹ The supine form in Danish has the expression [verb stem]-et/-t and is formally identical to the singular indefinite
form of the perfect participle. It has no inflectional paradigm of its own. For a full discussion of the distinction between the
supine and the perfect participle see Nielsen (2016: 387-431).
The exact meaning of (1) is difficult to render with precision in English. The most typical interpretation of this type is that the subject referent manages to execute an intended action. However, the use of the *få* + supine construction to convey clearly unintended actions that are detrimental to the agentive subject, as in (2), indicates that the ‘successful execution of an intended action’ interpretation draws on contextually bound, pragmatic aspects of meaning.

(2) Kurt fik sagt noget dumt
    K. get.PST say.SUP something stupid
    ‘Kurt ended up saying/accidentally said something stupid’

In the case of (1), assessed without any additional context, the interpretation is enriched by default expectations about the desirability of the activity denoted by the verb *danse* ‘dance’.

Another main type of the construction has a non-agentive subject the referent of which is typically interpreted as bearing a Beneficiary role, someone affected positively by an action carried out by another participant, optionally expressed by an agent adverbial as in (3).²

(3) Kurt fik omstød-t domm-en (af Højesteret)
    K. get.PST reverse-SUP sentence-DEF by supreme.court
    ‘Kurt had the sentence reversed (by the Supreme Court)’

² It is possible to interpret (3) as designating an event that is detrimental to the (inagentive) subject referent, and this interpretation (if perhaps less likely) will assign a Maleficiary role to the subject referent; see below regarding Beneficiary and Maleficiary as two variants of Afficiary.
The grammatical structure – the combination of få and the supine form – is the same in (3) as in (1)-(2), and if the agent adverbial af Højesteret is left out, the construction is structurally underspecified and could – in principle – be interpreted either as having a non-agentive or an agentive subject (in the latter case meaning something like ‘Kurt succeeded in carrying out his planned reversal of the sentence’).

Concerning agentivity, the combination of få and supine in Danish is thus a grammatical structure with a noticeable underspecification and it constitutes a set of construction types with challenging semantics that can be difficult to distinguish from the contribution of lexical fillers and pragmatic contexts.

The use of a GET verb for auxiliary or auxiliary-like functions is cross-linguistically well known, particularly in Germanic languages (Larsson 2014, Askedal 2012, Diedrichsen 2012, Colleman 2015), and in German we find constructions with bekommen ‘get, receive’ that have many characteristics similar to those of the Danish få + supine construction, witness (4) (from Diedrichsen 2012: 1164), which is open to different interpretations and is similar to (3) regarding agentivity.³

(4) Er bekommt das Auto gewaschen.
He.NOM get/receive.3SG ART.NEUT.ACC car wash.PTCP
‘He receives the car, which is washed’ or
‘Somebody washes the car for him’ or
‘He manages to wash the car’

³ A reviewer has pointed out that for the German construction shown in (4), the three possible meanings differ in terms of prosody. In Danish, prosody does not seem to determine interpretation regarding agentivity; however, a full prosodic study is beyond the scope of the present paper.
Compared to the similar constructions in other Germanic languages, the få + supine construction appears, however, to be particularly prominent in Danish and to allow for a particularly broad range of verbs. Thus, the Danish construction accepts intransitive verbs without restrictions (as in (1)), while these are at best marginally acceptable in the German bekommen construction (Diedrichsen 2012: 1169).

This paper presents an analysis of the Danish få + supine construction that identifies all the different types as instances, subtypes, of one common construction: the Affactive Construction, having as its key function to mark the subject argument as an Afficiary. The terms affective and afficiary are adopted from Zúñiga (2011), who introduces the term afficiary as a superordinate term to beneficiary and maleficiary:

Beneficiaries and maleficiaries can be seen as particular cases of afficiaries, i.e. typically animate participants of monoclausal constructions whose state or condition changes due to some state of affairs expressed by a matrix predicate without these participants being that state of affairs’ patient. (Zúñiga (2011: 329)

The term afficiary corresponds to the term interessent in the Danish and German tradition, or dativus (in)commodi, dativus sympathetic. The most well-known grammaticalised form of this participant role in Danish is the PP adverbial with the preposition for ‘for’ (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 1344) expressing an Afficiary that may be of the Beneficiary type as in (5) or the Maleficiary type as in (6).
The framework of the analysis is Danish Functional Linguistics (DFL, Engberg-Pedersen et al. 1996, 2005; Harder 2006; Nørgård-Sørensen et al. 2011). Like Construction Grammar (CxG, i.a. Goldberg 1995, Croft 2001, Diessel 2015), DFL is a sign-based theory, and all elements of language from the minimal morpheme to the full utterance are understood as signs constituted by a conventional (symbolic) relation between expression and content (‘form’ and ‘meaning’ in most mainstream frameworks). Unlike CxG, however, DFL emphasizes the biplane nature of the linguistic sign system and recognizes the role of distinct but interacting expression plane relations and content plane relations in the semiotic association between the two planes. Thus, while relations between the elements of the expression side of syntactic constructions are rejected in, e.g., Radical Construction Grammar (Croft 2001: 5, 21-24), and traditional syntactic relations are treated as symbolic relations between signs conceived of as essentially monolithic wholes, DFL emphasizes that expression structure and content structure are not necessarily, and not by definition, isomorphic and that relations and processes on the expression plane can have a “life on their own”, as witnessed by, e.g., the dummy expression subject det of meteorological verbs such as regne ‘rain’ in a

(5) han hent-edt bil-en for mig
    he fetch-PST car-DET for me
    ‘he fetched the car for me’\(^4\)

(6) den stor-e syrlighed ødelægg-er oplevelse-n for mig
    ART great-DEF acidity ruin-PRS experience-DEF for me
    ‘the great acidity ruins the experience for me’\(^5\)

\(^4\) From the website https://defemibyen.blogspot.com/2015/10/den-bedste-nyhed-jeg-har-hrt-lnge-deler.html, last accessed 15.11.19

\(^5\) From the website http://oeldatabasen.dk/index.php?nav=showbeer&id=1626, last accessed 15.11.19
language such as Danish that has mandatory subject expression (Harder 2006: 101, 110-112). Crucially, and fundamentally concurring with CxG, expression serves content and is ultimately motivated by function. Thus, the Danish obligatory dummy subject is functionally motivated as it provides the item for marking declarative vs. interrogative speech act: *det regner* ‘it’s raining’ vs. *regner det?* ‘is it raining?’ (Nielsen 2019: 130-132).

As most contemporary CxG models (Diessel 2015: 298), DFL is a usage-based approach, and structural relations are not considered to be autonomous from actual attested usage, as in formalist theories. However, DFL maintains a distinction between structure and usage as mutually dependent aspects of language and regards structure as “distilled out of, but simultaneously presupposed by, usage, so that actual attested examples are the result of the interaction of forces — one of which is the force exerted by pervasive, ‘emerged’ structural regularities” (Boye & Harder 2007: 570). The basis of the linguistic potential, the system of linguistic signs, is actual usage, and the system continuously accommodates to the functional pressures of the practices and purposes of communication. However, once a structured potential, the system, is established, it imposes a relatively stable network of options and restrictions on users and is indeed presupposed by usage as the shared conventions needed by speakers to encode and decode utterances (Harder 2006: 100-101; Nielsen 2016: 44-45). Thus, while usage-based CxG considers grammar to be *emergent* and questions the idea of a language system as distinct from usage (Diessel 2015: 296-297, 309), DFL regards grammar as an *emerged* potential (subject to change due to functional pressure), and while system and usage interact, they constitute distinct levels of description (Boye & Harder 2007: 581).

Expression structure and content structure are both language-specific – a DFL principle concurring with the rejection of universal syntactic primitives in CxG (Croft 2001; Diessel 2015: 297) – and the content element of any such language-specific sign is “its potential contribution to the communicative function of utterances of which it forms part” (Harder 1996: 101), in line with
the more general functionalist credo that “linguistic elements can only be understood by looking at
the jobs they do in communication, because that is what explains why they recur and pattern the
way they do” (Harder 1996: 154).

Syntactic constructions are regarded as signs with an expression side and a content side in their
own right, in agreement with the CxG definition of a construction C as “a form-meaning pair <Fi,
Si> such that some aspect of Fi or some aspect of Si is not strictly predictable from C’s component
parts or from other previously established constructions” (Goldberg 1995: 4; cf. Goldberg 2006: 3-10). While both words and syntactic constructions are recognised as signs, DFL maintains a
principled distinction between lexicon and grammar (cf. Nørgård-Sørensen et al. 2011; Boye &
Harder 2012) in contrast to the abolishment of this distinction seen in most CxG (e.g. Goldberg
Heltoft (2008) and Hansen & Heltoft (2011: 39, 84-89), a distinction is made between structures
governed by valency (lexical government) and categorial structures based on non-lexical, categorial
government (dependencies between syntactic categories – defined by their expression and content –
such as the category Verb in abstraction from any specific lexeme realising the category).

Just like other linguistic signs, constructions are connected in complex networks of interrelations
(cf. Diessel 2015: 297 for a similar view in CxG). What is characteristic of the DFL approach is the
focus on paradigmatic relations that organize the sign distinctions of the individual language
(Heltoft 2010; Nørgård-Sørensen et al. 2011). The sign distinctions are constituted by distinctions
on the expression plane associated with distinctions on the content plane, in the words of Bateson
(1972: 460), the “difference, which makes a difference”. This entails that a meaning difference can
only be regarded as a coded content distinction belonging to the language-specific system if it is
signalled by an expression difference; if there is no expression distinction, the meaning difference is

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6 See Diessel (2019) for a CxG model that distinguishes between lexemes and constructions as distinct types of signs.
not a matter of distinct signs, but of content variants (polysemy) of a sign, be it a construction, a lexeme or a morpheme.

The empirical basis of the analysis presented in the present paper is a corpus study of the få + supine construction in modern written Danish. This study is designed to test the descriptions made in previous studies of the construction and to bring out characteristics of the construction in authentic language use, thus informing the Affactive Construction analysis.

The outline of the paper is as follows. Section 2 provides an overview of the grammatical characteristics of the construction, and section 3 presents and discusses previous studies. In section 4 the corpus study is presented, and its results are discussed. Section 5 presents the Affactive Construction analysis and shows how this analysis avoids the problems faced by earlier accounts and explains the findings of the corpus study. Section 6 offers some concluding remarks.

Anticipating the analysis in section 5, I will refer to the få + supine construction as the Affactive Construction, abbreviated AC. The examples used in the paper are either authentic examples or examples given in other works on the construction. When no other source is given, the example is part of the corpus data collected for the present study. Examples used to show unacceptable structures are, obviously, constructed.

2. **Få ‘get’ + supine in Danish**

This section gives an overview of the grammatical characteristics of the AC prior to a closer examination of the semantics of the construction and the organisation of construction types. The presentation is largely based on the account in Hansen & Heltoft (2011).

In the AC the verb få ‘get’ functions as an auxiliary verb as it does not express the basic event type of the clause designated by main verbs but adds an additional layer of more grammatical meaning in its combination with the supine form. Following Boye & Harder’s (2012) definition of grammaticalization and grammatical status, a grammatical element cannot have discourse
prominence and therefore it cannot be focused. When used in the AC, få cannot be focused (it cannot, e.g., be the scope of negation), and this is evidence of its status as a grammatical verb, in other words, an auxiliary (cf. Boye 2010).

The supine verb is the main verb as it designates the event type of the clause and sets the valency restrictions for e.g. subject selection. Thus, the reciprocal verb mødes ‘meet (up)’ governs a subject with plural meaning as shown in (7); the construction is ungrammatical with a singular subject (8).

(7)  vi få-r mødtes nogle gang-e
     we get-PRS meet.SUP some time-PL
     ‘we get to meet up sometimes’

(8)  * jeg få-r mødtes nogle gang-e
     I get-PRS meet.SUP some time-PL

As noted above, the AC may have agentive or non-agentive subject interpretation, these interpretations constituting the two main construction types. A corpus example of the first AC type, with clearly agentive interpretation, is given in (9).
There are two subtypes of the non-agentive AC type. One subtype is characterised by having a subject which is a promoted indirect object, i.e. a subcategorised (viz. valency-governed) argument of a ditransitive main verb of the AC. An example from the corpus is given in (10) with the verb *overrække* ‘present, hand over’.

(10) Tim Svanholt fik forleden *overrakt* en check på kr. 5000
    T. S. get.PST the.other.day present.SUP a cheque for kroner 5000
    ‘The other day, Tim Svanholt got a cheque for 5000 kroner handed over to him’

Here the subject *Tim Svanholt* is the promoted IO of *overrække*, cf. the (constructed) ditransitive construction in (11).

(11) Forening-en *overrakte* forleden Tim Svanholt en check på kr. 5000
    society-DEF present.PST the.other.day T. S. a cheque for kroner 5000
    ‘The other day, the society handed over a cheque for 5000 kroner to Tim Svanholt’

(10) is a passive counterpart to (11), and the two form a paradigmatic voice opposition. Therefore, some linguists (e.g. Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 1289, 1326-1329) separate the type shown in (10) from the other variants that do not enter into such a voice opposition, in particular the other subtype of the non-agentive AC.
The other non-agentive type has a subject with no valency relation to the main verb. The non-agent subject is thus not a subcategorised argument promoted to subject, but an adjunct which in terms of lexical government is freely added to the predication. A corpus example is given in (12).

(12) Jeg ha-r for to år siden få-et reparer-et starter-en hos Volvo
     I have-PRS for two year.PL since get-SUP mend-SUP starter-DEF at V.
     her i Køge
     here in K.

  'two years ago I had/got the starter mended at the Volvo garage here in Køge’

Here the subject jeg ‘I’ denotes a referent that is interpreted as benefitting from the mending of the car, but this participant is not a valency-bound argument of the monotransitive main verb reparere ‘mend’. While the subject in (10) corresponds to the IO in (11), the subject in (12) corresponds to the freely added PP Afficiary adjunct in (13) (cf. (5)-(6) above), while a corresponding IO construction with reparere is ungrammatical (14).

(13) Mekaniker-en reparer-ede starter-en for mig
     mechanic-DEF mend-PST starter-DEF for me

  ‘the mechanic mended the starter for me’

(14) * Mekaniker-en reparer-ede mig starter-en
     mechanic-DEF mend-PST me starter-DEF

Both of the non-agentive AC types allow for the optional adverbial expression of the agent by a PP with the preposition af ‘by’ shown in (3) in section 1 with the monotransitive verb omstøde.
‘reverse’ and shown with a corpus example in (15) below, again with the ditransive verb *overrække* governing the promoted-IO-subject *familien* ‘the family’.

(15) Flygtningenaevnet-s afgørelse fik familie-n overrak-t af
    Refugee.Council-GEN decision get.PST family-DEF present-SUP by
    nødhjælpschauffør Kim Andersen fra Thyborøn
    humanitarian.aid.delivery.driver K. A. from T.

‘the family had the decision of the Refugee Council handed over by humanitarian aid delivery driver Kim Andersen from Thyborøn’

The presence of an agent adverbial makes an AC unequivocally non-agentive. ACs without an agent adverbial may also be clearly agentive as (9) or clearly non-agentive as (10) and (12). However, the interpretation of the AC is often open for both an agentive and a non-agentive reading, and the structure is thus underspecified. In (16), it is not possible to ascertain from the sentence alone, without any further context, whether the subject *jeg* ‘I’ produced the leather patches him-/herself, or if someone else did the production for him/her.

(16) Jeg fik fremstill-et en masse små læderlapper
    I get.PST produce-SUP ART lot small leather.patches

‘I managed to produce a lot of small leather patches/I had someone produce a lot of small leather patches’

When the supine verb governs a direct object (DO), two constituent orders are possible: SUP > DO as seen in (16) or DO > SUP as seen in (17).
Previous studies (Pedersen 2011; Larsson 2014) have found that there is no clear and consistent semantic difference between the two constituent orders in the Danish AC,\(^9\) and the two different orders will not be discussed further in this paper.

The examples given so far in this section have all designated events that would naturally be regarded as beneficial – or at least not detrimental – to the subject referent. However, examples are found where the designated event is clearly not in the interest of the subject referent, and in cases of agentive AC interpretation, the construction designates a situation where the subject accidentally carries out an undesired act with a detrimental result as seen in (18).

\[(18)\] Man kan forestille sig, at man ved krydsning af forskellige varieteter fåer fremstill-et en ny varietet, som indeholder stor-e mængde-r af uønsket-stoff-e.

‘One can imagine that by the crossing of different varieties one ends up producing/accidentally produces a new variety which contains large amounts of unwanted substances’

\(^9\) Larsson (2014) finds geographical differences in acceptability but does not report any semantic distinctions marked by constituent order.
The AC subject is usually human, as found in all the examples given so far, but ACs with a non-human subject are found, illustrated in (19) which has the abstract entity *en så stærk diskurs* ‘such a strong discourse’ (the relativised subject of the AC in the relative clause) as the agentive (or perhaps more precisely: causative) subject.

(19)  
Det er farligt at angrib-e en så stærk diskurs, som på ca. 20 år har fået bank-et miljøpessimisme-n ind i os

‘it is dangerous to attack such a strong discourse, which in about 20 years has managed to knock the environmental pessimism into us’

To sum up, the AC has two main types, a type with an agentive interpretation of the subject and a type with a non-agentive subject interpretation which has optional adverbial expression of the agent. The non-agentive type has two subtypes, one where the non-agentive subject is a promoted IO, and one where the non-agentive subject is a free adjunct promoted to subject status. The distinction between the two non-agentive subtypes is bound up with main verb valency and the difference between IO-governing ditransitive verbs and verbs that do not govern an IO argument. The central theoretical significance of these properties of the AC is that promotion to subject can take place independently of the valency core of the clause. In the non-agentive AC, upgrading to subject status does not rely on a predicate that subcategorizes the upgraded constituent as part of its lexical argument structure; the promoted subject can correspond to a freely added PP Afficiary adjunct (cf. (13)).
The distinction between the agentive and non-agentive type is not necessarily signaled, and ACs are often underspecified and open for both agentive and non-agentive interpretation. In section 5.3, I present an analysis of the agentive/non-agentive difference between the main construction types as a voice distinction, the AC with an agentive (interpretation of the) subject being active and the AC with a non-agentive (interpretation of the) subject being passive. In parallel to the terms agentive and non-agentive (interpretation), the terms active and passive (interpretation) will be used in the rest of the paper.

The different (sub)types of the AC described above are summarised in table 1 including abbreviations used in the rest of the paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affactive Construction</td>
<td>$få$ + supine form of main verb</td>
<td>AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC with active (agentive) interpretation</td>
<td>subject = agent</td>
<td>ACA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC with passive (non-agentive) interpretation</td>
<td>subject ≠ agent</td>
<td>ACP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACP with promotion of valency-bound IO</td>
<td>subject = promoted valency-bound IO</td>
<td>ACPio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACP with promotion of free adjunct</td>
<td>subject = promoted free adjunct</td>
<td>ACPadj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC with voice interpretation ambiguity</td>
<td>subject role underspecified: either agentive or non-agentive interpretation</td>
<td>ACX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Subtypes of the Affactive Construction, terminology and abbreviations

3. Previous studies

The Danish $få$ construction has been treated in general works on Danish grammar, special studies and cross-linguistic surveys. As a case of the latter, Larsson (2014) describes GET constructions, mainly GET passives, in Swedish, Norwegian and Danish based on data from the ScanDiaSyn
survey of Scandinavian dialect syntax and notes that the construction, especially in the active (agentive) interpretation is marginal in Swedish as compared to Danish and Norwegian. The most comprehensive account of the various types of the få construction as part of the larger grammatical system of Danish is the treatment in Hansen & Heltoft (2011), presented in section 3.1 below. In section 3.2, the description of the construction in older grammars of Danish and in the more recent special studies by Falster Jakobsen (2007, 2009) will be discussed. I conclude this review in section 3.3 with a discussion of the issues raised by these previous studies.

3.1. Hansen & Heltoft’s non-integrated constructions

In Hansen & Heltoft’s *Grammatik over det Danske sprog* (‘Grammar of the Danish Language’, 2011) – a functional and (thus) semiotics-oriented analysis of Modern Danish and the most recent comprehensive grammar of Danish – the combination of få ‘get’ and the supine is presented as three distinct constructions, *the telic få construction*, *the få passive* and *the afficiary construction.*

*The telic få construction* (“telisk få-konstruktion”) covers all instances with the agentive interpretation of the subject, i.e. my ACA (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 718-721); an example from Hansen & Heltoft (2011: 718) is given in (20).

(20) han fik slå-et græsplæne-n
    he get.PST mow-SUP lawn-DEF

‘he did the lawn-mowing, he got around to mow the lawn’

According to Hansen & Heltoft, the semantic contribution of the construction – its coded content – is a designation of a transition from one state to another, as a temporal profiling of the event designated by the main verb. The meaning expressed by the construction is that an activity or action takes place and that some goal is reached whereby some result comes about. The main verb in (20)
is lexically telic, but it is noted that the construction is also possible with lexically atelic and static verbs if the use of such verbs results in a description of a state of affairs conceived as an action that leads to a goal, and they provide the example in (21) with the atelic verb arbejde ’work’ (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 720).

(21) få-r du arbej-d-et på sommerhus-et?
    get-PRS you work-SUP on summer.cottage-DEF
    ‘are you getting any work done on the summer cottage?’

The construction normally only allows for human subjects, they argue, but examples with nonhuman subjects are found, as in (22) (from Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 721).

(22) sør-g-Ø for at træ-et få-r tørr-et ordent-ligt,
    provide-IMP for COMPL wood-DEF get-PRS dry-SUP properly
    ellers slå-r det sig
    otherwise warp-PRS it REFL.PRON
    ‘make sure that the wood gets to dry properly, otherwise it will warp’

The få passive (’få-passiv’) covers the instances of non-agentive subject interpretation where the subject is a promoted indirect object governed by a ditransitive main verb, i.e. my ACPio, and they give the example shown here in (23) with the ditransitive verb tilkende ‘award, grant’ (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 1289, 1326-1329).
Hansen & Heltoft’s (2011: 1344-1347) afficiary construction ("interessentkonstruktion")\textsuperscript{10} covers the instances of non-agentive subject interpretation where the subject is not bound by the valency of the main verb, i.e. my ACPadj. Hansen & Heltoft define the subject as an Afficiary (Danish: *interessent*) which is semantically equivalent to a free Afficiary adjunct (cf. (5), (6) and (13) above). Thus, the subject of Hansen & Heltoft’s example in (24) is equivalent to the complement of *for* in (25).

\begin{align}
(24) & & \text{tiltalt-e fik ændr-et ordlyd-en af sin advokat} \\
& & \text{defendant-DEF get.PST change-SUP wording-DEF by REFL.POSS lawyer} \\
& & \text{‘the defendant got the wording changed by his/her lawyer’} \\
(25) & & \text{advokat-en ændr-ede ordlyd-en for tiltalt-e} \\
& & \text{lawyer-DEF change-PST wording-DEF for defendant-DEF} \\
& & \text{‘the lawyer changed the wording for the defendant’}
\end{align}

Hansen & Heltoft (2011: 1346) note the interpretation ambiguity of the *få* + supine combination, in particular the possible ambiguity between their afficiary construction and telic *få* construction (i.e. in my terminology an ACX which may be interpreted either as an active AC or a passive AC with

\textsuperscript{10} The term ‘afficiary construction’ as a translation of Hansen & Heltoft’s *interessentkonstruktion* is not to be confused with the term Affactive Construction as used in this paper to refer to the *få* + supine construction in general. When used, ‘afficiary construction’ refers exclusively to Hansen & Heltoft’s analysis of *få* + supine constructions.
promotion of a free adjunct), in the absence of an agent adverbial (e.g. absence of *af sin advokat* ‘by his/her lawyer’ in (24)) which rules out interpretation as a telic *få* construction. They do not suggest any common, general constructional organisation, or shared semantics, uniting what they conceive of as three distinct constructions based on *få* and the supine, and thus no unifying analysis is found in Hansen & Heltoft (2011).

### 3.2. Other previous treatments

As regards older accounts, we find the *få* + supine construction described in the three central grammars of Danish of the 20th century, Mikkelsen (1911), Diderichsen (1962) and Hansen (1967). Mikkelsen (1911: 429-430) describes how the construction is used with verbs designating an intended action. Likewise, Diderichsen states that with a transitive main verb the construction designates that “one achieves the carrying out of something” (1962: 135).11 He notes that the “logical subject” (the agent) of the supine can be identical to the subject of the verb *få* or different from this subject, and that in the latter case the construction may possibly denote something which is detrimental to the subject. With an intransitive main verb, as in (26), the construction is said to denote “something desired or intended” (Diderichsen 1962: 135).12

(26) Naar jeg fåa-r sidd-et lidt kan jeg godt gaa videre

`when I get-PRS sit-SUP a.little can.PRS I well walk.INF further`

‘when I’ve had the chance to sit down for a bit, I’ll be able to walk on’

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11 My translation of the Danish: ”at man opnaar, at noget bliver gjort” (Diderichsen 1962: 135).

The essence of the analyses by Mikkelsen (1911) and Diderichsen (1962) is that the construction expresses successful accomplishment or execution of an intended action, and the description in Hansen (1967) is in line with this view: "the construction with få designates that something is received, achieved by … or happens to someone … or is managed, attended to or gets done (sometimes especially on a person’s initiative, by one’s own effort, under exertion, difficulties …)" (Hansen 1967: III, 155).13

In more recent years, Falster Jakobsen has examined the various constructional options of the verb få ‘get’ from a Construction Grammar perspective in two articles (Falster Jakobsen 2007, 2009). In the analysis of the få + supine combination, the openness in the assignment of argument roles (in particular the subject role) is given particular emphasis, and Falster Jakobsen provides authentic examples of constructions that remain ambiguous even when their textual context is taken into account, such as (27) (Falster Jakobsen 2007: 293).

(27) den holdning fik jeg ændr-et hen ad vej-en
    that position get.PST I change-SUP DIR.PART along way-DEF
    ‘I ended up changing that position (of mine)/my position got changed along the way’

It remains unclear whether (27) is to be interpreted so that the subject jeg ‘I’ as an agent carries out the act of changing his/her position, or if the state of affairs referred to is one in which someone else acts to change the position, or something else causes the change of position. An ambiguous example from the corpus data is given in (28).

---

(28) Enkelt-e tilnærmelse-r gjorde vi dog punktvis, efter at vi fik single-PL advance-PL do.PST we PART sporadically after COMPL we get.PST 
bygg-et de rum, som var forudsætning-en for de alternativ-e aktivitet-er build-SUP those room.PL which be.PST prerequisite-DEF for ART alternative-PL activity-PL
‘we did do a few advances here and there after we got those rooms built that were the prerequisite for the alternative activities’

It cannot be determined whether the AC in (28) is to be interpreted as having an agentive or a non-agentive subject – were the rooms built by the ‘we’ or for the ‘we’ but by someone else? – and neither the textual or the situational, pragmatic context disambiguates the sentence (even given the larger textual setting beyond what is provided above, cf. the likewise ambiguous example (16) in section 2).

The subject role underspecification poses a problem for an analysis of the construction in terms of argument role inheritance (cf. Goldberg 1995), and this leads Falster Jakobsen to the conclusion that the crucial function of the construction is not the organisation of argument roles based on inheritance from the verb få and from the supine verb – in particular the allocation of the agent role to a syntactic constituent – but rather the semantic feature ‘resultative’ associated with the verb få (Falster Jakobsen 2007: 294). The functional purpose of the construction is therefore regarded as that of adding the semantic component ‘resultativity’ to the representation of the designated state of affairs (2009: 197), summarised in the statement that “the addition of Resultativity is the primary – and unequivocal – raison d’être of the construction” (2009: 200).14

Falster Jakobsen thus identifies a specification of Aktionart as the general content coding that unites all subtypes of the construction regardless of whether the subject is to be interpreted as the agent or not, while Hansen & Heltoft (2011) only define the agentive construction, their telic $få$ construction, in Aktionsart terms. In the rest of the paper I will use the term *telicity* and talk of the component ‘telic’ as found in Hansen & Heltoft (2011) rather than Falster Jakobsen’s term ‘resultativity’ and the component ‘resultative’, which I take to refer, in this context, to the same semantic phenomenon.

3.3. Discussion of previous studies

The presentation of $få +$ supine in Hansen & Heltoft (2011) has one central overall shortcoming: the lack of a unifying analysis of all the types of the combination of $få$ and supine which would provide a general description of the construction and the relations between its subtypes. The three main types – my ACA, ACPio and ACPadj – all have the same basic grammatic expression, and unless there are particular reasons to assume otherwise, one should expect identity in grammatical expression (form) to correlate with identity in grammatical content (meaning) (Haiman 1985: 19-21, 30; Goldberg 1995: 67-69; cf. Goldberg’s (2006: 166-182) analysis of the common semantic properties of the English subject–auxiliary inversion constructions). This appears particularly pertinent in the case of $få +$ supine because the distinction between the agentive and the non-agentive construction is both structurally underspecified and frequently unclear in actual language usage. As noted above, Falster Jakobsen offers a unifying semantic basis for the construction in terms of resultativity. This suggestion will be dealt with further below in the discussion of the results of the corpus study.

A further issue is the problem of the demarcation between the two types of non-agentive constructions. The ACPio type and the ACPadj type have the properties of agent demotion and the optional expression of the agent with $af +$ NP as clearly shared features, and this is not captured in
Hansen & Heltoft’s description of their få passive and afficiory construction. The distinction between the two non-agentive types is based on the valency of the main verb, viz. whether or not the AC subject is a valency-bound argument, and this is a matter of lexical properties, not of the categorial structure of the construction, which concerns the properties of the syntactic construction as distinct from the contribution of the lexemes filling the constructional slots in specific instances (cf. section 1 on lexicon vs. grammar). Again, similarity in the grammatical structure is not mirrored in a unifying description, in this case the similarity between the two types of non-agentive constructions.

Considering all the previous studies presented above, the agentive construction type calls for special consideration as this is the type where there is the clearest disagreement on the proper analysis. Comparing the old accounts in Mikkelsen (1911), Diderichsen (1962) and Hansen (1967) with the more recent accounts by Hansen & Heltoft (2011) and Falster Jakobsen (2007, 2009), we see a conflict between an old approach that focuses on the role of the subject vis-à-vis the state of affairs denoted by the main verb – the subject referent succeeds in the execution of an intended action – and a modern approach that focuses on Aktionsart, the coding of telicity (in Falster Jakobsen’s terms: “resultativity”).

The description of the construction as encoding ‘action intended by the subject referent who wants to achieve something’ has an intuitive appeal: it seems – prima facie – that the typical function of the construction, its communicative contribution, is to convey ‘successful execution of something planned’. However, two uses of the agentive construction pose a problem to this traditional ‘intended action’ analysis: malefactive examples where the subject referent carries out an involuntary, non-intentional act to the detriment of him-/herself as (2) in section 1, (18) in section 2 and (29) below, and examples with non-human, inanimate subjects that cannot be carriers of intentions as in (19) in section 2 and (30)-(31) below.
(29) han kom til at smadr-e en aftershave og fik tråd-t
he come.PST to to smash-INF ART aftershave and get.PST step-SUP
i et glasskår\footnote{https://www.dr.dk/sporten/fodbold/championsleague/kiksede-fodboldskader, last accessed 31.10.19.}
in ART piece.of.broken.glass
‘he accidentally smashed an aftershave and ended up stepping/accidentally stepped in a piece of broken glass’

(30) alle håb-er, det får regn-et af inden på søndag\footnote{Example from \textit{KorpusDK}}
everybody hope-PRS it get-PRS rain-SUP off before on Sunday
‘everybody hopes all the rain will be over with on Sunday’

(31) Larm-en fra de urolig-e hest-e fik vækk-et beboer-ne\footnote{From https://nordjyske.dk/nyheder/20-heste-reddet-fra-brand-paa-gaard/ae24de4f-0670-4684-9530-bc1e57a7747d, last accessed 31.10.19.}
noise-DEF from ART restless-PL horse-PL get.PST wake-SUP resident-PL.DEF
‘the noise from the restless horses got the residents woken up’

This difficulty in handling malefactives and nonhuman subjects is avoided in the Aktionsart analysis of the modern descriptions since the function of adding the semantic feature ‘telic’ does not rely on the subject designating an entity that benefits from the state of affairs or has any intentional relations to its realisation. However, for the Aktionsart-oriented description to be convincing from a functional perspective, the claim that the construction contributes by adding the coding ‘telic’ to the clause should be substantiated with empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that this is indeed the function of the construction for users in linguistic interaction.
4. The corpus study

The corpus used is the 56,000,000 word KorpusDK corpus of modern written Danish. The two overall objectives of the study were (a) to examine empirically the two competing approaches to the construction discussed above, the subject role approach and the Aktionsart approach, and (b) to uncover aspects of the grammatical structure and semantics of the different subtypes of the construction as a basis for a unifying account of the different AC types.

4.1. Questions to answer and design of the study

In the critique of the absence of an integrated description of the agentive and non-agentive construction types in Hansen & Heltoft’s (2011) account, an important aspect was the structural underspecification that causes ambiguity between an agentive and a non-agentive interpretation of the construction. To substantiate this critique, the corpus study must assess to which extent the attested examples are ambiguous. It would speak in favour of the non-integrated description if the corpus data were to show that the agentive få + supine construction and the two kinds of non-agentive få + supine construction are kept nicely apart, viz. that ambiguous constructions are rare and can be considered marginal or at least more peripheral than unambiguous constructions. The following hypothesis can thus be formulated as a test of the empirical foundation for the non-integrated description of distinct constructions:

- **Hypothesis I**: ACs are normally either clearly agentive or clearly non-agentive

In order to assess the telicity analysis of the agentive construction in Hansen & Heltoft (2011) and of all få + supine constructions in Falster Jakobsen (2007, 2009), it is necessary to find out if in the concrete instances of use the construction provides the content element ‘telic’ to predications which would not otherwise contain such an element, thus supporting the claim that the addition of the

18 Online access: https://ordnet.dk/korpusdk
element ‘telic’ is the functional purpose of the construction. This means that the main verbs in the attested examples must be analysed for Aktionsart. The hypothesis in favour of the telicity analysis is that the verb is typically not lexically telic but has the feature ‘telic’ added to its un-telic (atelic or static) meaning by the AC (following Falster Jakobsen), or possibly by the ACA in particular (following Hansen & Heltoft); in Construction Grammar terms (Goldberg 1995; Boas 2013: 235-238, 244-246; Hilpert 2019: 29, 57-65), the lexically specified instantiation of the AC (or ACA) with a non-telic verb inherits the feature telic from the general schematic construction. This leads to the formulation of the following two related hypotheses:

- **Hypothesis II**: The main verbs in ACs in general are not lexically telic
- **Hypothesis III**: The main verbs in the agentive AC type (ACA) are not lexically telic

To assess the subject role analysis in Mikkelsen (1911), Diderichsen (1962) and Hansen (1967), one must find out if the description of the subject referent as someone who succeeds in carrying out an intended action with the conscious purpose of achieving something desired is consistent with the semantics of the attested uses of the construction. This means that clauses must be checked for features that either harmonise well with a constructional ‘intended action’ component or are incompatible with the ‘intended action’ reading. Two such features, which were noted in section 3.3, are malefactivity and animacy. If ACs designate successful execution of an intended action, an action planned by and for the benefit of the subject, it is not expected to find ACs with main verbs that are clearly or most likely to be interpreted as malefactive, i.e. designating events that are detrimental to the subject, and it is not expected to find ACs with non-human subject referents, since they cannot be bearers of consciousness and intentions (with the possible exception of higher animals and anthropomorphised objects). This yields the following two hypotheses:

- **Hypothesis IV**: The main verbs in ACs are not malefactive
- **Hypothesis V**: The ACs have subjects with human referents
In addition to the analysis of the data for features directly associated with hypotheses I-V above, the ACs were analysed for the transitivity of the main verb in its syntactic realisation and the inflection of få as these features turned out to be relevant to the overall analysis, see below.

The method for collecting and analysing the corpus material was the following. A formal search query for the string [[a form of the verb få ‘get’] + [0-3 random words] + [a random verb in the supine form]] was carried out,¹⁹ yielding a total of 39,716 tokens. The KorpusDK search engine automatically reduces results of this magnitude, in this instance to 4,981 tokens. After having extracted 52 doubles from this reduced result, the remaining 4,929 were randomised and the first 700 were analysed. Of these, 91 results were not ACs and were discarded. The remaining 609 examples of the AC were analysed for the following variables:

- Agentivity (agentive or non-agentive interpretation)
- Telicity of the main verb
- Transitivity of the construction
- Malefactivity
- Subject referent
- Inflection of få

In the following sections, the findings are presented and discussed.

4.2. Agentivity

As regards agentivity, the aim was to acknowledge even unlikely but possible interpretation ambiguity. Thus, the registration ‘ambiguous’ (ACX) comprises both the very clearly ambiguous cases and the cases that may invite active reading but where a passive reading is nevertheless judged to be possible (if only marginally) and vice versa. This is to make sure that the assessment of

¹⁹ The formal string had the form [lemma="fä" & pos="V"] {}{0,3} [pos="V" & morph=",.*PCP2,"].
agentivity targets the semantics of the construction rather than pragmatics and extralinguistic encyclopedic knowledge of agent role probability.

The ACs were categorised as either unequivocally agentive (i.e. active, ACA), unequivocally non-agentive (i.e. passive, ACP) or ambiguous, viz. allowing both an agentive and a non-agentive interpretation (ACX). The results are presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agentivity</th>
<th>% of all AC (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agentive (ACA)</td>
<td>22.33 (136)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-agentive (ACP)</td>
<td>34.32 (209)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguous (ACX)</td>
<td>43.35 (264)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (609)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Agentivity in the corpus data*

This result shows that it is *not* typical that the AC is clearly either agentive or non-agentive. The unambiguous examples combined (ACA + ACP) constitute a small majority of 56.65% (n = 345), but the largest of the three interpretation types, the ambiguous ACX, makes up 43.35% (n = 264) of all examples. We may thus conclude that it is a very common trait of the AC that the status of the subject as either agent or non-agent is *not* clear. This result disproves Hypothesis I in section 4.1, predicting that ACs would normally be clearly agentive or clearly non-agentive, and it provides support for the analysis of the AC as being structurally underspecified with regard to agentivity.

In the analysis of the variables described below, reference will be made to the overall distribution among the ACs of agentive interpretation (active), non-agentive interpretation (passive) and interpretation ambiguity, viz. the general agentivity distribution shown in Table 2: ACA: 22.33%; ACP: 34.32%; ACX: 43.35%.
4.3. Telicity

The analysis of the telicity of the main verbs in the ACs is based on the semantics of the verb lexeme excluding the possible influence on telicity interpretation of the AC itself but including the telicity-determining role of main verb complements or adverbial modifiers. A central telicity-determining factor in Danish is transitivity. Many dynamic verb stems, e.g. læse ‘read’, are lexically underspecified for telic vs. atelic interpretation, but the syntactic choice between transitive construction (presence of direct object (DO)) and intransitive construction (absence of DO, possibly with a non-DO expression of the object argument, e.g. a prepositional object) provides a telicity specification. When the verb occurs in transitive construction the meaning is unequivocally telic (32); in intransitive construction it is specified as atelic (33) (Durst-Andersen & Herslund 1996).

(32) hun læs-te en bog
       she read-PST a bog
     ‘she read a book’
(33) hun læs-te
       she read-PST
     ‘she read/was reading’

Verbs were categorised with the following values:

- static
- atelic
- telic
- dynamic: verbs open for interpretation as either atelic or telic but not static
- not telic: verbs open for interpretation as either static or atelic but not telic
neutral: verbs open for interpretation as either static, atelic or telic

The distribution of the telicity values for all ACs and for the three agentivity types is shown in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telicity value of main verb</th>
<th>% of all AC (n)</th>
<th>% of ACA (n)</th>
<th>% of ACP (n)</th>
<th>% of ACX (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static</td>
<td>0.16 (1)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>3.28 (20)</td>
<td>8.09 (11)</td>
<td>2.39 (5)</td>
<td>1.52 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>89.98 (548)</td>
<td>80.88 (110)</td>
<td>91.87 (192)</td>
<td>93.18 (246)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic (= telic/atelic)</td>
<td>5.25 (32)</td>
<td>8.09 (11)</td>
<td>4.78 (10)</td>
<td>4.17 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not telic (= static/atelic)</td>
<td>0.49 (3)</td>
<td>0.74 (1)</td>
<td>0.96 (2)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (=static/atelic/telic)</td>
<td>0.66 (4)</td>
<td>1.47 (2)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.76 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable(^{20})</td>
<td>0.16 (1)</td>
<td>0.74 (1)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (609)</td>
<td>100.00 (136)</td>
<td>100.00 (209)</td>
<td>100.00 (264)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Telicity across AC types

Table 3 shows that the vast majority of all verbs in the AC – 89.98% – are lexically telic, i.e. they are telic independently of the meaning attributed by the AC. Only one example was found to have a static main verb (the verb fastholde ‘maintain, stick to’), and 20 examples (3.28%) had atelic main verbs, the majority of these found in ACAs, e.g. (34).

(34) det eneste dyb-ere formål er at få sludr-et sammen
    ART only deep-COMP purpose be.PRS to get.INF chat-SUP together
    om liv-et nu og her
    about life-DEF now and here

\(^{20}\) The one unanalysable verb was manifestet, which is most likely an incorrect spelling of the supine of manifestere ‘manifest’ used in a way that was impossible to access for telicity.
‘the only deeper purpose is to get (a chance) to chat with one another about life here and now’

Dynamic verbs, which are lexically open to telic or atelic interpretation, constitute 5.25% (n = 32), and together with the 4 tokens of neutral verbs they form a group of verbs that lend themselves nicely to constructional specification of unequivocally telic meaning. However, even as a combined group they hold a very small share of the verbs.

Hypothesis II in section 4.1. predicted that the main verbs of ACs in general would not be lexically telic, and this is clearly disproven by the corpus findings.

Hypothesis III, predicting that main verbs of agentive ACs in particular would not be lexically telic, is also essentially disproven by the fact that 80.88% (n = 110) of all ACA main verbs are lexically telic. However, a tendency for the main verbs of the ACA to be less massively telic, at least in relative terms, could indicate that the ACA has a constructional specification of telic meaning to offer, i.e. the non-telic verbs in the ACA are found in that particular construction because the construction does impose a telic meaning. Following this line of reasoning, we would expect to find a relatively low share of the 548 unequivocally telic verbs in the ACAs (compared to the share of the telic verb found in ACPs and ACXs) and a relatively high share of the 60 verbs that are not unequivocally telic (the 1 static, the 20 atelic, the 32 dynamic, the 3 not telic and the 4 neutral verbs) in the ACAs. Table 4 shows the distribution of unequivocally telic verbs and not unequivocally telic verbs among ACA, ACP and ACX.
In order to assess whether the distribution of unequivocally telic verbs and not unequivocally telic verbs across AC types reflects a special tendency for any of the two verb types, one has to compare with the general distribution of agentivity types in the corpus data presented in Table 2, ACA: 22.33%; ACP: 34.32%; ACX: 43.35%. The distribution of unequivocally telic verbs approximates the general distribution of agentivity types very closely, i.e. there is no observable tendency to find fewer of the already lexically telic verbs in the ACA. The picture is different when looking at the figures for the not unequivocally telic verbs. Their occurrence in the ACA is almost twice as frequent as the overall share of the ACA type, 41.67% compared to 22.33%. This could seem to suggest an association between verbs that do not have a definite coding of telic meaning and the ACA, lending some support to the characterisation of the agentive AC as a marker of telicity. However, the low number of not unequivocally telic verbs (60 as compared to the 548 unequivocally telic verbs) makes the observation less certain, and – more importantly – the skewed telic/un-telic distribution may be due to the association between telicity and transitivity (cf. above on syntactic specification of telicity) since there are very strong ties between intransitive constructions – associated with atelic meaning – and ACA interpretation as described below.

### 4.4. Transitivity

The syntactic construction type of the main verb of the ACs was categorised as either

- transitive construction (presence of direct object),

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AC type</th>
<th>Unequivocally telic in % (n)</th>
<th>Not unequivocally telic in % (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>20.07% (110)</td>
<td>41.67% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>35.04% (192)</td>
<td>28.33% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACX</td>
<td>44.89% (246)</td>
<td>30.00% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00% (548)</td>
<td>100.00% (60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: Distribution of unequivocally telic vs. not unequivocally telic among AC types*
construction with prepositional object (presence of object argument, but with PP realisation),

- intransitive construction (absence of referential object with argument status) or

- reflexive construction (explicit marking of the absence of a distinct object argument)

Strictly speaking, the construction with a prepositional object is a type of intransitive construction, but it differs from intransitive constructions where there is no form of referential object with argument status, cf. (35) where the bare noun *avis* ‘newspaper’ is not a referential NP and does not designate an argument (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 474, 828, 939).

(35) han læste avis
    he read.PST newspaper
    ‘he was reading a/the newspaper (he did newspaper reading)’

As shown in Table 5, the great majority of ACs are transitive constructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitivity</th>
<th>% of all AC (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitive</td>
<td>89.00 (542)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional object</td>
<td>1.48 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intransitive (no obj. arg.)</td>
<td>6.57 (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive</td>
<td>2.63 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable</td>
<td>0.33 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (609)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5: Transitivity in ACs*

The distribution of transitivity values on the three agentivity types is presented in Table 6, which shows that the unambiguously non-agentive type is almost completely transitive (96.65%), and that the ACX, which allows for non-agentive interpretation, also correlates very strongly with transitive
construction (91.29%). Constructions that are not transitive are only found with a substantial percentage in the ACA (prepositional object, intransitive and reflexive combined: 27.20%), i.e. in ACs that do not allow for non-agentive interpretation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitivity</th>
<th>% of ACA (n)</th>
<th>% of ACP (n)</th>
<th>% of ACX (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitive</td>
<td>72.79 (99)</td>
<td>96.65 (202)</td>
<td>91.29 (241)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional object</td>
<td>2.94 (4)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>1.89 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intransitive (no obj. arg.)</td>
<td>12.50 (17)</td>
<td>2.87 (6)</td>
<td>6.44 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive</td>
<td>11.76 (16)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.48 (1)</td>
<td>0.38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (136)</td>
<td>100.00 (209)</td>
<td>100.00 (264)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6: Transitivity in the three AC types*

Non-transitive construction is thus strongly correlated with agentive interpretation (cf. Larsson 2014: 165; Diderichsen 1962: 135). Furthermore, among the 6 ACPs categorised as intransitive, 5 have an incorporated “object noun”, which, while not a referential object argument, does designate some object-like entity, as shown in (36) where *bånd* ‘bond, tie’ designates a (metaphorical) object.

(36) de 3800 mennesken-er, der har få-et lag-t bånd om
don 3800 human-PL that have.PRS put-SUP tie around
deres personlig-e frihed
deres personal-DEF freedom
‘the 3800 people that have had their personal freedom curbed (lit. have had ties put on their personal freedom)’
Only the category ‘reflexive’ is exclusively found in the ACA, as in (9) in section 2 and (37) below, tallying with the intuition that it is impossible to force a non-agentive interpretation on an AC combined with a reflexive construction.

(37) Hun få-r drej-et sig halvt om

she get-PRS turn-SUP REFL.PRON half around

‘she manages to turn around halfway’

The reflexive construction in Danish is an explicit device for signaling the absence of a (potential) object argument (distinct from the subject) (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 592-594), and we may conclude that the presence of some sort of object argument or object-like element is a prerequisite for the non-agentive interpretation (and thus also for agentivity ambiguity), while the explicit marking of the absence of an object argument blocks non-agentive interpretation.

As noted in section 4.3, the overrepresentation in the ACA of the few verbs that are not unambiguously telic could be thought of as an indication that the purpose of the ACA is to provide telic meaning. However, the relations between telicity and transitivity and between objects and agentivity suggest a different analysis that centres on the role of objects. Absence of an object yields an intransitive construction which will often be the grammatical factor that results in atelic meaning (cf. section 4.3 and (32)-(33)). Since object-free constructions are strongly connected with agentive interpretation, they are predominantly found in ACAs rather than in ACPs and ACXs. Thus, atelic meaning that results from object-free construction becomes associated with ACAs, but the atelic meaning of the verb (or more precisely, the neutral verb and the absence of a direct object) is an accompanying feature of the object-free construction. It is an epiphenomenal consequence of the role of transitivity in agentivity interpretation.
As noted in section 4.3, the number of verbs that are not unambiguously telic verbs is so low that the significance of their ACA overrepresentation in the data can be questioned, but whether or not the overrepresentation is significant, the transitivity constraints on agentive and non-agentive interpretation offer an explanation of why we find more of the not unambiguously telic verbs in the ACA type, an explanation that does not rely on provision of telic meaning as the purpose of the ACA.

### 4.5. Malefactive predicates

Hypothesis IV in section 4.1 predicts that there will be no malefactive AC main verbs. The corpus study found that very few ACs have main verbs that designate events that are typically or clearly malefactive, although some do occur, cf. Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malefactivity</th>
<th>% of all ACs (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not malefactive (default)</td>
<td>93.10 (567)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely malefactive</td>
<td>3.45 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly malefactive</td>
<td>3.28 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable</td>
<td>0.16 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (609)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 7: Malefactivity in ACs*

An example of an AC from the corpus analysed as most likely malefactive is (18) in section 2. A clearly malefactive AC is given in (38).
han kom i klemme i en kidnapningsaffære og fik hoved-et
he come.PST in pickle in ART kidnapping.affair and get.PST head-DEF
hugg-et af
cut-SUP off
‘he got into a pickle in a kidnapping affair and got his head cut off/got beheaded’

Turning to the distribution of malefactivity values on the three agentivity types, we see that the likely and clearly malefactive examples are predominantly found in the ACP and almost absent in the ACA, cf. Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malefactivity</th>
<th>% of ACA (n)</th>
<th>% of ACP (n)</th>
<th>% of ACX (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not malefactive (default)</td>
<td>98.53 (134)</td>
<td>83.25 (174)</td>
<td>98.11 (259)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely malefactive</td>
<td>1.47 (2)</td>
<td>7.66 (16)</td>
<td>1.14 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly malefactive</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>9.09 (19)</td>
<td>0.38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (136)</td>
<td>100.00 (209)</td>
<td>100.00 (264)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Malefactivity in the three AC types

None of the ACAs were judged to be clearly malefactive, which is not surprising given that the subject of the ACA is the agent of the main verb, in the sense of semantic or logical subject, and such an agent is more likely to be associated with intentional and goal-oriented action than a non-agent, which makes malefactivity very marked and bound up with accidental and involuntary action (as in (18)).
### 4.6. Subject referents

Hypothesis V in section 4.1 predicts that there will be no ACs with non-human subject referents. In the subject referent analysis, the ACs were sorted in the following subject type categories:

- Human, including pairs and groups
- Institution, e.g. a company, a country
- Animal
- Thing, i.e. inanimate concrete entities, including plants and concrete masses (e.g. snow)
- Abstract, inanimate concepts, e.g. ‘love’, ‘distance’; excluding states of affairs
- State of affairs, as expressed by e.g. action nouns or clauses
- Function that prevents subject identification: AC as subject or predicative to the subject

The result of the analysis for ACs as a whole is shown in Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject referent</th>
<th>% of all AC (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>76.68 (467)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>9.52 (58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thing</td>
<td>1.15 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>0.49 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of affairs</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function preventing identification</td>
<td>7.39 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable</td>
<td>4.76 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (609)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 9: Subject referents of the ACs*
A clear majority of the ACs (76.68%) have human subject referents, and the second largest category is institutions (9.52%) which can be interpreted as entities that represent humans meronymically. Thus, directly or indirectly human subject referents constitute 86.20% of all AC subjects.

The distribution of the different types of subject referent on the three AC types is presented in Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject referent</th>
<th>% of ACA (n)</th>
<th>% of ACP (n)</th>
<th>% of ACX (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>81.62 (111)</td>
<td>74.16 (155)</td>
<td>76.14 (201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>6.62 (9)</td>
<td>13.40 (28)</td>
<td>7.95 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thing</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>2.87 (6)</td>
<td>0.38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>1.47 (2)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of affairs</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
<td>0.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function preventing identification</td>
<td>6.62 (9)</td>
<td>5.26 (11)</td>
<td>9.47 (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanalysable</td>
<td>3.68 (5)</td>
<td>4.31 (9)</td>
<td>5.68 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00 (136)</td>
<td>100.00 (209)</td>
<td>100.00 (264)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 10: Subject referents of the three AC types*

Table 10 shows that the directly and indirectly human subject referents (human + institution) account for close to 9 in 10 examples in each agentivity type: 88.24% for ACAs, 87.56% for ACPs and 84.09% for ACXs. It is noticeable that for the very rare ‘thing’ category, i.e. concrete non-human (and inanimate) entities, 6 out the 7 examples are unequivocally non-agentive (ACPs), while only one example (39) is judged to be potentially agentive (an ACX).
4.7. The AC and expressions of purpose and achievement

The final finding of the corpus study to be presented is the frequent association between the AC and elements that express goal, purpose or achievement independently of the AC itself. Hansen (1967: III, 155) and Jakobsen (2007: 296) note that the AC is very often used when conveying that the subject referent wants to achieve something and is deliberately aiming at obtaining some result. This is very evident in the large number of corpus examples where the AC occurs in the infinitive form in a context that designates, directly or indirectly, achievement intentions.

For all ACs a registration was made of the inflection of få and the syntactic context of the AC, e.g. its use in periphrastic tenses and passives or in combinations with modal verbs. The three most common inflection values were the simple present, the simple past and the at infinitive, roughly corresponding to the English to infinitive and mainly used as a nominal form. The figures for these three forms are presented in Table 11, which shows that these forms constitute three quarters of all ACs.
It is noticeable that the *at* infinitive makes up a third (35.47%) of all ACs. Of these 216 examples, 29 are combined with the preposition *for* ‘for, to’ to form final adverbials expression the goal or purpose of an action as in (40).

(40) Vi gik ned på vores værelse for at få pakk-et vores tøj
    *we walked down on our room to get the packing of our clothes done*

While the final adverbials constitute only 13.43% of all *at* infinitives, they form the largest individual functional group. In addition, the *at* infinitives very frequently occur as subordinate to predicates that designate intention, purpose or endeavour to achieve something such as the verb *lykkes* ‘succeed, be successful’ in (41) and the noun *interesse (i)* ‘interest (in)’ in (42).

(41) Det lykkedes mig at få kald-t Brian til bevidsthed igen
    *I managed to (lit. it was successful (to) me) to get Brian called back to consciousness again*
The *at* infinitives also occur frequently with adjectival predicates that presuppose someone’s interest in the carrying out of an action, e.g. *lettest* ‘easiest’ in (43).

(43) det er lett-est at få penge-ne udbetal-t i Grækenland, Irland og Portugal

‘it’s easiest to get the money paid out in Greece, Ireland and Portugal’

In total, *at* infinitives that are subordinate to an intention or purpose-designating predicate account for 84 of the *at* infinitives. Together with the 29 final adverbials with *for*, they constitute 113 of the *at* infinitives, 52.31%. With the *at* infinitives accounting for 35.47% of the ACs of the corpus study, the *at* infinitives used in or closely associated with expressions of intention or wishes for achievements make up nearly a fifth (18.55%) of all ACs. It does not follow from this association of the AC with “AC-external” expressions of intention and wishes for achieving results that this is the coded semantics of the AC. It does show, however, that the meaning of the AC fits noticeably well with intention and achievement contexts, and the semantic analysis must account for this.

4.8. Discussion of the corpus results

The above results of the corpus study can now be summarised and discussed. The result of the agentivity analysis of the ACs, which showed that close to half (43.35%) of the ACs are ambiguous
between an agentive and a non-agentive reading, disproves Hypothesis I in section 4.1. predicting that ACs would normally be clearly agentive or clearly non-agentive. This result speaks in favour of a description of the AC that unites the agentive and the non-agentive instances as types or versions of the same basic construction rather than assuming a fundamental distinction between two distinct constructions.

The Aktionsart-oriented analysis of the AC as a means for adding the content ‘telic’ to the designated state of affairs – either as the functional purpose of the AC in general (as argued in the resultativity analysis by Falster Jakobsen) or as the function of the ACA (as argued by Hansen & Heltoft) – was evaluated by testing Hypothesis II, predicting that main verbs of ACs in general would not be lexically telic, and Hypothesis III, predicting that main verbs of ACA in particular would not be lexically telic (cf. section 4.1.). Both these hypotheses were disproven, and the Aktionsart analysis is thus not supported by the corpus data. The main verbs found in the ACs are overwhelmingly telic – 9 out of 10 AC main verbs are lexically telic independently of the constructional context – and this clearly suggests that the addition of the feature ‘telic’ is not the communicative point of using the AC, cf. the functional conception of meaning outlined in section 1. The very strong tendency for AC main verbs to be lexically telic does not in itself rule out that a telic event profile is encoded by the construction. This could be regarded simply as a case of integration or unification between verb meaning and constructional meaning, showing harmony between the lexical choice and the choice of construction (Fried & Östman 2004: 25, 71). And even if one regards telic meaning to be something else than the typical communicative purpose of the construction in usage, telic meaning could be considered a secondary and typically redundant feature of the AC, originating (synchronously or diachronically) in the designation of a telic transfer event by the lexical source of the construction (its auxiliary), the (full) verb få ‘get’.
In arguing for such an account, the Aktionsart expressed by the construction with lexically non-telic verbs would play a central role. If such instances of the construction always convey telic meaning, then one could argue that while ACs with a lexically telic verb exhibit simple lexeme-construction unification, ACs with a verb that is lexically non-telic either specify the event profile as telic (in the case of verbs that are underspecified for Aktionsart) or coerce the meaning of the verb by imposing the telic event profile on which the construction insists (in the case of verbs that are specifically not telic), as in Goldberg’s (1995) classic example of constructional meaning, \textit{she sneezed the napkin off the table} where the caused motion construction is used with the non-caused motion verb \textit{sneeze}. However, it is not clearly the case that ACs with a non-telic verb have a telic event profile.

In Danish, telic and atelic predications combine with different duration adverbials, a PP with \textit{på} ‘on’ for expressing time spent to reach the endpoint of a telic event (44) and a PP with \textit{i} ‘in’ for expressing time spent on an atelic activity (45).

\begin{itemize}
  \item (44) hun afmonter-ede bombe-n på fem minutt-er / *i fem minutter
  she defuse-PST bomb-DEF on five minute-PL in five minute-PL
  ‘she defused the bomb in (lit. on) five minutes’
  \item (45) hun flirt-ede med ham i fem minutt-er / *på fem minutter
  she flirt-PST with him in five minute-PL on five minute-PL
  ‘she flirted with him for (lit. in) five minutes’
\end{itemize}

If ACs with lexically non-telic verbs always had telic meaning, one would expect them to occur with \textit{på} adverbials as in (44), but not with \textit{i} adverbials (45). However, a Google search yielded
numerous ACs with atelic verbs and i adverbials, signaling that the clause has atelic meaning, such as (46) with snakke ‘talk’ and (47) with sove ‘sleep’.

(46) vi fik snakk-et i 2 time-r\textsuperscript{21}  
we get.PST talk-SUP in two hour-PL  
‘we got (the chance) to talk for two hours’

(47) jeg fik sov-et i fire time-r\textsuperscript{22}  
I get.PST sleep-SUP in four hour-PL  
‘I managed to sleep for four hours/I got four hours of sleep’

These examples can be regarded as evidence, or at least a strong indication, that the AC with a lexically non-telic verb does not have telic meaning, and thus that the AC does not clearly encode telic meaning.

Ruling out entirely that telic event profiling can be regarded as an aspect of the constructional coding of the AC may be too strong a position. It may be possible to set up a model of layered “Aktionsart packaging” to account for cases like (46) and (47), a model in which an “external” telic profile is imposed on an “internal” state of affairs that maintains an atelic profile, explaining the atelic duration adverbials (cf. Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 720 for a description of the ACA that may be interpreted along such lines). As noted in section 4.3, the occurrence of not unequivocally telic verbs is higher in the ACA – the type which Hansen & Heltoft (2011: 718-721) most explicitly regard as having telic meaning – than would be expected from the share of this type in the corpus,

\textsuperscript{21} https://stensberg.dk/onenewmedia/18\%20a\%20Georgien.pdf last accessed 10/08/21

\textsuperscript{22} http://simonetajmer.dk/2015/01/10/back-in-the-hood/ last accessed 10/08/21
and while this may be due to the association between telic meaning and transitivity, it is possible that telic event profile is a relevant aspect of the ACA, even if it a secondary semantic aspect.

In any case, regardless of whether telic meaning should be ruled out as part of the coded semantics of the AC or if it should be acknowledged as an accompanying content feature, the result of the corpus study clearly supports the conclusion that telic meaning is not the essential functional contribution of the construction, viz. it is not why users choose the construction in communication – it is not the *raison d’être* of the AC.

The purpose of the malefactivity analysis and the subject referent analysis was to examine if the “successful execution of intended action” analysis is consistent with the semantics of the authentic ACs of the corpus study. A strong indicator of the AC *not* having the traditionally assumed ‘intentional action’ meaning (cf. section 3.2) would be a significant number of malefactive ACs. Since this is not found in the corpus study, the malefactivity analysis of the data does not provide a strong argument against the ‘intentional action’ analysis, especially not as an analysis of the ACA. The presence of a small number of malefactive ACs, including some with an agentive subject, does, however, raise questions about the suitability of the traditional ‘intentional action’ account, and it calls for a description that does not depend on the subject designating an agent who intentionally strives to reach a goal. Concerning the subject referent analysis, a strong indicator against the ‘intentional action’ analysis of ACs would likewise be a significant number of ACs with inanimate subjects, especially in agentive AC (in which the inanimate subjects may be called causative rather than agentive). The corpus data does not provide a strong argument against the ‘intentional action’ analysis based on the presence of inanimate subjects. Some non-human subjects do occur in the corpus material, however, and as shown in section 3.3, they are not difficult to find. The ‘intentional action’ account is not well suited to deal with these inanimate subjects, and while these were very few in the corpus data, their presence must also be dealt with.
5. The Affactive Construction

The solution to the problems of the previous analyses is an analysis that 1) can explain the affinity between telic meaning and the AC, especially the ACA, noted by Hansen & Heltoft and by Falster Jakobsen, without identifying telicity as the essential contribution of the construction, 2) can explain why the construction in the agentive reading is typically interpreted as conveying the successful execution by the subject of an intended action without identifying intentionality and the achieving of something desired by the subject as the coded content of the construction, and 3) can provide a basis for an analysis of the ACs with a non-human subject.

These requirements are all fulfilled by an analysis of the combination of få and the supine, in all its subtypes, as an Affactive Construction having as its basic and constitutive meaning the specification of the subject argument as an Afficiary (cf. section 1). According to this analysis, it is not only the non-agentive construction type with a non-valency-bound subject – the type dubbed afficiary construction (interessentkonstruktion) by Hansen & Heltoft – that conveys that the subject referent stands in a relationship of interest to the state of affairs designated by the verb. The assignment of Afficiary meaning to the subject is the core semantics of the AC found in all its subtypes, and the analysis suggested here thus unites all the types – the ACA, the ACPio and the ACPadj – in a participant role-based account. This aligns the description of the constructional semantics with the intuitive impression that the construction is used to express something about the subject vis-à-vis the state of affairs. Based on this description, the interpretation of the state of affairs as something desired by the subject, something the subject want to see carried out, can be regarded as a variant in usage, indeed the central usage variant.

5.1. Afficiary and agent

The Afficiary analysis offers a general description of the constructional semantics that is compatible with the more specific interpretations of the construction in specific instances of use. As an abstract
frame, the Afficiary role can be straightforwardly interpreted as denoting someone who wishes for an action to be carried out, either as someone benefitting from the action performed by someone else (the non-agentive interpretation) or as the one executing an intended action (the agentive interpretation). The analysis stays clear of the problems with the malefactive constructions noted in section 3.3 as the Afficiary role is also compatible with the interpretation that the designated event is detrimental to the subject referent. The Afficiary analysis is also perfectly compatible with the semantics of the ACPio type with a promoted IO as subject, since the Recipient role of the Danish IO (described in Heltoft 2014) can be straightforwardly described as a special case of the Afficiary role (cf. Zúñiga 2011: 329).

A characteristic feature of the construction that follows from the generalised Afficiary analysis, is the double thematic role of the subject in the agentive AC. Thus, in (48) the subject jeg ‘I’ has the double role of Agent and Afficiary.

(48) jeg fik mig rejs-t
    I get.PST REFL raise-SUP
    ‘I managed to get up’

In the non-agentive AC, the subject only has the Afficiary role, and the agent may optionally be adverbially expressed as in (49).

(49) Det vis-er en ny rapport, som 134 økonomisk klemt-e kommune-r
    this show-PRS ART new report which 134 economically hard-pressed-PL municipality-PL
    […], ha-r få-et lav-et af tre forsker-e fra Århus
    have-PRS get-SUP make-SUP by three researcher-PL from Å.
In agentivity-ambiguous ACs (the ACXs), it is possible but not necessary to interpret the subject as having the Agent role in addition to its fundamental Afficiary role. By assuming that the Afficiary specification is primary and the question of the Agent role is secondary, the analysis offers a description in terms of argument roles that stays clear of the problem of how to determine the Agent role assignment noted by Falster Jakobsen (2007: 294).

5.2. Coded content, variants and semantic affinities

As shown above, the Agent of the AC may be a person acting unintentionally or an inanimate instigator more precisely described as a force (a causative participant rather than agentive in the strict sense). Thus, the argument role Agent in the AC must be understood as ‘content subject’, i.e. the argument lexically specified as argument 1, allowing for such deviations from the prototypical agent. Even if the Agent role of the AC does not require volition or even consciousness, a natural interpretation of the role combination Agent + Afficiary is, however, that the subject acts intentionally to achieve something. An Agent is prototypically someone acting on his or her own volition, viz. consciously deciding to execute an action (cf. Saeed 1997: 140). When the fundamental Afficiary of the AC, someone standing in a relationship of interest to the designated state of affairs, has the additional role-feature of being an Agent, someone prototypically acting volitionally, the most straightforward and unmarked interpretation is that, given no lexical or pragmatic cues to indicate otherwise, the subject executes a planned action and intentionally strives for a result – and successfully achieves the desired result. The fact that the coded Afficiary semantics of the AC is naturally interpreted as conveying ‘intentional action’ tallies with the corpus results presented in section 4.7 that show the frequent association between the AC and expressions
of intentions, and planned goal-oriented action. In this way, the Afficiary analysis explains why we find the AC in ‘intentional action’ contexts without having to define intentionality as the coded meaning, a description at odds with the non-intentional uses of the AC.

The ‘intentional action’ interpretation can be regarded as the main usage variant of the AC. Being a variant, however, it is not an interpretation that the AC insists on, and the combination of the roles Agent and Afficiary also lends itself nicely to the less common ‘accidental action’ reading of malefactive ACs with an agentive subject. The interpretation may be brought about by a main verb designating an event that is most likely to be understood as detrimental to the subject, as in e.g. (29) in section 3.3 with the verb (+ complement) *træde på et glasskår* ‘step on a piece of broken glass’. Here the most reasonable pragmatic interpretation of the constructional coding of the subject as Agent and Afficiary is that this subject does something to his own disadvantage – the agentive subject is someone acting accidentally.

As pointed out above, the analysis of the content of the AC should be able to explain the affinity between telic meaning and the AC, especially the ACA, noted by Hansen & Heltoft and by Falster Jakobsen. Such an explanation is found in the link between affaction, event effect and telicity. An afficiary is a participant who is advantaged or disadvantaged by an event, and the act of affaction is thus a causation of advantage or disadvantage, bound up with the event having an effect – favourable or detrimental – on the afficiary. As telic events are defined by their bringing about of a change of state, they will, *ceteris paribus*, tend to have a greater effect than atelic events and states: The telic *they fixed the car* is likely, *ceteris paribus*, to have a greater effect on someone associated with the car (e.g. the owner) than the atelic *they were working on the car*. This may explain why the AC, dedicated to ascribing an Afficiary role to the subject, will most often occur with telic main verbs, since affaction have a stronger affinity to changes of state than to situations that do not involve a change of state (cf. the association of the feature ‘telic’ and high transitivity in Hopper &
Thompson 1980). Thus, the Afficiary analysis offers an explanation of the strong link between the AC and telic verbs without running into the problem of positing the component ‘telic’ as the functional contribution of the construction.

5.3. Voice: active and passive AC

As noted in section 2, the distinction between the agentive and the non-agentive AC can be regarded as a voice opposition between active voice and passive voice. Active voice is defined by the identity between the content subject (the logical subject, the Agent) and the expression subject (the formal subject constituent), while the passive is defined by the content subject (Agent) being demoted and optionally expressed by an adverbial constituent (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 1287). The distinction between the agentive AC and the non-agentive can thus be described as a distinction between active and passive AC (as indicated by Falster Jakobsen 2007: 293), an analyse in agreement with the literature on similar constructions with GET verbs in other languages, especially Germanic languages (such as the German bekommen passive, cf. Diedrichsen 2012; Larsson 2014; Lenz & Rawoens 2012). According to the suggested voice analysis, both the non-agentive AC with a promoted valency-bound IO as subject (ACPio) and the non-agentive AC with a free adjunct as subject (ACPadj) are considered passives, i.e. the subject of a passive AC may be a promoted object (IO) or a promoted free Afficiary not subcategorised by the main verb. This analysis is in line with the theoretical definition of the passive voice as essentially a matter of subject demotion (rather than object promotion) (Comrie 1977; Foley 2007: 418-419). The subject demotion understanding of the passive voice is the one called for by the grammar of Danish as all passive constructions in Danish involve subject demotion, but not necessarily object promotion (Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 1287-1288). For instance, the impersonal passive of intransitive verbs with the locative dummy subject der ‘there’ demotes the subject to an optionally expressed agent adverbial without any object promotion (50).
As subject demotion is the defining property of passives in Danish, it makes good sense to name the two non-agentive subtypes of the AC – that share the features of having an expression subject which is *not* the content subject (not the agent) and allowing for optional adverbial expression of the demoted content subject – Passive Affactive Construction, contrasting with the agentive type as the Active Affactive Construction.

As the clauses instantiating the AC are so frequently ambiguous between an agentive (active) or non-agentive (passive) interpretation, one may wonder if the voice opposition is a grammatically coded distinction or merely a difference in (pragmatic) interpretation beyond the semantics of the construction. When an agent adverbial is present, as in (49) above, the AC is unambiguously non-agentive, so the possibility or impossibility of adding an agent adverbial to a prima facie ambiguous AC will show if it is to be interpreted as agentive or non-agentive. However, such a manipulation of the AC will not change the fact that very frequently the construction as it stands in actual usage is structurally underspecified, and the voice distinction may thus be considered covert or latent.

### 5.4. The taxonomy of AC types

Having now presented the analysis of the fundamental function of the *få* + supine construction as a marker of Afficiary subject role and the discussion of the difference between agentive and non-
agentive interpretation as a voice distinction, the Affactive Construction and its subtypes can be presented in Figure 1 showing the taxonomy of AC types.

![Figure 1: the taxonomy of Affactive Constructions](image)

5.5. Non-human subjects and subjectification

As noted above, the analysis of the AC must provide a basis for an analysis of the ACs with a non-human subject (AC-NHS). As shown in section 4.6, AC-NHSs are extremely rare in the corpus data, constituting only 10 out of the 609 ACs, but it is not difficult to find examples as demonstrated by (30) and (31) in section 3.3. In itself, the Afficiary analysis does not offer a straightforward accommodation of the non-human subjects as these subjects – inanimate concrete objects and abstract concepts – are not well suited for the role as Afficiaries. However, the Afficiary analysis forms a basis for a description of the rare and peripheral non-human subjects in terms of subjectification.

The term subjectivity is used to describe the presence of the speaker in (the meaning of) the utterance (Stein & Wright 1995), as seen e.g. in discourse particles marking speaker stance. It is well known that lexical and grammatical elements with propositional, or descriptive, objective,
meaning, can develop subjective meaning expressing the speaker’s attitude towards or perspective on the propositional content. The process of shifting from expressing propositional meaning to expressing an attitude towards the propositional content is known as subjectification (Traugott 1995), a classic example being the development of epistemic meaning in e.g. English *must* (Traugott 1989: 32).

The AC-NHS is describable in terms of subjectification. Instead of being assigned to the clausal subject, the Afficiary role gets assigned to the communicating subject, the *sujet parlant* (i.e. the speaker). In other words, while the ordinary, basic AC has a human subject that is defined by the construction as having the Afficiary role, the AC-NHS subjectifies the Afficiary content of the construction which becomes a marking of speaker attitude. Speaking in favour of this analysis is the fact that it appears to be characteristic of the AC-NHS that it presents a state of affairs which the speaker – or possibly the hearer, the speaker + the hearer or a larger discursive community – finds desirable. This is true of (30) and (31) in section 3.3, and of (51) below, which is a statement by a police officer describing how a family managed to escape a burning house because they were woken up by a crying baby.

(51) om det er røg-en, der får vækk-et spædbarn-et, eller om det er if it be.PRS smoke-DEF that get-PRS wake-SUP baby-DEF or if it be.PRS vågn-et af sig selv, ved vi ikke noget om wake-SUP by REFL.PRON self know.PRS we not something about ‘whether it’s the smoke that wakes up the baby or if the baby wakes up by him-/herself, we know nothing about’

24 From the news site https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/graedende-spaedbarn-reddede-familie-fra-braendende-hus, last accessed 15.11.19
The subjectification analysis thus offers a connection between the affaction analysis of the ordinary AC and the rare AC-NHS, the latter being a peripheral variant of the AC that may indicate a path of grammatical development in which the Afficiary role is shifted from the propositional layer to the interpersonal (“modal”) layer of meaning.

6. Conclusion

The Afficiary analysis presented in this paper offers a better description of the *få* + supine construction in Danish than those of previous studies by uniting all the structurally closely related AC types in a unified description of their semantic similarities and the organisation of the distinctions between them. The suggested analysis brings together user intuition – that the construction is used to express something about the subject vis-à-vis the state of affairs – with actual authentic usage as found in the corpus study and a theoretical wish for a clear and simple analysis covering all the grammatically related combinations of *få* and supine.

Considering the job done by the AC, that which causes it to be used and reproduced as part of Danish grammar (cf. the functionalist credo presented in Section 1), the present study shows that contributing telic meaning is not the functional point of the AC, and the construction is not made for keeping track of the agent of the designated state of affairs. Instead, the Danish AC is designed to communicate an interest in an Afficiary, someone advantaged or disadvantaged by an event, presented as the subject of the clause, the informational theme argument and point of departure of the message. Whether this Afficiary is the agent of the event or not is a secondary matter, the configuration of which can be described as a distinction between active and passive AC.

The suggested analysis of the AC offers a basis for future research in the way the AC and its subtypes fit into the larger network of *få* constructions. This includes analysis of how the properties of the AC link up with e.g. caused-motion constructions (as in *få bilen til værkstedet* “[manage to...
take the car to the garage’) or resultative constructions (as in få kokkenet rent ‘[manage to] clean the kitchen’). A central question to answer for such research would be the role of affinity in other få constructions.

7. References


Zúñiga, F. (2011). Why should beneficiaries be subjects (or objects)? Affaction and grammatical relations, in S. Kittilä et al. (Eds.), *Case, Animacy and Semantic Roles* (pp. 329-348). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.