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# A Descriptive Analysis of The *Viktig* Alternation in Norwegian

Master's thesis in Language Studies with Teacher Education  
Supervisor: Christopher Wilder  
May 2021



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Faculty of Humanities  
Department of Language and Literature





# Abstract

The overall purpose of this thesis is to give a descriptive analysis of the *viktig* alternation, which is illustrated by Norwegian sentence pairs like *Et godt arbeidsmiljø er viktig / Det er viktig med et godt arbeidsmiljø*. This pattern has earlier been described in connection with so-called 'pancake sentences'. This thesis has established a description of what elements make up the *special* structure where we argue for the following sentence structure: 'expletive *det* + copula V *være* + *Adjective* + special obligatory adjunct *med*-phrase'.

Furthermore, we argue that the structure is part of an argument alternation. Based on results from Jan-Terje Faarlund's paper *Embedded Clause Reduction and Scandinavian Gender Agreement* from 1977, an informal investigation of what predicates enter the *viktig* alternation has been conducted. The results show that adjectives that can take an infinitive clause in the subject position and an NP in the subject position can enter the alternation. Adjectives only allowing NPs or NPs as well as finite clauses in the subject position cannot enter the alternation. The adjectives allowed to enter the alternation make up specific groups of adjectives: Effort, necessity, possibility, importance, frequency and experienter adjectives. Specific verb and noun predicates are in addition argued to enter the *viktig* alternation. Three problem cases are detected, and questions for later research are presented.



# Preface

My interest in English as both a language and as a concept arose in high school. I do, however, remember my English teacher drilling us in verb tenses and I could not for the life of me understand why. Today I do, and I am very grateful. English has been an important tool for expressing myself and to communicate with people on an international level, which made me more motivated and invested in the subject in school. Today, travel and learning about other people's culture and language are very important to me. Being able to communicate outside the normal small talk creates greater opportunities within these interests. I have, nevertheless, always been attentive of my errors, and always been eager to improve. Therefore, my interest in Norwegian/English differences was born. When my supervisor presented me with the topic of this thesis, I knew that this would be an intriguing topic to write my thesis on.

This thesis was written in the time frame January 2021 to May 2021. The work on getting to know the field of research and conducting the informal investigation began in July 2020. The data presented in the thesis is relevant academic literature, corpus and string search on Google and native intuition. Considering that the *viktig* alternation, to our knowledge, never has been analysed as an argument alternation before, theories from other linguistic scholars (e.g., Haegeman & Guéron (1999); Saeed (2009); Landau (2009); Sveen (1996); Åfarli & Vangsnes (2020)) have been essential when analysing the *viktig*-structure. Papers on *pancake* sentences (Faarlund (1977); Josefsson (2009)) has furthermore been central to fathom specific elements of the alternation. I hope that my aim in providing a descriptive analysis in the *med*-structure of *pancake* sentences will spark interest in further research on the topic.

Writing a master's thesis is, in many ways, a completely new experience. Over the past year, I have experienced a great deal of personal development. I have gone through rough periods feeling stuck without inspiration or motivation but kept on writing. Whenever the motivation has struck again, I have been grateful for every bit of knowledge I have gained throughout the process. Being in the 'Lektor program' has its complications regarding the bachelor thesis and the order of the subjects. To some extent, these complications have made a desirable level of knowledge of different aspects of linguistic theory less attainable. Luckily, my supervisor has been incredibly dedicated to assisting me when my knowledge has fallen short.





# Acknowledgements

Although the process of writing a very intricate thesis like this feels like a lonely experience, there are important people I would like to thank for their support and for making this thesis possible.

First and foremost, I want to thank my supervisor Christopher Wilder, who shares my interest in English/Norwegian language differences and introduced me to the topic of this thesis. For the past year, he has nourished my brain by offering advice, answering all my questions with great elaborations, and providing me with exceptional guidance. I am very much appreciative and grateful. Without him and his remarkable knowledge within his field of English linguistics, this thesis would not exist.

I also want to thank the NTNU Dragvoll library for providing me with both physical but mostly online literature, which has been very much needed during these special times.

Moreover, I want to thank my friends who have provided me with their native intuition and been an escape when I needed breaks. I want to thank my father for economic support throughout my education. Moreover, I want to thank my foster mom for always believing I could achieve more but had enough patience to let me figure it out for myself. And, of course, my cat Suzi for making sure I took many short breaks.

Lastly, and unconventional, I want to thank myself for proving to myself that people whom the Child Welfare services have protected can do anything they set their minds to. As a child, I never thought a higher education was possible for someone like me, but I am grateful that I did not let statistics dictate my future. Higher education is not reserved for people from middle or higher socioeconomic classes but for everyone who wishes to attend.

Thank you.

Molly-Melissa Eilertsen Sakslund  
Trondheim, spring 2021



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# List of Abbreviations and Symbols

*	Ungrammatical/unacceptable sentence
e	Empty gap
∅	Empty gap
Adj:	Adjective
AP:	Adjective Phrase
Construction NOM:	Construction Nominal
Construction PROP:	Construction Propositional
DO:	Direct object
Fem:	Feminine
Masc:	Masculine
N:	Noun
Neut:	Neuter
NP:	Noun Phrase
NP*:	Reduced clause leaving behind object NP
OB:	Object
P:	Preposition
PP:	Preposition Phrase
PRED:	Predicate
PresS:	Presenteringssetning
REFL:	Reflexive pronoun
REL:	Relation
Sing:	Singular
V:	Verb
V2:	Verb second; Finite verb comes second in a sentence
ViktigAlt:	<i>Viktig</i> alternation
VP:	Verb Phrase

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Topic and Approach

As a Norwegian speaker of English and an English teacher in training, I have experienced many instances of what a researcher of translation studies would call 'syntactic calque'. Instances where Norwegians apply Norwegian syntax to English sentences. One particular instance is the occurrence of the impersonal sentence structure '*det + være + adjective + med*', as illustrated in (2). Sentence (1) is the regular structure of the same sentence. As illustrated in (4), the impersonal sentence structure in question is ungrammatical in English.

- |     |  |                                   |
|-----|--|-----------------------------------|
| (1) | Et godt samarbeid er viktig.<br><i>Good cooperation is important</i>   | <i>Regular structure</i>          |
| (2) | Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid.<br><i>It is important with a good cooperation.</i><br><i>'Good cooperation is important.'</i> | <i>Special structure</i>          |
| (3) | Good cooperation is important.   | <i>Regular structure: English</i> |
| (4) | *It is important with a good cooperation.  | <i>Special structure: English</i> |

To our knowledge, this structure has only been mentioned briefly in the discussion of 'pancake sentences' by Jan-Terje Faarlund (1977) and Gunlög Josefsson (2009) as support to their claims but never been analysed in depth. The main goal of this master's thesis is to give a descriptive analysis of the impersonal sentence structure and to investigate what class of predicates show the pattern. As a result of sentence (1) and (2) having the same meaning, we believe the regular structure and the special structure to be two realisations of the same predicate, hence the name '*Viktig* alternation'. The thesis will be conducted within the generative grammar framework.

## 1.2 Main Points

In this thesis, we will establish the properties of the *viktig*-pattern and argue that the sentence structure results from an argument alternation. Further, we will investigate which predicates can enter the alternation. Through analysing the sentence structure in question, we have reason to believe that this sentence structure has properties not analysed in Norwegian linguistics before. We have looked at known Norwegian sentence structures and compare them to the *viktig*-pattern, resulting in the assumption that the *viktig*-pattern is a special Norwegian argument alternation that has only recently emerged in the language. Furthermore, arguing the *viktig*-pattern as an argument alternation is a new approach to the already known *med*-structure of *pancake* sentences, and a significant focus will be on establishing what predicates that enter the alternation.

## 1.3 The Structure

The thesis has five chapters. The first of them is this introduction which covers the main goals of the thesis. Chapter 2 *Background* will first present theory on argument structure and argument alternation before dealing with each of the special structure's elements: *det*-subject, *med*-phrase and adjectives as predicate. Chapter 3 *Previous Analyses on the*

*Viktig Alternation Pattern* will introduce previous analysis of the *viktig*-pattern through papers by Faarlund (1977) and Josefsson (2009). Furthermore, this chapter will discuss a 'hidden clause' hypothesis, which the two linguists argue for in their papers. In chapter 4 *The Class of Predicates That Enter the Viktig Alternation*, we will report the results of an informal investigation where the aim is to establish an independent description of the class of predicates allowed in the ViktigAlt. The hypothesis, methods, investigation and results will be presented, and the hypothesis will be answered. Chapter 5 *Conclusion* will give a tentative conclusion and mention interesting topics for further research.



## 2. Background

The main goal of this chapter is to introduce the sentence structure in question in more detail. First, the chapter will introduce and explain the main components of argument structure (section 2.1) and argument alternation (section 2.2) before arguing that the *viktig* alternation is indeed an argument alternation (section 2.2.1). Then, the *viktig* alternation's different elements will be demonstrated, and argumentation for their properties will be provided to show distinction from other known sentence structures. The main elements in the *viktig* alternation are *det*-subject (section 2.3), *med*-phrase (section 2.4), and adjective as a predicate (section 2.5).

*The viktig alternation* found in Norwegian is illustrated in (1) and (2), and as mentioned in the introduction, example (4) illustrates an ungrammatical special structure in English. (3) demonstrates the grammatical counterpart to (4).

- |     |  |                                   |
|-----|--|-----------------------------------|
| (1) | Et godt samarbeid er viktig.<br><i>A good cooperation is important</i>   | <i>Regular structure</i>          |
| (2) | Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid.<br><i>It is important with a good cooperation</i><br>'Good cooperation is important.' | <i>Special structure</i>          |
| (3) | Good cooperation is important.   | <i>Regular structure: English</i> |
| (4) | *It is important with a good cooperation.  | <i>Special structure: English</i> |

### 2.1 Argument Structure

Within generative linguistics, a sentence and its parts are analysed in both syntactic and semantic terms. The syntax contains verb, subject, object, etc., as well as phrase type NP, VP, PP etc. The semantic terms are predicate (verb or adjective) and arguments (NP, PP). Traditionally, we categorise verbs (V) as transitive, intransitive, and ditransitive (depending on the number of objects it takes). The noun phrases (NP) in the sentence are either the subject, indirect object, or direct object. Sentences can also hold a complement or an adjunct, which most often is in a prepositional phrase (PP) (Haegeman & Guéron, 1999, p. 21).

Semantically, the lexical verb or adjective functions as a predicate, and the noun phrases and complement prepositional phrases are arguments of the predicate. The predicate describes a state or an event that needs participants to make sense in a sentence. These participants are the arguments.

#### 2.1.1 Predicates

The predicate can be either a verb or an adjective. The verb which takes arguments and describes state or events is called a *lexical verb* (*buy, leave, believe*). Preceding the lexical verb is often an *auxiliary verb* (*have, be*) which cannot assign theta-roles and does not impact the argument structure (Haegeman & Guéron, 1999, p. 38). Adjectives that can function as predicates are called predicative adjectives and are accompanied by a copula verb *be*, making the sentences *copular*. Like auxiliary verbs, the copula verb *be* does not assign theta-roles (Haegeman & Guéron, 1999, p. 40) but carries the tense of the sentence.

These adjectival predicates are in most cases intransitive, taking one argument. In sentence (5), the predicative adjective *smart* acts as the main predicate of the sentence and usually have only one argument realised as a noun phrase in the subject position. Sentence (5) includes the subject noun phrase *the boy* which is the argument, and the auxiliary *be* in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular present tense linking the argument and the predicate *smart*. Predicative adjectives taking two arguments can occur (Ramchand, 2018, p. 284), as illustrated in (6) with the adjective *smitten* taking an NP (*the boy*) and a PP (*with his friend*).

- (5) The boy is smart.  
 (6) The boy is smitten with his friend.

### 2.1.2 Theta-Roles

The arguments used in a sentence depend on the requirements of the verb. One of the requirements is the semantic meaning of the argument. The argument is assigned a *thematic role*, also called a *theta-role* by the predicate, depending on the requirements (Haegeman & Guéron, 1999, p. 25). In (7), the noun phrase *Elvis*, in subject position, has the thematic role AGENT: the participant who initiated the event. The noun phrase *the building*, in the direct object position, has the thematic role LOCATION: where the event takes place.

- (7) Elvis has left the building.  
 AGENT                      LOCATION

Table 2 is an extended list of thematic roles, retrieved from Saeed (1999, pp. 153-154) and modified, provided on the grounds that we will encounter several thematic roles throughout the thesis.

#### **Table 1: Outline of Thematic Roles**

AGENT:	the initiator of some action, often acting with intention.
PATIENT:	the entity affected by some action, often a change in state.
THEME:	the entity moved by an action, or whose location is described.
EXPERIENCER:	the entity aware of the action but is not in control of the action.
BENEFICIARY:	the entity benefiting from the action.
INSTRUMENT:	the means an action is performed or something comes about.
LOCATION:	the place in which something is situated or takes place.
GOAL:	the entity towards something moves, literally or metaphorically.
SOURCE:	the entity from which something moves, literally or metaphorically.
STIMULUS:	the entity causing an effect (usually psychological) in the EXPERIENCER.

We have addressed two verbal elements that cannot assign theta-roles (auxiliary *be/have* and copula verb *be*). Furthermore, not all noun phrases are arguments receiving a theta-role. NPs as adjuncts, expletive *it*, and quasi-arguments do not receive theta-roles. Adjuncts are optional elements of a sentence containing additional information and will, therefore, not be assigned a theta-role. Expletive *it* is a non-referential element that does not contribute semantic meaning but occurs based on the 'Extended Projection Principle', a principle requiring all sentences to "have a subject of the predication" (Moro,

2006, p. 217). Expletive *it* satisfies the principle, and therefore, often occupies the subject position in a sentence when the subject clause has moved to another right-sided position. Considering it acts as a placeholder, it is not assigned a theta-role. Quasi-arguments are what we call *it* when *it* is the pronoun of weather verbs. It does not carry a semantic meaning and is not assigned a theta-role (Haegeman & Guéron, 1999, pp. 40-44).

- |      |   |                       |
|------|---|-----------------------|
| (8)  | The cat ran away <b>last week</b> .                       | <i>NP as adjuncts</i> |
| (9)  | <b>It</b> is important to remember [that grandma is old]. | <i>Expletive it</i>   |
| (10) | <b>It</b> is pouring down outside.                        | <i>Quasi-argument</i> |

### 2.1.3 Theta-Grid

Argument structure is a lexical property of the predicate word. In the mental lexicon of the human brain, it is believed that verbs are stored with lexical information: what it means, how many arguments it takes, and what arguments (thematic roles) it takes. Each verb has a theta-grid, meaning that each verb has a list of theta-roles that normally acts as its arguments. The theta-grid further carries information about the number of arguments a verb allows and how they are syntactically realised in a sentence (Saeed, 2009, p. 160). The verb *leave* is a two-place predicate (allowing two arguments). Its theta-grid can be as follows:

**leave** V: <AGENT, LOCATION>.

The theta-roles are stored in ordered pairs inside angle brackets. The first theta-role, AGENT, serves as the syntactic role of a subject and is the external (semantic) argument of the predicate. The second theta-role, LOCATION, serves the syntactic role of an object and is the internal semantic argument of the predicate. In (11), the NP *Elvis* is the external argument of the predicate, the NP *the building* is the internal argument of the predicate. As a result of *leave*'s theta-grid, we know that the adverb *yesterday* is an adjunct, not an argument.

- (11) Elvis left the building yesterday.  
 AGENT    LOCATION

## 2.2 Argument Alternation

Now that we know that argument structure is based on the predicate and its arguments, we will learn that the arguments of a verb can be realised in different syntactic patterns. Usually, verbs have one way of expressing their arguments, nevertheless, verbs with two arguments or more can undergo passivization. The verbs have two forms: one active and one passive. (12a) is an example of a sentence with a basic argument structure. The AGENT *Mary* is realised syntactically as the subject of the sentence, and the THEME *cookies* as the direct object.

- (12) a. Mary baked cookies.  
 AGENT                  THEME
- 
- b. Cookies were baked by Mary.  
 THEME                                  AGENT

The verb *bake* can, however, be passivized. Sentence (12b) is the passive sentence derived from the active sentence (12a). The object has moved to the subject position, and the subject has moved to the direct object position gaining a preposition *by*. In some cases, the AGENT may be deleted. The lexical verb is still the same, but the sentence has gained the auxiliary verb *be* (Wilder, 2019). Intransitive verbs in English (taking only one argument) cannot be passivized; Norwegian intransitive verbs, on the other hand, can.

Many verbs can furthermore allow two realisations. This is known as argument alternation. These verbs, in contrast to passivization, will not change form. Argument alternation pattern, or 'diathesis alternation', comes from the assumption that a verb's semantic arguments have a specific pair of alternative syntactic realisations. In other words, one proposition can be provided through more than one sentence structure where the arguments often change place (Levin, 1993, p. 2). Examples of argument alternations are the *spray/load* alternation, also known as the *locative* alternation, and the *swarm* alternation.

- (13) a. Sharon sprayed water on the plants  
 b. Sharon sprayed the plants with water (Levin, 1993, p. 2).
- (14) a. Bees swarmed in the garden  
 b. The garden swarmed with bees (Dowty, 2000, p. 112).

The *spray/load* alternation is illustrated in example (13), where (13a) and (13b) has the same core semantic meaning, but the action in which the AGENT is causing is realised in two ways. Example (14a) and (14b) illustrate the *swarm* alternation, where the activity within a LOCATION is realised in two different ways. *Spray*, *load* and *swarm* are just three examples of verbs that allow two realisations. Their arguments shift place but keep their theta-roles and the sentence's core semantic meaning. We will revisit the *spray/load* alternation and *swarm* alternation in more detail in section 2.3. What is worth noting is that the sentence not undergone an alternation is often referred to as *unmarked* or *regular*, and the structure undergone an alternation is often called *marked* or *special*. This thesis will use the terms *regular structure* and *special structure*.

Similar to verb predicates, there are also argument alternation patterns involving adjective predicates. One group of adjective predicates known to English linguistics is 'evaluative adjectives'. Evaluative adjectives characterise behaviour or attitude from a subjective perspective of the speaker and include adjectives like *rude*, *nice*, *modest*, *crazy*, *skilful*, etc. (Landau, 2009, p. 317). Landau addresses the possibility for a regular sentence with an evaluative adjective predicate to undergo argument alternation. He writes that the regular structure's subject is "a (sentient) individual, the possessor of the property in question" (2009, p. 317). About the special structure, he writes that "the subject argument is an inanimate entity, usually (but not necessarily) an event, and the possessor argument is expressed as an optional PP" (Landau, 2009, pp. 317-318). We will now examine sentence (15).

- (15) a. Elvis was skilful.  
 POSSESSOR
- b. Playing the guitar was skilful of Elvis.  
 EVENT POSSESSOR

(15b) illustrates Landau's main points. The noun phrase argument *Elvis* is now realised as an optional PP, and the sentence has gained an event argument realised in the subject position. Although the use of the predicative adjective is more complex in (15b), Landau argues that the special structure in (15b) is derived from the regular structure in (15a) (2009, p. 318). Landau's paper confirms that argument alternation occurs with predicative adjectives in like manner as verbal predicates.

### 2.2.1 Introduction of the *Viktig* Alternation:

The first and foremost discussion regarding the *viktig* alternation is whether it is indeed an argument alternation. As illustrated in (1) and (2), the predicative adjective *viktig* allows for two different syntactic realisations of its semantic argument. The regular structure in (1) includes, alike evaluative adjectives, one argument realised as a noun phrase in subject position, an adjectival predicate and a copula *være* ('be') linking the subject noun phrase to its predicate. The NP refers to an entity that can be physical or abstract. The adjective refers to a property. The meaning of a *viktig* sentence is that the entity which the NP refers to has (or 'possesses') the property which the adjective refers to. Sentence (2) has the same meaning. Regarding the theta role assigned by the predicate, the argument in a *viktig* sentence cannot be argued to have the theta-role AGENT, as it does not initiate an action. It cannot be THEME, as the non-physical entity's location is not being described. The theta-role EXPERIENCER is neither a good fit as the NP is not experiencing an action. None of the theta-roles in **Table 1**, section 2.1.2, describe the argument of the adjectives in a *viktig* sentence. Landau (2009) describes the role of a 'possessor' argument when discussing evaluative adjectives (p. 319), as no event or action is expressed by the predicate's argument. The argument in (16) can possess the property of the adjective: 'good cooperation' can possess 'importantness'. We, therefore, choose to follow Landau and argues that the *viktig* predicates assign arguments with the possessor role and do not follow the theta-roles described in section 2.1.2. The sentence pattern of the regular structure is as follows: NP + *være* + Adj.

- (16) Et godt samarbeid er viktig. *Regular structure*  
*A good cooperation is important*  
 POSSESSOR

The special structure in (17) has the same predicate *viktig* and argument *et godt samarbeid* as the regular structure in (17). The special structure has, although, gained a *med' with'*-prepositional phrase following the predicate. Moreover, the *med*-phrase contains the argument noun phrase, which is no longer in the subject position. Additionally, the subject position is now occupied by the pronoun *det* ('it'), used as a meaningless 'placeholder' subject (expletive *det*). The semantic meaning has not changed. The sentence pattern of the special structure is: Det + *være* + Adj. + [med NP].

- (17) Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid. *Special structure*  
 POSSESSOR  
*It is important with a good cooperation*

It is evident from the introduction of these sentences that sentence (17) expresses the same predicate-argument combination as (16). The predicative adjective *viktig* has two realisations, the argument is expressed in two different manners, where both sentence patterns bear the same semantic meaning. For this alternation, in particular, no semantic meaning is added. In light of the evidence, we consider the *viktig* alternation to be an argument alternation.

As seen in the introduction, the syntactic structure of (2) is ungrammatical in English, yet it is often preferred over (1) in Norwegian, in many instances. The rest of this chapter will focus on the properties of the *viktig* alternation. With properties established, one can discover what predicates can undergo the alternation and understand the distinctions from other alternations. We will first describe the nature of the *det*-subject.

## 2.3 *Det*-Subject

The special structure in the *viktig* sentence (2) gains the pronoun *det* ('it') in the subject position. We argue *det* to be an expletive subject. In section 2.1.2, expletive *it* was introduced as a syntactic element acting as a 'placeholder' in the subject position to abide by the 'Extended projection principle'. In English, the placeholders *there* and *it* corresponds to the Norwegian placeholder *det* (Wilder, 2018, pp. 38-42). In Norwegian, *det* can function as a referential NP, or an expletive subject, as exemplified in (18) and (19).

- (18) Været er flott i dag. Ja det er **det**. *Referential NP*  
*Weather.the is great in today. Yes it is it*  
 'The weather is great today. Yes that it is.'
- (19) **Det** er viktig at du rekker neste ferje. *Expletive subject*  
*It is important that you reach next ferry.the*  
 'It is important that you catch the next ferry.'

English has three specific sentence structures or requirements where the placeholder *it* is allowed. These are *extrapositions*, *cleft-sentences*, and as the subject of weather, time and distance expressions (Wilder, 2018, pp. 43-48). In the extraposition structure, the pronoun *it* can be used as an anticipatory subject for the subordinate clause, as in (20):

- (20) **It** was important [that the dinner was ready at 6 pm].

The anticipatory subject is used to abide by the principles of "end-focus" and "end-weight". This means that the most important information comes at the end of the sentence. Another anticipatory *it* is used in cleft sentences, here the important information is fronted:

- (21) **It** was I who took the dog for a walk.

In English, we also find non-anticipatory *it*; in weather-, time- and distance expressions, as seen in (22) and (23):

- (22) **It** snowed outside.  
(23) **It** was late in the evening.

The *it* in these three examples have in common that they have no semantical meaning on their own. They act as 'dummies'. These dummies are the expletive *it*. In Norwegian *it* is also called an impersonal pronoun, for the reason that it is not referential or carries meaning. The principle is known in both English and Norwegian, however, placeholder *it* is more restricted in English than in Norwegian.

In the *med*-structure of the *viktig*-pattern, *det* does not refer to any element in the sentence or stand for a concrete thing or abstract entity. As illustrated in (24), *det* is not given a theta-role, and leaving out *det* in (25) does not change the semantic meaning of the sentence. Therefore, we argue the NP *det* to not have any semantic contribution to the sentence and only serves as a syntactic 'placeholder'.

- (24) Et godt samarbeid er viktig  
POSSESSOR  
*A good cooperation is important*
- (25) Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid  
? POSSESSOR  
*It is important with a good cooperation*

### 2.3.1 'Presenteringssetninger'

Norwegian sentences are often introduced by the expletive *det*. Within Norwegian, some intransitive verbs with one noun phrase argument can be realised in a *presenteringssetning* ('presentational sentence'), PresS in short, with the impersonal *det* realised in the subject position (Sveen, 1996, p. 141). In (26a), the noun phrase *naturkatastrofe* is the argument of the verbal predicate *erklært* and is realised after the verb, *det* is occupying the subject position as a placeholder.

- (26) a. Det er erklært naturkatastrofe I Australia.  
*It is declared natural disaster.a in Australia*  
'A natural disaster has been declared in Australia.'
- b. En naturkatastrofe er eklært I Australia.  
*A natural disaster is declared in Australia*  
'A natural disaster has been declared in Australia.'

Norwegians have two structures to choose from: the regular structure and the impersonal structure (PresS). (26b) shows the regular structure where the argument is in the subject position, and (26a) shows the impersonal with a *det*-subject. Norwegian speakers often avoid indefinite subjects and instead use an impersonal pronoun such as *det* in sentences with intransitive verbs (Sveen, 1996, p. 141). The subject-argument of the special structure is generally indefinite, yet the argument of the regular structure can be either definite or indefinite.

We propose that the special structure in the *viktig* sentence (17) is not a presenteringssetning. First of all, PresS is associated with basic sentences with an intransitive verb. ViktigAlt is mostly concerned with adjectives (and occasionally, the predicate is a verb or noun). Second, in a PresS, the subject NP follows the verb without an additional preposition. In the special structure of ViktigAlt the NP follows the verb in an additional prepositional phrase.

- (27) a. En bjørn sover.  
*A bear sleeps*  
 b. Det sover en bjørn.  
*It sleeps a bear*

Third, PresS do not allow predicative adjectives:

- (28) a. En bjørn er viktig.  
*A bear is important*  
 b. \*Det er viktig en bjørn.  
*It is important a bear*

Fourth, PresS does not allow transitive verbs, as illustrated in (29). ViktigAlt is found with transitive verbs, shown in (30). Verbs that show the ViktigAlt pattern will be discussed in chapter 4, section 4.4.3.

- (29) a. En bjørn forlot skogen.  
*A bear left woods.the*  
 'A bear left the woods.'  
 b. \*Det forlot skogen en bjørn.  
*It left woods.the a bear*
- (30) a. Kryssord tar tid.  
*Crosswords take time*  
 b. Det tar tid med kryssord.  
*It takes time with crosswords*

We propose that the impersonal *det*-structure in the ViktigAlt is a new independent type. The ViktigAlt does not fit the description of clausal extraposition, as illustrated in example (20), nor a PresS. The *med*-structure of ViktigAlt takes both intransitive predicate adjectives, some transitive verbs and gains an extra preposition following the predicate.

We have now examined the syntactic and semantic properties of the placeholder *det* and argued that it is not a referential NP, but an impersonal pronoun functioning as an expletive *det* performing a syntactic role. We will now move on to discuss the semantic properties of the *med*-phrase, alike placeholder *det*, it adds no semantic meaning.

## 2.4 Med-Phrase

As introduced in section 2.2.1, the special construction of a *viktig* sentence contains a *med*-phrase ('with-phrase'). Within both English and Norwegian languages, we find various usage of *med* ('with'), often as adverbial adjuncts. One example is *with* as an accompaniment, acting as an adverbial adjunct to VP (C.M. Wilder, personal communication, February 9, 2021).



- (31) Mary went to the cinema **with** John. *English*  
 (32) Mary dro på kino **med** John. *Norwegian*  
*Mary went on cinema.the with John*  
 'Mary went to the cinema with John.'

*With* can moreover occur as a *with*-instrument. When an argument assigned the theta-role INSTRUMENT occurs in a PP introduced by the preposition *with*, the phrase is called a *with*-INSTRUMENT. *With* in this case acts as an adjunct (Saeed, 2009, p. 154).

- (33) They signed the treaty **with** the same pen. *English*  
 INSTRUMENT  
 (Saeed, 2009, p. 154).

- (34) Hun målte feberen hans **med** et digital termometer. *Norwegian*  
 INSTRUMENT  
*She measured fever his with a digital thermometer*  
 'She measured his temperature with a digital thermometer.'

Furthermore, *with* can be used as a *with*-absolute. *With*-absolute is an adverbial expression where the preposition *with* governs the complement small clause, often preceding the main clause (McCawley, 1983, p. 271; Wilder, 1991, p. 216).

- (35) **With** [the bus driver on strike], we'll have to ride on bicycles. *English*  
 (McCawley, 1983, p. 271).  
 (36) **Med** [katten ute av huset] kan musene danse på bordet. *Norwegian*  
*With the.cat out of the.house can mice.the dance on table.the*  
 'With the cat out of the house, the mice can dance on the table.'

*Med*-phrases can furthermore be used to mark an argument of a verb. This usage of *med* occurs in, for example, the *spray/load* alternation and the *swarm* alternation.

#### 2.4.1 The Locative Alternation

The *locative* alternation, also known as the *spray/load* alternation, involves two syntactic structures which occurs with a specific kind of transitive verbs that denotes three arguments. The verbs that show the alternation describe a "substance or entity whose location is changed" (Levin, 1993, p. 50). The three arguments are normally AGENT, THEME, and GOAL, alternatively AGENT, CONTENT, CONTAINER, as proposed by Pinker (Pinker, 1989 as cited in Wilder, 2020b). The two internal arguments (CONTENT/THEME and (CONTAINER/GOAL) are realised in two different patterns:

Pattern (i): CONTENT/THEME => direct object, and CONTAINER/GOAL => PP (into/onto).

Pattern (ii): CONTAINER/GOAL => direct object, and CONTENT/THEME => *with*-PP.

- (37) a. Lucy sprayed the paint on the wall. *English | Pattern (i)*  
 AGENT THEME GOAL

b. Lucy sprayed the wall with paint. Pattern (ii)  
 AGENT                      GOAL                      THEME

(Arad, 2006, p. 466).

(38) a. Kari lastet varer inn i bagasjerommet. Norwegian | Pattern (i)  
 AGENT      THEME      GOAL

*Kari loaded goods into trunk.the*  
 'Kari loaded goods into the trunk.'

b. Kari lastet bagasjerommet med varer. Pattern (ii)  
 AGENT                      GOAL                      THEME

*Kari loaded trunk.the with goods*  
 'Kari loaded the trunk with goods.'

The regular structure (37a) expresses the thematic role GOAL in an onto/into-PP, and the special structure (37b) expresses the thematic role of THEME in a *with*-PP. The PPs are complements of the verb in both patterns. *With* in pattern (ii) is a *with*-THEME acting as a grammatical preposition introducing the complement. The meaning of the sentence remains the same after the alternation, although the lexical entry is different. As suggested by Pinker, verbs that only show pattern (i), e.g., *to put*, have CONTENT-oriented meaning (the direct object = the CONTENT argument). Verbs that only show pattern (ii), e.g., *to cover*, has CONTAINER-oriented meaning (the direct object = the CONTAINER argument) (Arad, 2006, p. 475). Alternating verbs like *to spray*, *to load*, etc., are compatible with both meanings, and therefore allow both patterns.

## 2.4.2 The *Swarm* Alternation

The *Swarm* alternation involves two syntactic structures. Unlike the locative alternation, the verbs that can take a *swarm* alternation are intransitive, denoting two arguments: AGENT and LOCATION. The arguments are realised in two different patterns (Dowty, 2000, p. 117).

Pattern (i): AGENT role => subject, LOCATION role => PP with a locative preposition (in VP).

Pattern (ii): LOCATION role => subject, AGENT role => *with*-PP (in VP).

(39) a. Bees swarmed in the garden. English | Pattern (i)  
 AGENT                      LOCATION

b. The garden swarmed with bees. Pattern (ii)  
 LOCATION                      AGENT

(Dowty, 2000, p. 112).

Pattern (ii) does, in most cases, not accept the *with*-phrase to be omitted (Dowty, 2000, p. 126), as it marks the argument of the verb. Therefore, the *with* preposition can be argued to be acting as a grammatical preposition to the AGENT argument, where *with* has no semantic meaning on its own. Consequently, the *with*-phrase acts as an obligatory complement PP (Wilder, 2020a).

The Norwegian *swarm* alternation seems to have a more complex pattern with some verbs allowing three constructions: the two constructions known in English by Dowty (2000, p. 112) and an additional construction with an impersonal sentence pattern known in Norwegian by Mjøsund (2020, p. 26). In the impersonal construction (pattern (iii)), expletive *det* is realised in the subject position, and the AGENT is realised in a PP following the verb. The PP is headed by either *av* ('of/'by') or *med* ('with'). The PP in pattern (ii) can likewise be headed by either *av* or *med* (Mjøsund, 2020, pp. 26-27). The three patterns are illustrated in example (40). Mjøsund (2020) discovered that in most cases, only the impersonal structure was allowed in the alternation, whereas pattern (ii) is acceptable with only some verbs (p. 28).

- (40) a. Blåklokker blomstrer i enga. Norwegian | Pattern (i)  
*Bluebells are blooming in field.the*  
 'Bluebells are blooming in the field.'
- b. Enga blomstrer *av/med* blåklokker. Pattern (ii)  
*Field.the is blooming by/with bluebells*  
 'The field is blooming with bluebells.'
- c. Det blomstrer *av/med* blåklokker i enga. Pattern (iii)  
 It is blooming by/with bluebells in field.the  
 'The field is blooming with bluebells.'

(Mjøsund, 2020, pp. 27-28).

As a result of pattern (iii), a Norwegian *swarm* sentence can look like a *med*-sentence in the *viktig*-pattern; both patterns are introduced by an expletive *det* and have a *med*-PP. The *viktig*-pattern can furthermore take a locative PP adjunct, resulting in the same sentence structure.

- (41) Det blomster med blåklokker i enga.  
*Det + PRED + med-pp + locative PP*
- (42) Det er viktig med samarbeid i Norge.  
*Det + PRED + med-PP + locative PP*

To distinguish the *swarm*-pattern in (41) from the *viktig*-pattern in (42), there are three main differences between the patterns. One, the *swarm*-pattern takes two arguments, the *viktig*-pattern takes one. Second, one of the arguments in *swarm* is realised in an obligatory locative PP. The locative PP in *Viktig* is an optional adverbial adjunct in the sentence. Third, the arguments in *swarm* have the theta-roles AGENT and LOCATION, the argument in *Viktig* is a POSSESSOR. We will now turn to the *med*-phrase in the *Viktig* alternation.

### 2.4.3 The *Viktig* Alternation

The *viktig* alternation, compared to the locative and the *swarm* alternation, takes predicates denoting only one argument and no location. In the regular structure, the argument is realised in the subject position (24), and in the special structure, it is realised in a PP following the verb (25).

- (24) Et godt samarbeid er viktig. *Regular structure*  
 POSSESSOR  
*A good cooperation is important*
- (25) Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid. *Special structure*  
 POSSESSOR  
*It is important with a good cooperation*

The preposition *med* (*with*) introduces the argument in the special structure. In contrast to *swarm*, the *viktig*-pattern cannot take the preposition *av* instead of *med*. The special and the regular structure communicate the same meaning; no additional meaning is added, although the sentence has gained an expletive subject and a preposition. This fact would indicate that also *med*, along with the expletive *det* (discussed in section 2.4), carries no meaning on its own. To rule out other possibilities, we will now look at some sentences where *med* acts differently to the one in the *viktig* alternation.

Intransitive predicates can take adjuncts and complement PPs. An adjunct PP is semantically a modifier of the VP/P. A complement PP is (in most cases) semantically an argument of the predicate V or A. Normally, the adjunct is optional, and the complement is obligatory (Schütze & Gibson, 1999, p. 426; C.M. Wilder, personal communication, March 8, 2021). In (43a) below, we see a sentence in the *special* structure. This sentence has a case where there is a PP following a *with*-phrase complement.

- (43) a. *Det er ulovlig med hasj i Norge.*  
*It is illegal with hash in Norway*  
 'Hash is illegal in Norway.'  
*Det er* [<sub>AP</sub> [<sub>AP</sub> *ulovlig med hasj* ] [<sub>PP</sub> *i Norge* ] ].
- b. *Det er ulovlig med hasj.*  
*It is illegal with hash*  
 'Hash is illegal.'
- c. *Hasj er ulovlig.*  
*Hash is illegal*

The PP *i Norge*, following the *med*-phrase, gives additional information to the sentence about location. Nevertheless, the location-PP is not part of the AP, and the sentence is grammatical without it, proven in (43b). This PP acts as a modifier, a non-obligatory element. Moreover, (43a) demonstrates that the *with*-phrase serves as an argument to the predicate. It acts as an obligatory complement; the sentence would be ungrammatical if it were omitted. The *regular* structure is illustrated in (43c) and shows that the NP in the *with*-phrase can be realised without the preposition. Nonetheless, the meaning of the sentence has not changed. Some *with*-phrases, on the other hand, do not have an alternative realisation without the preposition.

A *with*-preposition can introduce several kinds of modifiers. To distinct these modifiers from the *with*-phrase in the *viktig* alternation, (44) will illustrate some crucial characteristics:

- (44) a. Jeg tror ikke **det er mulig med tanke på naturen vi har i fylket.**  
 b. \*Jeg tror ikke tanke på naturen vi har i fylket, er mulig.

The highlighted part of sentence (44a) looks like a *viktig* sentence. There are two reasons why it is not. Firstly, (44a) is not synonymous with the 'regular' structure in (44b). Secondly, the *det* is referential. The *med*-phrase is a modifier as it provides additional information not necessary for the meaning of the sentence, and the sentence is grammatical without it.

With examples (43) and (44), we can argue that *med* in the special structure does not introduce a modifier as the *med*-phrase is grammatically necessary. The presence of *med* in the special structure does not provide any additional meaning that is not present in the *regular structure*. *Med* can, therefore, be argued to act as a grammatical preposition, a grammatical marker of the argument. However, we need to address one problem concerning the syntactic status of the *med*-phrase. If a PP is obligatory, it is normally seen as the semantic argument of the predicate, i.e., a complement. In the case of the *viktig*-pattern, the NP realised as a *med*-phrase is the external argument of the predicate. In the regular structure, it occupies the subject position. It is unlikely that the external argument is realised in the complement position of the predicate; complements of a predicate are normally internal arguments (C.M. Wilder, personal communication, March 8, 2021). We, therefore, argue that the *med*-phrase in the special structure is a special adjunct in the sense that it is obligatory.

## 2.5 Adjectives as Predicates

Adjectives can be used either attributively or predicatively. The *viktig* alternation is concerned with the predicatively used adjective; the adjective is the main predicate of the sentence, introduced by a copula *be*. In the same way as verbs, adjectives can assign thematic roles to their arguments. In section 2.2, we addressed evaluative adjectives as a group of predicative adjectives known in linguistic literature. In section 2.2, we illustrated that they could be realised in two sentence structures. Considering the thesis' focus on Norwegian sentence structures, we turn now to Norwegian adjectives.

### 2.5.1 Norwegian Adjectives

In Norwegian grammar, in contrast to English, adjectives show morphological agreement. The agreement principle is called 'samsvarsbøyning' and is illustrated in **Table 2**. In attributive use, the adjective will inflect to agree with the noun in the DP it modifies. In predicative use, the adjective will inflect to agree with the DP it is the predicate to. The attributive adjectives can carry both 'strong' or 'weak' inflections, demonstrated in (45) and (46). Adjectives modifying a definite noun phrase carry 'weak' inflection, gaining an -e suffix (45). Adjectives modifying an indefinite noun phrase carry a 'strong' inflection, where the agreement is based on gender and number (masculine/feminine/neuter and singular/plural), illustrated in (46). In predicative use, the adjectives are not dependent on the DP's definite/indefinite distinction and can only be inflected with a so-called 'strong inflection' (47) (Åfarli & Vangsnes, 2020, p.528). Example (47c) illustrates an ungrammatical sentence where the predicative adjective carries weak inflection.

- (45) Den **fine** katten. *Attributive: Definite, weak*
- (46) a. En **fin** katt. *Attributive: Indefinite, strong, masculine, singular*  
 b. Ei **fin** jente. *Attributive: Indefinite, strong, feminine, singular*  
 c. Et **fin** eple. *Attributive: Indefinite, strong, neuter, singular*  
 d. Mange **fine** katter/jenter/epler. *Attributive: Indefinite, strong, masc/fem/neut, plural*
- (47) a. Katten er **fin**. *Predicative: Definite, strong, masculine, singular*  
 b. Eplet er **fin**. *Predicative: Definite, strong, neut, singular*  
 c. \*Eplet er **fine**. *Predicative: Definite, weak*

**Table 2: Adjective Agreement in Norwegian**

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>	<b>Neuter</b>
<b>Singular</b>	En <b>fin</b> katt	En/ei <b>fin</b> jente	Et <b>fin</b> eple
<b>Plural</b>	<b>Fine</b> katter	<b>Fine</b> jenter	<b>Fine</b> epler

Since the predicative adjectives lack the *definit* form (indefinite/definite distinction), linguists argue that adjective agreement in predicate use is less restricted. There are cases where semantics defies grammar and cases where the adjective is not inflected according to the DP (Åfarli & Vangsnes, 2020, p. 529). Consequently, the expletive *det* holds the neuter singular form. According to Sveen (1996), the sentence's predicate is expected to agree with the *det*-subject in an impersonal sentence (pp. 99-100). The neuter agreement is illustrated in (48):

- (48) [ *at*-clause ] er klart. / \*[ *at*-clause ] er klar.  
*Det* er klart [ *at*-clause ]. / \**Det* er klar [ *at*-clause ].

Considering the neuter agreement on expletive *det*, the sentences in the special structure in the *viktig* alternation are expected to show agreement in neuter singular. In sentences like (49) and (50), we find it difficult to claim that the expletive *det* and the predicate agree in neuter. Some adjectives in Norwegian do not gain a suffix when inflected, *viktig* and *umulig* being two. *Aktuell*, in sentence (51), on the other hand, gains a -t suffix in neuter singular.

- (49) Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid.  
*Neut. ?*  
*It is important with a good cooperation*
- (50) Det er umulig med full åpningstid.  
*Neut. ?*  
*It is impossible with full opening hours*
- (51) Det er aktuelt med permittering.  
*Neut. Neut. sing*  
*It is applicable with layoffs*

On the other hand, with the regular structure, we do not expect the neuter agreement on the adjective unless the DP is in neuter. However, as demonstrated in (54), the DP and

the predicate disagree: the adjective shows the neuter singular form, which it did in the special structure.

- (52) Et godt samarbeid er viktig.  
Neut. sing.           ?, sing.  
*A good cooperation is important*
- (53) Full åpningstid er umulig.  
Masc. sing.           ?, sing.  
*Full opening hours is impossible*
- (54) Permittering er aktuelt.  
Masc. sing.       Neut. Sing  
*Layoffs is applicable*

Although the disagreement seems odd, the phenomenon is not a new discovery. In 1977 Jan Terje Faarlund discovered the same phenomenon with sentence (55). The predicate is not agreeing with the DP, DP being in a masculine, plural form and the predicate being in a neuter singular form. The grammatical sentence according to agreement is demonstrated in (56).

- (55) Pannekaker er godt.  
Masc. plural    Neut. Sing  
*Pancakes is good*
- (56) \*Pannekaker er gode.  
Masc. plural    Masc. plural  
*Pancakes are good*

This example stirred up many discussions among linguists and has been a topic until today. There have been many analyses of this sentence, and several papers have been dedicated to finding an answer to why there is a disagreement between predicate and DP. Two papers which discuss 'pancake sentences' (Faarlund 1977 and Josefsson 2009) also discuss this *med*-pattern involved in the *viktig* alternation. Therefore, the next chapter will discuss main elements from the two papers' analysis on 'pancake sentences'.

## 2.6 Interim Summary

We have now argued that the *viktig*-pattern is part of an argument alternation, as the predicate's argument can be realised in both the regular and the special structure. Further, we have established that the special structure in the *viktig* alternation is made up of an expletive subject, a copula verb *være* ('be'), a predicative adjective (and some cases of other predicates), a special adjunct PP introduced by the grammatical preposition *det* ('with') which holds the non-expletive subject argument. Furthermore, we have argued that the structure is not a 'presenteringssetning' but that it is a unique sentence structure containing an adjective disagreement.

### 3. Previous Analyses of the *Viktig* Alternation Pattern

The *viktig* alternation pattern has never been addressed before, as this thesis is the first to address the special pattern as an argument alternation. The *med*-structure has, however, been mentioned in two previous papers within Scandinavian linguistics. In 1977, Jan Terje Faarlund wrote a paper on 'pancake sentences' where he addressed gender disagreement between the subject and the adjective in a special type of sentence structure. At the end of his paper, he mentioned the possibility for *pancake* sentences to be realised as an impersonal sentence with a *med*-phrase. This impersonal sentence is very interesting to this thesis as its characteristics are resembling those of the *viktig*-pattern. Several linguists have since commented on the *pancake* sentences without addressing the *med*-phrase structure. In 2009, Gunlög Josefsson wrote a paper addressing the same *pancake* sentences with a new analysis which again opened up the question about the *med*-structure. These are the only sources we know of that offer analyses of the *med*-structure. However, they do not look at it as an argument alternation. Both papers claim that there is a relationship between the *pancake* sentences and the *med*-structure, and both offers a short analysis of the relation between the two structures. In other words, these two papers are interesting to us as they say something about the *viktig* alternation.

Faarlund and Josefsson's main arguments are these:

- (i) The neutral sentence in the *viktig* alternation is a 'pancake sentence' with gender disagreement.
- (ii) The subject of a *pancake* sentence is not an NP but a 'hidden clause' with a 'silent verb'. The pronounced NP is the object of the verb in the hidden clause.
- (iii) It is possible to explain the neuter agreement on the adjective because the subject is a clause.
- (iv) In the *med*-structure, what looks like a PP (P+NP) is also a clause with a 'hidden verb'.

This chapter will present Faarlund and Josefsson's papers on *pancake* sentences with the main focus on the analysis of the *med*-structure. In section 3.1, Faarlund's paper will be presented with his analysis of *pancake sentences* and *med*-structure, where his main argument is that the NP is a clause. In section 3.2, we will introduce Josefsson's arguments of there being two different *pancake* sentences, one which agrees with the 'hidden clause' hypothesis and one which argues the NP not to be a clause. She argues the former can be realised in a *med*-structure. Another linguist, Enger (2004), disagrees with Faarlund and Josefsson. He argues that there is no hidden clause in *pancake* sentences and that the subject NP is just an NP. We call this idea the 'no hidden clause' hypothesis. In section 3.3, we address the main similarities and differences between Faarlund and Josefsson's 'hidden clause' hypothesis and the 'no hidden clause' hypothesis, as well as address two main problems with the 'hidden clause' theory.



### 3.1 Faarlund (1977)

Faarlund introduces the Norwegian *pancake* sentence in (57) as the phenomenon to analyse. First, he addresses the gender disagreement. Secondly, he introduces what he believes to be an underlying embedded clause. Thirdly he addresses sentences with two adverbials in the subject position. At the end, he introduces the *med*-structure. We will now look at his claims one by one.

To illustrate the gender disagreement between the noun phrase and the adjective, Faarlund analyses sentence (57). He addresses that the noun *pannekaker* is a masculine plural noun, and the adjective *godt* is a neuter singular adjective. According to adjective agreement rules in Norwegian (see **Table 2** in section 2.5.1 above), the noun and the adjective in (57) are disagreeing in gender. The curious case within the gender disagreement is that the sentences are perfectly grammatical (Faarlund, 1997, p. 239).

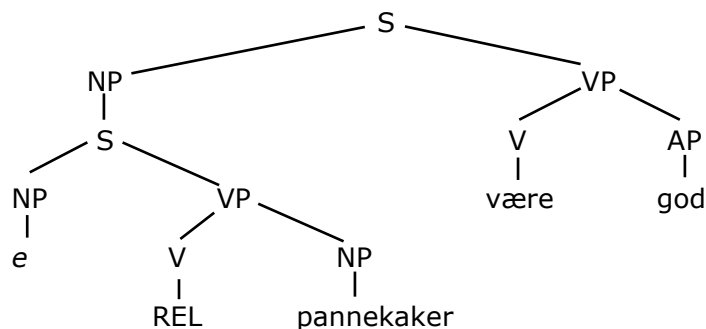
(57) Pannekaker er godt.  
*Pancakes-COMMON is good-NEUT*  
 'pancakes is good.'

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 240).

Faarlund's hypothesis is "that the non-agreeing neuter adjectives [...] are at some level of abstraction in agreement with a sentence or an infinitive clause" (Faarlund, 1977, p. 242). In other words, his main claim is that what looks like a subject NP is, in reality, an underlying subject clause. Faarlund argues that the subject of a *pancake sentence* at some stage would have had an embedded clause where the neuter gender would have been attached. The gender agreement would have happened ahead of what he believes to have been a reduction of the clause. Furthermore, he argues that the clause would have been reduced (the subject and verb would be deleted) to the object of the clause, leaving it to occupy the subject position of the surface structure. The adjective would agree with the clause before it was reduced and therefore show disagreement in the surface structure.

**Figure 1** illustrates his idea. The NP of the *pancake* sentence would be an embedded clause reduced to only the object *pannekaker*. The verb in the clause expresses a general 'have'-type meaning, which he calls 'REL' for 'relation' (adapted from Faarlund, 1977, p. 248).

**Figure 1:**



(Faarlund, 1977, p. 247).

The deep structure would be as demonstrated:

(58) [clause subject + verb + object NP\* ] + *være* + Adjective.

Faarlund argues that the adjective agreement rule would have taken place in the deep structure. When the subject is a clause, the adjective always gets neuter singular agreement. The clause would therefore have been attached to the neuter agreement in a deep structure. The clause would then reduce, deleting the subject and verb, leaving the object NP\* behind to occupy the subject position. Faarlund's argument is that if *pancake* sentences have a hidden clause, agreement in neuter would be expected. The surface structure would then be as demonstrated:

(59) NP\* + *være* + Adjective.

Faarlund has the assumption that the underlying clause is an underlying infinitive clause. The semantic argument of the adjective is realised by the infinitive clause (1977, p. 247). As support to his assumption, he discovered that the predicative adjectives that take an infinitive in subject position were the same adjectives that would disagree in the neuter. An underlying infinitive clause is justified by the paraphrase relation between (60) and (61).

(60) Å ete pannekakerer godt.  
'to eat pancakes is good.'

(61) Pannekaker er godt.  
'Pancakes is good.'

(Faarlund, 1977, pp. 242, 240).

Further, Faarlund chooses the term REL ("relation") to represent the verb in the embedded clause of a *pancake* sentence's deep structure. When the embedded clause is deleted, REL becomes 'semantically redundant' as the sentence has another finite verb, and the meaning the REL supplies can be interpreted through the context. REL is therefore also deleted (Faarlund, 1977, p. 248). Å *ete* in (60) would be redundant in the context of *pannekaker* and *godt*, as the noun and adjective in (61) imply the event of eating.

A verb with the 'have'-type meaning of the underlying verb REL tends to have an indefinite object NP. Faarlund connects this to his observation that *pancake* sentences generally have indefinite subject NPs. He proposes that 'have' can have a general or vague meaning, but when used with a definite NP 'have' is more restricted. The more restricted use does not correspond to the meaning of REL, which includes introducing new information. Definite NPs do not introduce new information, indefinite NPs, on the other hand, do. (62a) illustrates the definite NP *pannekakene* in masculine plural agreeing with the verb *god* in plural masculine form. (62b), on the other hand, illustrates the indefinite NP *pannekaker* in masculine singular disagreeing with the verb *god* in neuter (Faarlund, 1977, pp. 249-250):

(62) a. Pannekakene er gode.  
*the-pancakes are good*  
b. Pannekaker er godt.  
*pancakes are good*

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 249).

Norwegian is a V2 language, which means the finite verb comes second in the sentence. In main clauses, only one constituent (clause or phrase) can precede the finite verb. The constituent is often the subject (Subject + V(finite) +...) as in example (63), or a topicalised object/ adverbial, as in example (64). Two constituents preceding the finite verb is ungrammatical, as illustrated in (65).

(63) [NP Rådhuset] brann uheldigvis ned i dag.  
*City Hall.the burned unfortunately down today*  
 'The city Hall unfortunately burned down today.'

(64) [Adverbial I dag] brann uheldigvis rådhuset ned.

(65) \*<sub>[Adverbial I byen]</sub> <sub>[Adverbial i dag]</sub> brann rådhuset ned.  
*in the-town today burned the-city-hall down*

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 252).

To further legitimize his claim of an underlying embedded clause in *pancake* sentences, Faarlund presents an argument involving adverbial constituents. Inside the embedded clause, there may be adverbial constituents in addition to the subject, object, and the abstract verb REL. He argues that there is one exception to the V2 rule (Faarlund, 1977, pp. 252-253). Faarlund argues that sentence (66) has an underlying clause that is reduced (complementizer + subject + verb are deleted), leaving PP + PP in a position that only allows one constituent, illustrated in example (67).

(66) Da eg var i byen i dag, møtte eg ein gammal venn.  
 'when I was in the-town today, met I an old friend.'

(67) I byen i dag møtte eg en gammal venn.  
 'in the-town today met I an old friend.'

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 253).

His analysis of the two adverbial constituents takes us to the analysis of sentence (68), a *pancake* sentence with disagreement in gender. Faarlund claims that the subject NP of (68) is not a simple NP constituent but two separate constructions in the deep structure (1977, p.253).

(68) Egg til frokost er godt.  
 'eggs for breakfast is good.'

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 253).

The deep structure of example (68), according to Faarlund:

(69) [<sub>clause</sub> NP(subject) [<sub>VP</sub> V [<sub>NP</sub> egg] [<sub>PP</sub> til frokost ] ] ] er godt.

He believes the reason why both constituents appear before the finite verb is that both the NP *egg* and PP *til frokost* are constituents of a reduced infinitive clause (Faarlund, 1977, p. 254):

(70) [Å ha egg til frokost] er godt.  
 'To have eggs for breakfast is good.'

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 254).



sentences: Construction PROP and Construction NOM. She claims that Construction PROP involves a hidden clause and can be realised in a *med*-structure. This *med*-structure is the very same as presented in chapter 2. She further claims that the *med*-structure involves a hidden clause. Concerning Construction NOM, she argues that the construction does not involve a hidden clause at all. In other words, Josefsson agrees with Faarlund that (some) *pancake* sentences have a hidden clause. In her paper, Josefsson discusses Swedish examples, which we will use when presenting her theory. Norwegian allows equivalent examples. All examples in section 3.2 are Swedish except for: 82, 83, and 89-91, which are Norwegian.

### 3.2.1 Two Types of Pancake Sentences

In the beginning of her paper, Josefsson addresses two sentences, (75) and (76), which Faarlund identified as *pancake* sentences. Both sentences disagree in gender. These sentences she argues to be two different constructions. Construction NOM(inal), illustrated in (75), and Construction PROP(ositional), illustrated in (76). Josefsson follows the same idea as Faarlund, expecting agreement in neuter if the subject is a hidden clause. She does, however, argue the subject of Construction NOM to be a noun phrase and the subject of Construction PROP to be a hidden clause (Josefsson, 2009, p. 38).

- |      |   |                          |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| (75) | Senep                      är   gult.<br><i>Mustard.COMMON is yellow-NEUT</i><br>'Mustard is yellow.'                                 | <i>Construction NOM</i>  |
| (76) | Två älskare                      är   omoralisk-t.<br><i>Two lovers]COMMON.PL is immoral-NEUT</i><br>'To have two lovers is immoral.' | <i>Construction PROP</i> |

(Josefsson, 2009, p. 35).

Josefsson addresses four differences between the two constructions to distinguish them (2009, p. 38). We will address two of them in the following two sections.

- (i) The subject of Construction PROP can be paraphrased by an infinitival phrase, the subject of Construction NOM cannot.
- (ii) Only Construction PROP can be realised in the *med*-structure. In other words, only Construction PROP is a *viktig* sentence.

#### 3.2.1.1 Construction PROP

Josefsson's Construction PROP is remarkably similar to Faarlund's hidden clause hypothesis. Josefsson claims that the subject is clausal and that the DP *två älskare* ('two lovers') in (76) is the syntactic object of the hidden clause (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 35-36, 42). Faarlund made the same argument addressing the NP in subject position in the surface structure to be the object of the reduced clause. To justify her claim, Josefsson has four main arguments. The first argument, also pointed out by Faarlund, is that the sentence can be paraphrased as a sentence that has an infinitival clause where the DP is the syntactic object:

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| (77) | Att ha två älskare är omoralisk-t.<br><i>To have two lovers is immoral-NEUT</i><br>'To have two lovers is immoral.' |
|------|---|

(Josefsson, 2009, p. 43).

The second argument “is the possibility of having reflexives” (Josefsson, 2009, p. 43), as anaphoric pronouns *sin/sina* as illustrated in (78). A reflexive indicates that a subject antecedent is present. In contrast to a Construction PROP sentence, it is ungrammatical to have reflexives in ordinary noun phrases, as illustrated in (79) (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 43-44):

- (78) En blomma till sina närmaste medhjälpare  
*a flower.COMMON to REFL closest co-workers.COMMON.PL*  
 vid julen är självklar-t  
*at Christmas is natural-NEUT*  
 ‘To give a flower to one’s closest co-workers at Christmas is natural.’
- (79) \*Blommor från sitt hemland doftar underbar-t  
*flowers from REFL homeland smell wonderful.NEUT*  
 Intended reading: ‘Flowers from a person’s homeland smell wonderful.’  
 (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 43-44).

Her third argument is “that the noun phrase in the subject position [...] has non-nominative case” (Josefsson, 2009, p. 44). In other words, the noun phrase is not subject to the verb. She illustrates this argument with two sentences, where the NP (representing Construction PROP) in (80) has non-nominative case, and the NP (representing Construction NOM) of (81) has nominative case.

- (80) [One cannibal to the other:]  
 Henne med senap och ketchup vore läcker-t.  
*her with mustard and ketchup would.be delicious-NEUT*  
 ‘To get/have/eat her with mustard and ketchup would be delicious.’
- (81) Hon med senap och ketchup är läcker.  
*she with mustard and ketchup is delicious.COMMON*  
 ‘The woman/girl with mustard and ketchup is delicious.’  
 (Josefsson, 2009, p. 44).

What she does not comment on in her paper is the fact that if the NP in a Construction PROP sentence is an object, the NP is expected to have accusative case. If the NP is accusative, we should be able to see it when the NP of Construction NOM is a simple pronoun as in (82). Note that example (82) and (83) are Norwegian.

- (82) \*Ham er godt.  
*Him is good*

The pronoun *ham* in (82) has accusative case, still the sentence is not grammatical. So too are Construction PROP sentences which have a nominative pronoun:

- (83) \*Han er godt.  
*He is good*

The fourth argument, already addressed by Faarlund, is the possibility that “more than one phrase can precede the finite verb in Construction PROP sentences” (Josefsson, 2009, p. 45) without violating the V2 rule. After demonstrating her claim that the subject of Construction PROP is a clausal constituent, she demonstrates its structure. Sentence

(78) has three constituents before the finite verb, illustrated in (84). Sentence (80) has two constituents before the finite verb, illustrated in (85):

- (84) [en blomma] [til sina medhjälpare] [vid julen] = sequence of 3 phrases.  
           OB       +       PP                               +       PP
- (85) [henne] [med senap] = 2 phrases.  
           OB       +       PP

Josefsson claims there to be a null verbal element answerable for a propositional reading of the subject in (84), where in contrast, the subject of (85) has a mass reading. This null verb is located in the head of a 'small vP' and is equivalent to the light verb *ha* ('have') and the preposition *med* ('with'). To illustrate the presence of a null verb, Josefsson draws on another construction which has the possibility of a null verb (Josefsson, 2009, p. 46):

- (86) Jag vill Ø till Rom.  
       I want to Rome  
       'I want to go to Rome.'

(Josefsson, 2009, p. 46).

The meaning of sentence (86) includes GO, although the main verb *åka* ('go') is not present. Josefsson argues the sentence is grammatical because the modal auxiliary and directional prepositional phrase of the sentence "identifies the content of the null verb" (Josefsson, 2009, p. 46). They confirm the semantic context of a null verb, and at the same time, confirm that the structure has a slot for a null verb (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 46, 56). She claims that Construction PROP has a similar structure to (86) where she draws on the concept HAVE corresponding with the null head (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 46-47). She compares example (86) with sentence (77) to illustrate her argument that the concept of HAVE is part of the embedded clause underlying the subject.

- (77) Att ha två älskare är omoralisk-t.  
       to have two lovers is immoral-NEUT  
       'To have two lovers is immoral.'

(Josefsson, 2009, p. 47).

According to Josefsson, there are many options for light verbs in Swedish: *have, take, give, perceive, do, hold, put* (2009, p. 51).

Josefsson's third claim is that Construction PROP sentences can be paraphrased with a *med*-phrase ('with-phrase'): *det* ('it') + a *med*-phrase. She argues that the preposition *med* and the light verb HAVE are equivalent in meaning, illustrated by paraphrasing (77) with a *med*-phrase:

- (87) Det är omoralisk-t med två älskare.  
       it is immoral-NEUT with two lovers  
       'It's immoral to have two lovers.'

(Josefsson, 2009, p. 58).

With example (87), Josefsson wants to demonstrate that the *med*-phrased can replace a clause containing the light verbs. At the same time, she argues that the *med*-phrase have clausal properties (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 58-59). As a result of the light verbs having a similar reading to *med*, Josefsson arrives at the possibility that the *med*-phrase is a small clause similar to the NP in the subject position of a *pancake* sentence. Instead of *med* being located in a small 'vP' (like light verbs), *med* would be located in a small 'pP' with a null subject, taking the neuter feature and the NP as an object of *med* (Josefsson, 2009, pp. 58-61).

### 3.2.1.2 Construction NOM

Construction NOM, in contrast to Construction PROP, has an NP with nominal case in subject position. For the NP of Construction NOM Josefsson has a 'no hidden clause' hypothesis. The subject is argued to be a simple NP containing a null pronominal element in the topmost XP of the subject noun phrase. Josefsson assumes the null element is the reason for the "neuter agreement on the predicative adjective" (2009, pp. 38-39), as there is no 'hidden clause' to explain the neuter feature. Construction NOM does not have the possibility to paraphrase with the *med*-structure, illustrated in (88).

- (88) a. Senap är gul-t. (Josefsson, 2009, p. 35).  
*Mustard is yellow*  
 b. \*Det är gult med senap.  
*It is yellow with mustard*

We did, however, look for construction NOM in Norwegian and found some examples of this type of sentence:

- (89) a. Ull er mykt.  
*Wool is soft*  
 b. \*Å ha ull er mykt.  
*To have wool is soft*  
 c. \*Det er mykt med ull.  
*\*It is soft with wool*  
 (90) a. Sirup er seigt.  
*Syrup is sticky*  
 b. \*Å spise sirup er seigt.  
*To eat syrup is sticky*  
 c. \*Det er seigt med sirup.  
*\*It is sticky with syrup*  
 (91) a. Melk er godt.  
*Milk is good*  
 b. Å drikke melk er godt.  
*To drink milk is good*  
 c. Det er godt med melk.  
*It is good with milk*

Sentence (89a) and (90a) are Construction NOM sentences. Both have simple NPs with singular common gender nouns and neuter singular adjectives and are therefore *pancake* sentences. However, they cannot take an infinitive subject and cannot paraphrase with the *med*-structure. (91a), on the other hand, is not a Construction NOM sentence as it



can paraphrase with both an infinitival clause and the *med*-structure. Josefsson mentions that the NP of Construction NOM often has a mass reading (2009, p. 36). The NPs of (89)-(91) are mass nouns, yet the NP of (91) has the reading of HAVE.

### 3.3 'Hidden Clause' Hypothesis vs 'No Hidden Clause' Hypothesis

#### 3.3.1 Faarlund vs Josefsson

What Faarlund (1977) believes to be one sentence type, Josefsson (2009) argues to be two different constructions. Construction PROP includes a 'hidden clause', and Construction NOM, which does not include a hidden clause. Both Faarlund (1977) and Josefsson (2009) argue that there is a 'hidden clause'; Faarlund claims it to be reduced, whereas Josefsson believes it to be unpronounced.

What is interesting is that Faarlund argued that if the embedded clause was not the subject of the sentence, the sentence could have a *med*-phrase. With this statement, Faarlund, in some way, had the idea that *pancake* sentences could have two different ways of realising the argument of the adjective. One where the embedded clause was not the subject but realised as a *med*-phrase. Faarlund did not argue any further into this matter. As we can see, Josefsson had a similar idea as she was able to identify two constructions within *pancake* sentences.

Concerning the *med*-structure, Faarlund suggests all *pancake* sentences to allow the *med*-structure paraphrase. Faarlund argues that if REL is not deleted in the embedded clause, it would appear as the preposition *med* ('with') with a dummy subject *det* or the verb *ha* ('have'). Josefsson, on the other hand, shows that Faarlund's suggestion is not true for all types of *pancake* sentence. She argues that only Construction PROP could paraphrase with a *med*-phrase as a result of *med* being semantically related to HAVE.

The *pancake* sentences that allow a *med*-phrase have the same properties as *viktig* alternation sentences. The subject moves into the *med*-phrase, the expletive *det* appears in the subject position, and the predicate is an adjective in the neuter. Both structures have the same semantic meaning. As a result of examples (89)-(91), we consider only Construction PROP sentences possible as *viktig* sentences in the next chapter. Moreover, we consider the adjectives in Construction NOM not to be *ViktigAlt* adjectives.

Josefsson's idea of two different *pancake* sentences is convincing as the mass nouns in Construction NOM do not show any signs of an underlying clause where paraphrasing is possible, as Construction PROP does.

#### 3.3.2 Two Problems for Hidden Clauses

Faarlund and Josefsson make interesting arguments for the 'hidden clause' hypothesis for Construction PROP sentences. Nevertheless, we have detected two problems concerning the 'hidden clause' hypothesis.

The first problem is about a difference between infinitive subjects and the alleged 'hidden clause' subject. Clausal subjects can usually undergo the process of extraposition, as illustrated in (92).

- (92) a. [<sub>clause</sub> Å ha to elskere] er umoralisk. *Clause in subject position*  
*to have two lovers is immoral*
- b. Det er umoralisk [<sub>clause</sub> å ha to elskere]. *Extrapolated clause*  
*it is immoral to have two lovers*

But when the clause is realised with an empty verb (which Josefsson advocates for), the subject cannot be extrapolated. (93b) illustrates an unacceptable sentence where the clause with an empty verb has been extrapolated. This problem is not addressed by Faarlund or Josefsson.

- (93) a. [<sub>clause</sub> To elskere] er umoralisk. *Clause in subject position*  
*Two lovers is immoral*
- b. \*Det er umoralisk [<sub>clause</sub> to elskere]. *Extrapolated clause*  
*It is immoral two lovers*

The position after the predicative adjective is not a normal position for an NP. According to 'the theory of Principles and Parameters' within generative linguistics, NPs need case. The NP in (93b) is not in a position where it can get case since adjectives cannot assign case. The position after the predicate is, however, a typical position for a PP. When adding the preposition *med*, NP is given case from inside the PP, and we get a grammatical sentence (C.M Wilder, personal communication, March 23, 2021):

- (94) Det er umoralisk [<sub>pp</sub> med [<sub>NP</sub> to elskere] ].  
*It is immoral with two lovers*

The second problem is about the claim that a *pancake* sentence has an infinitive paraphrase. Hellan (Hellan, 1986, as cited in Enger 2004) presents a problem for the clause theory of *pancake* sentences. Example (95) is a *pancake* sentence.

- (95) Vodka er sunt.  
*vodka-MASC.SG is healthy-NEUT.SG*

(Enger, 2004, p. 6).

According to the clause theory, the subject is the object of an empty verb with the general meaning of HAVE. In the case of sentence (95), the meaning of the empty verb is more specific, like DRINK. (96a) is mentioned by Faarlund to be derived from (96b) (Enger, 2004, p. 8).

- (96) a. [<sub>Clause</sub> PRO (adstract verb) vodka] er sunt.  
*Vodka is healthy*
- b. Å ha vodka er sunt/ Å drikke vodka er sunt.  
*To have vodka is healthy/ To drink vodka is healthy*

What is interesting is that sentence (95) can also have an extra infinitive added after the adjective. This type of sentence is known as 'tough-movement construction'. (97) is still

a *pancake* sentence where the subject NP *vodka* is common gender, and the adjective has neuter inflection.

- (97)       Vodka       er sunt       å drikke.  
          *vodka-MASC is healthy-NEUT.SG to drink*

(Enger, 2004, p. 8).

The clause theory assumes the subject to be an infinitival clause with the meaning HAVE, 'å ha vodka'/'å drikke vodka'. Sentence (97) should therefore be able to paraphrase like sentence (98).

- (98)       \*Å ha vodka er sunt å drikke/ \*Å drikke vodka er sunt å drikke  
          *to have vodka is healthy to drink/ To drink vodka is healthy to drink*

(Enger, 2004, p. 9).

However, the sentences in (98) are not acceptable, they are semantic nonsense. (97) can therefore not be derived from (98) (Enger, 2004, pp. 8-9).

Both Faarlund and Josefsson believes the subject NP of *pancake* sentences (Construction PROP) are hidden clauses. The alleged reduced clause is not able to extrapose. Also, the infinitive paraphrase does not work when a *pancake* sentence gets an extra 'tough-movement' infinitive. These two facts leave us questioning whether the hidden clause hypothesis is wrong. These two facts are not problems for a 'no hidden clause' analysis which says the subject of *pancake* sentences is just an NP. To be convincing, the no-hidden clause theory must address the 'syntactic symptoms' of hidden clauses presented by Faarlund and Josefsson, and the hidden clause theory must address the two problems above. Faarlund's insight of a hidden clause is both important and insightful, although the theory might be wrong. In chapter 2, we assumed the NP of *viktig* sentences to be simple NPs ('no hidden clause'). As a result of the two problems addressed concerning the hidden clause theory, we will continue to assume that the subject is a 'no clause' NP in chapter 4.

### 3.4. Interim Summary

In this chapter, we have introduced two papers that discuss the *med*-structure we find in *ViktigAlt*. Both Faarlund (1977) and Josefsson (2009) discusses *pancake* sentences to find a reason for the gender disagreement in these sentences. Faarlund (1977) argues a reduced clause has caused the disagreement, believing the neuter agreement would have taken place in the deep structure before leaving the object of the clause to act as the subject of the sentence. He also introduces an alternative structure to the *pancake* sentences, where the subject is the pronoun *det*, and the argument of the sentence is placed within a *med*-phrase. This structure is the same as the *viktig*-pattern. Josefsson (2009) argues there to be two different *pancake* sentences: Construction PROP and Construction NOM. Construction PROP, she argues, to have a hidden clause as the NP does not have nominative case. However, we addressed the issue of the NP not having accusative case either. The hidden clause she argues to have a light verb with the meaning of 'HAVE' and that the sentence can alternate with the *med*-structure (introduced by Faarlund) where the preposition carries the same meaning of 'HAVE'. Construction NOM does not have the same properties and cannot be realised with the

*med*-structure. We, therefore, argued Construction PROP sentences to be *viktig* sentences as they share the same properties. Both Faarlund and Josefsson (Construction PROP) argues that *pancake* sentences can paraphrase with an infinitive clause; this idea will be carried forward in chapter 4. In the third and last section of this chapter, we discussed similarities between Faarlund and Josefsson, as well as addressed two problem cases for the 'hidden clause' hypothesis. As a result of the problem cases, we decided that the NP of *viktig* sentences will continue to be addressed as an NP and not a hidden clause.



- (102) Pannekakene er gode. *NP subject (not a pancake sentence)*  
*Pancakes.the is good*

Example (101) and (102) show that these predicates can take both infinitive clauses and NPs in subject position. We have therefore investigate if the class of ViktigAlt predicates are predicates which can take an NP subject or an infinitive clause subject. This hypothesis was suggested by Wilder (2020c):

- (103) **Hypothesis:**  
**ViktigAlt predicates = predicates that allow an infinitive clause subject as well as an NP subject.**

This chapter will discuss whether this hypothesis is correct. If the hypothesis is indeed correct, we expect two things to be true:

**Prediction 1:** Any adjective that shows ViktigAlt pattern also allows an infinitive subject (with the same meaning/ sense of the adjective).

**Prediction 2:** Any adjective that does not allow an infinitive subject does not show ViktigAlt pattern.

## 4.2 The Investigation

This section will focus on the informal investigation of answering the research question (99). We will first address what research methods were used throughout the process before addressing the process of how data was collected and evaluated.

### 4.2.1 Method

Our aim in conducting the investigation was to achieve the most significant number of results without much assistance from native speakers. We decided against quantitative and qualitative research, as it would have been unpractical due to both timing and the amount of data needed. We would not have been able to facilitate a questionnaire or an observation until late in the researching process, whereas other methods proved more favourable in productivity. In addition to drawing on previous theory, corpora and Web search were the most productive and authentic methods. We were able to collect authentic Norwegian sentences in large numbers. Achieving accurate data from participants through questionnaires, where translation or acceptability tests would have been used to achieve desired sentence structures, could result in problems. Such problems could be inaccuracy and researcher influence.

The corpora used in this research is the Norwegian 'Oslo-korpuset', specifically the Bokmål section, which contains fictional texts, newspapers, and non-fiction. Desired sentence structures were attained using advanced search options. String search on Google became convenient to test adjectives not found in the corpus search. The researcher's native intuition has also been an essential part when testing the acceptability of Norwegian sentences. Help from other native speakers of Norwegian has also been a factor when confirming acceptability.

### 4.2.2 Collecting and Testing Data

The investigation started with collecting data from *Oslo-korpuset* ('The Oslo Corpus'). In the advanced search options section, we inserted the word classification of the *special* structure: "pronoun *det* + verb *er* + (spot open for one word) + preposition *med*", which resulted in 583 instances from 133 sources. The open spot is left for the predicate to investigate what predicates are allowed in the *viktig*-pattern. Using 'Det Norske Akademis Ordbok' ('The Norwegian Academic's Dictionary'), we identified the word in the open spot as either a verb, an adjective, a noun or a preposition. When testing the acceptability of alternating the *med*-sentences into regular sentences, many sentences were unacceptable. We experienced instances where *det* was referential, *med* was part of an adverbial, or the string '*det er predicate*' was one constituent.

- (104) a. Vi føler oss så trygge som det er mulig med en nabo som La Hauge.  
*We feel us so safe as it is possible with a neighbour as La Hauge*  
'With a neighbour such as La Hauge, we feel as safe as possible.'

Vi føler oss [så trygge [som det er mulig] [med en nabo som La Hauge].

- b. Jeg tror ikke det er **mulig** med tanke på naturen vi har i fylket.  
*I think not it is possible with though on nature we have in county.the*  
'I do not think it is possible with regards to the nature in our county.'

Jeg tror ikke det er mulig [med tanke på naturen vi har i fylket].

Example (104a) illustrates a sentence that contains what looks like the *viktig*-pattern. This sentence is, however, not a *viktig* sentence. The string *som det er mulig* (*det* + *være* + adjective) is one clause introduced by *som* ('as'). This *som*-clause modifies the adjective *trygge* ('safe'). The string *med en nabo som La Hauge* is a separate PP introduced by the preposition *med* ('with') and is the main clause modifying *føler* ('feel'). In example (104b), the string *det er mulig med tanke på naturen* could look like a *viktig* sentence. Nevertheless, *det* is referential, and *med tanke på naturen*[...] is an adverbial introduced by the preposition *med* to modify the predicate *mulig* ('possible').

The predicates collected from the corpus covered only some of the Norwegian adjectives. The rest of the predicates were collected through a string search on Google. Such strings would usually be "*det er/var 'predicate' med*". From these string searches, we would find examples of sentences where different predicates fit the *special* structure. String search could also result in zero findings; sentences with specific a predicate did not exist, or sentences had the wrong properties, as exemplified in (104).

#### 4.2.2.1 Ambiguity

As a result of the data collected from the corpus and Web search, we went on to test the ambiguity of the predicative adjective of the sentences. We discovered words that changed semantic meaning when alternating from special structure to regular structure. If a *med*-structure with *det* subject did not mean the same as the sentence with NP subject, then the sentence did not show the *viktig* alternation. As illustrated in chapter 2

on argument alternation, the regular and special pattern sentences are to have the same semantic meaning. To be certain the ambiguous sentences could not be alternated, we tested the same predicate in another sentence to determine if the predicate or the context caused the ambiguity.

Faarlund claimed that the adjective *god* shows both patterns (*pancake* sentence and *med*-sentence) as illustrated in example (73) above. However, we have detected some complications regarding the adjective. Sentence (105) illustrates an ambiguous sentence.

- (105) a. Det er godt med penger i banken.  
*It is good with money in bank.the*  
 'There is a lot of money in the bank'.  
 b. Penger i banken er godt \*(å ha).  
*Money in bank.the is good (to have)*  
 'It is good to have money in the bank'.

In Norwegian, the adjective *godt* can be interpreted as either (i) 'a lot', (ii) 'tastes/feels good' or (iii) 'nice'/^good'. *Godt* in sentence (105a) can carry meaning (i) or (iii), but in (105b), *godt* can carry meaning (ii) or (iii). Nevertheless, sentence (105) is an example of what looks like a *viktig* alternation but is not. Sentence (105b) has the structure NP + *være* + *adjective*, however, the sentence cannot stand alone without the verb *to have*.

Sentence (106) is another ambiguous sentence with *god* as a predicate.

- (106) a. Det er godt med snø på gårdsplassen.  
*It is good with snow in courtyard.the*  
 'There is a lot of snow in the courtyard.'  
 b. \*Snø på gårdsplassen er godt.  
*Snow on courtyard.the is good*  
 'Snow in the courtyard tastes good.'

In (106a), the predicative adjective is interpreted with meaning (i). Sentence (106b) is not an acceptable Norwegian sentence, but if the subject were definite (*snøen* ('the snow')), *godt* would be interpreted with meaning (ii). Although the predicative adjective *god* can be ambiguous, and in many cases are not a *pancake* sentence, the meaning of example (73a) and (73b) (Faarlund's original *pancake* sentence) both carry meaning (ii). As a result of (105), (106) and (73), *god* seems to be allowed in *ViktigAlt* if both structures carry meaning (ii) 'tastes good'/'feels good'.

- (73) a. Pannekaker er godt.  
*pancakes is good*  
 b. Det er godt med pannekaker.  
*it is good with pancakes*  
 'Pancakes are good.'

(Faarlund, 1977, pp. 240, 254).

(107) is another example of an ambiguous predicate.



- (107) a. Det er enkelt med fisk til middag.  
*It is easy with fish for dinner*  
 'It is easy to cook fish for dinner.'  
 b. Fisk til middag er enkelt.  
*Fish for dinner is easy*  
 'Fish for dinner is easy to make/' 'Fish for dinner is simple/boring.'

The predicative adjective *enkelt* ('easy') can have either the meaning 'easy' or 'simple'. In (107a), *enkelt* is interpreted as 'it is easy to cook fish'. In (107b), *enkelt* can also be interpreted as 'fish is a simple/boring dinner dish'. The former meaning is nevertheless the most common interpretation of this sentence. Therefore, it can be argued to be a *viktig*-adjective because both regular structure and special structure are interpreted with the same semantic meaning.

#### 4.2.2.2 Infinitive Subjects and NP Subjects

After testing the data for the correct properties, ambiguity and acceptability in the *viktig* alternation, we created two groups of adjectives. Group 1 contained adjectives which do enter the *ViktigAlt*. Group 2 contained adjectives which do not enter the *ViktigAlt*. In the former group, predicates that could alternate according to the *viktig* alternation without complications were listed. In the latter group, adjectives that could not do a *viktig* alternation in terms of grammaticality/ambiguity were listed. Further, we used these groups to test the hypothesis of infinitival and NP subjects.

When testing if the predicates could take an infinitival subject, we used one main infinitival clause: "å reise jorda rundt" ('to travel around the world'). The predicates that did not allow this infinitival clause were tested with other context-based infinitival clauses. Adjectives such as *snilt* ('kind'), is one example of predicates in group 1 that allowed a context-based infinitival clause instead of the clause "å reise jorda rundt". Adjectives such as *lite* ('not much'), and *slemt* ('mean'), in group 2, allowed an infinitival clause in the subject position. These adjectives were tested once more in the *viktig* alternation.

- (108)
- Snilt: \*Å reise jorda rundt er snilt / Å dele mat er snilt.  
 'To travel around the world is kind/' 'to share food is kind.'
- Lite: \*Å reise jorda rundt er lite/ Å hoppe en meter er lite.  
 'To travel around the world is not much/' 'to jump one meter is not much.'
- Slemt: \*Å reise jorda rundt er slemt/ Å slå et dyr er slemt.  
 'To travel around the world is mean/' 'To hit an animal is mean.'

Sentence (109) and (110) both have the same adjective *lite*. (109) is an example of a sentence looking like a *viktig* sentence but cannot take the regular structure. (110) on the other hand, seems to take both the special and the regular structure.

- (109) a. Det er lite med fisk i elva.  
*It is little with fish in river.the*  
 'There is not much fish in the river.'

- b. \*Fisk i elva er lite.  
*Fish in river.the is little*  
 \* 'Fish in the river is not much.'
- c. Fisk i elva er det lite av. *Not ViktigAlt*  
*Fish in river.the is it little of*  
 'There is not much fish in the river.'

- (110) a. %Det er lite med én kake.  
*It is little with one cake*  
 'One cake is not much.'
- b. %Én kake er lite.  
*One cake is little*  
 'One cake is not much.'

Native Norwegian speakers rate sentence (110a) as somewhat acceptable in spoken language. (110b) was rated less acceptable to not acceptable in both spoken and written language. *Lite* should have the meaning of *few* instead of *not much* to be acceptable, in that the intended meaning of the sentence is about number and quantity, not amount.

Concerning Noun phrases, we already know from Faarlund (1977) that *viktig* sentences can take NPs as subject. NPs can denote physical entities and abstract entities (events as well as facts, ideas etc.):

- (111) a. Det er viktig med kunder. *Physical entity*  
*It is important with customers*  
 'Customers are important.'
- b. Det er viktig med et godt arbeidsmiljø. *Event*  
*It is important with a good working environment*  
 'A good working environment is important.'
- c. Det er viktig med kreative ideer. *Abstract entity*  
*It is important with creative ideas*  
 'Creative ideas are important.'

Infinitive clauses can only denote events. Knowing that the adjective *godt* can take a physical entity (see example(73)) does not necessarily mean that every *viktig*-adjective can. We tested physical entities in the same manner as infinitival subjects; we examined if the *viktig*-adjectives could take a physical entity in the subject position.

When testing if the NPs are definite or indefinite, we used the same NPs from the 'NP as subject' test. To test their acceptability in the *viktig* alternation, definite and indefinite NPs were tested in both the regular and the special structure.

### 4.3 Results

After testing the data collected in the manner described in section 4.2, we were able to gather a collection of adjectives that can enter the ViktigAlt. Through testing the hypothesis, several properties of the adjectives have been accounted for.

As a result of testing infinitival clauses in the subject position of *viktig*-adjectives, we learned that nearly all *viktig*-adjectives allowed an infinitival clause in the subject

position. Some adjectives which we initially believed could enter the ViktigAlt were not able to take an infinitival clause. These adjectives were tested in the *viktig* alternation once more. With help from native speakers of Norwegian, these adjectives were rated as not acceptable in the special structure, except for one specific adjective we will discuss in section 4.6.1. For valid results, every predicate found when collecting data was tested for acceptability in both the regular and special structure several times. With help from native speakers of Norwegian, we were able to prove that the hypothesis is correct for most cases.

In the results, we find three groups: group 1 and group 2 show cases that fit the predictions, group 3 show problem cases.

## 4.4 Group 1: Adjectives that Show the ViktigAlt Pattern and that Allow Infinitive Subject

The first group of predicates which fits the hypothesis contains predicates which satisfy prediction 1. **Prediction 1:** Any adjective that shows ViktigAlt pattern also allows an infinitive subject (with the same meaning/ sense of the adjective). Group 1 predicates can enter the ViktigAlt.

This section is divided in three subsections. Section 4.4.1 covers the predicative adjectives that can enter ViktigAlt. In section 4.4.2, we find similarities between ViktigAlt predicates and *tough*-movement predicates. Section 4.4.3 introduces noun and verb predicates allowed in ViktigAlt.

### 4.4.1 Adjectives

In the investigation, we found many adjectives that behave in accordance with the hypothesis: the adjectives in ViktigAlt allow an infinitive as well as an NP in the subject position. Within the list of adjectives allowed, we found adjectives that made up specific groups of adjectives. The groups listed in (112) were suggested in Wilder (2020c).

(112)

- Effort:** *Utfordrende* ('challenging'), *vanskelig* ('difficult'), *easy* ('enkelt').
- Necessity:** *Nødvendig* ('necessary'), *påkrevd* ('required').
- Possibility:** *Mulig* ('possible'), *ulovlig* ('illegal'), *aktuelt* ('applicable').
- Importance:** *Viktig* ('important'), *essensielt* ('essential') *avgjørende* ('crucial').
- Frequency:** *Vanlig* ('common'/'normal'), *uvanlig* ('uncommon').
- Experiencer A:** *Kjedelig* ('boring'), *spennende* ('exciting'), *stimulerende* ('stimulating').

(113)-(118) are examples of one adjective from each of the groups above. (a)-examples illustrates ViktigAlt *regular structure* with an NP in subject position. (b)-examples illustrates ViktigAlt *special structure*. (c)-examples show the adjectives with an infinitive subject.

- (113) a. Hjemmekontor er utfordrende.  
*Home office is challenging*
- b. Det er utfordrende med hjemmekontor.  
*It is challenging with home office*  
'Home office is challenging.'
- c. Å jobbe på hjemmekontor er utfordrende.  
*To work at home office.a is challenging*  
'To work at a home office is challenging.'
- (114) a. Et gyldig visum er påkrevd.  
*A valid visa is required*
- b. Det er påkrevd med et gyldig visum.  
*It is required with a valid visa*  
'A valid visa is required.'
- c. Å reise med gyldig visum er påkrevd.  
*To travel with a valid visa is required*
- (115) a. Hasj er ulovlig.  
*Hash is illegal*
- b. Det er ulovlig med hasj.  
*It is illegal with hash*  
'Hash is illegal.'
- c. Å selge hasj er ulovlig.  
*To sell hash is illegal*
- (116) a. Et godt samarbeid er viktig.  
*A good cooperation is important*
- b. Det er viktig med et godt samarbeid.  
*It is important with a good cooperation*  
'Good cooperation is important.'
- c. Å ha et godt samarbeid er viktig.  
*To have a good cooperation is important*
- (117) a. Høydeskrekk er vanlig.  
*Fear of heights is normal*
- b. Det er vanlig med høydeskrekk.  
*It is normal with fear of heights*  
'Fear of heights is normal.'
- c. Å oppleve høydeskrekk er vanlig.  
*To experience fear of heights is normal*
- (118) a. Myke pakker er kjedelig.  
*Soft gifts are boring*
- b. Det er kjedelig med myke pakker.  
*It is boring with soft gifts*  
'Soft gifts are boring.'
- c. Å åpne myke pakker er kjedelig.  
*To open soft gifts are boring*

#### 4.4.2 Relation to Tough-Movement Predicates

While analysing the results of the investigation, we find similarities between the predicates allowed in the *viktig* alternation and the predicates allowed in what is known

as the *tough*-movement. Predicates of the *tough*-movement can take both infinitive subject (119a) and NP as subject (119b):

- (119) a. It is easy/difficult/important/tough/hard to cut this tree down.  
 b. This tree is easy/difficult/important/tough/hard to cut e down.  
 (Gluckman, 2019, p. 149).

(119a) has an expletive subject which in (119b) has been alternated with a non-expletive subject, leaving a non-subject gap in the embedded clause of (119b) (Gluckman, 2019, p. 149). Many ViktigAlt adjectives also show the *tough*-movement pattern:

- (120) a. Det er godt å vite dette.  
*It is good to know this*  
 'This is good to know.'  
 b. Dette er godt å vite e.  
*This is good to know*

English *tough*-predicates seem to have the same classification, as well as similar adjectives, as the Norwegian adjectives that enter ViktigAlt (Wilder, 2020c):

(121)

**Effort:** Difficult, hard, easy, simple, tough.

**Necessity/Possibility:** Necessary, possible, impossible, illegal.

**Importance:** Important, crucial.

**Experiencer adj.:** Boring, interesting, stimulating, entertaining, amusing, harmful.

When comparing the groups of *viktig*-adjectives in (112) with the groups of *tough*-adjectives in (121), we find striking similarities. Moreover, with example (120) illustrating a *viktig*-adjective in the *tough*-movement, we believe there might be a link between ViktigAlt and the *tough*-movement. ViktigAlt can furthermore take noun and verb predicates. We will discover that some of these can enter the *tough*-movement.

#### 4.4.3 ViktigAlt Predicates – Nouns and Verbs

Until now, we have focused on adjectives as predicate of ViktigAlt sentences. Yet, Faarlund (1977) establishes in his paper that not only adjectives show the ViktigAlt pattern. To illustrate, he introduces the noun and verb predicates *ein fordel* ('an advantage') and *hjelper* ('helps') that can be realised in both the regular and special structure.

- (122) a. Varme klede er ein fordel. PRED=N  
*warm clothes is an advantage*  
 b. Eit glas konjakk hjelper. PRED=V  
*a glass brandy helps*

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 250).

- (123) a. Det er ein fordel med varme klede.  
*it is an advantage with warm clothes*  
 b. Det hjelper med eit glas konjakk.  
*it helps with a glass brandy*

(Faarlund, 1977, p. 254).

Furthermore, Gluckman (2019) introduces several verbs allowed in the thought-movement pattern: psych-verb such as *amuse* and *annoy* (124), and predicates *lønner seg* ('be worthwhile') (125), *gir mening* ('makes sense') (126), *tar tid* ('take time') (127) (Gluckman, 2019, p. 150).

- (124) a. It frightens/amuses/depresses me (for my kids) to play with guns.  
 b. Guns frighten/amuse/depress me (for my kids) to play with e.  
 (125) a. It's worth it/worthwhile (for us) to invest in cryptocurrencies.  
 b. Cryptocurrencies are worth it/worthwhile (for us) to invest in e.  
 (126) a. It makes sense (for John) to mow the lawn first.  
 b. The lawn makes sense (for John) to mow e first.  
 (127) a. It took a week (for John) to paint the fence.  
 b. The fence took a week (for John) to paint e.

(Gluckman, 2019, p. 150).

Wilder (2020c) argues that psych-verbs as well as the Norwegian verb phrases *lønner seg* ('be worthwhile') and *tar tid* ('take time') show the ViktigAlt pattern. These verbs also allow an infinitive subject:

- (128) a. Slike mennesker irriterer meg. / Det irriterer meg med slike mennesker.  
*Such people annoy me / it annoys me with such people*  
 b. Bil lønner seg. / Det lønner seg med bil.  
*Car.a pays off / it pays off with car.a*  
 c. Forandring tar tid. / Det tar tid med forandring.  
*Changes takes time / it takes time with changes*  
 d. Å snakke med slike mennesker irriterer meg.  
*To talk with such people annoys me*  
 e. Å kjøpe en bil lønner seg.  
*To buy a car pays off*  
 f. Å oppleve forandring tar tid.  
*To experience change takes time*

(Wilder, 2020c).

Moreover, we argue that the predicate *gir mening* ('makes sense') is allowed in the ViktigAlt:

- (129) a. En grundig gjennomgang av arbeidet gir mening.  
*A thorough review of work.the makes sense*  
 b. Det gir mening med en grundig gjennomgang av arbeidet.  
*It makes sense with a thorough review of work.the*  
 'A review of the work makes sense.'

- c. Å ta en grundig gjennomgang av arbeidet gir mening.  
*To take a thorough review of work.the makes sense*  
 'To do a thorough review of the work makes sense.'

That ViktigAlt can take predicates other than adjectives is demonstrated in example (122), (123), (128) and (129). The ViktigAlt pattern can be found with nouns and verbs in addition to adjectives. We therefore conclude that ViktigAlt predicates include both adjectives, nouns and verbs. Furthermore, we have illustrated similarities between ViktigAlt predicates and *tough*-predicates. Both *tough*-adjectives and *tough*-verbs seems to be allowed in the *viktig* alternation. However, we do not have an answer to the link between *tough*-movement and ViktigAlt. We leave it as an interesting question for future research.

## 4.5 Group 2: Adjectives that do not Show the ViktigAlt Pattern and that do not Allow Infinitive Subject

The second group of predicates which fits the hypothesis contains predicates which satisfy prediction 2. **Prediction 2:** Any adjective that does not allow an infinitive subject does not show ViktigAlt pattern. Group 2 predicates cannot enter the ViktigAlt.

The cases which fit prediction 2 is divided in three types, each will be discussed in a separate subsection. In section 4.5.1 we present adjectives which describe a physical property of their subject such as colour, size and shape. In section 4.5.2 we present adjectives which allow their subject to be an NP or finite clause, but not infinitive. Section 4.5.3 will present evaluative adjectives.

### 4.5.1 Adjectives that Only Take NP Subjects

In the results, we find adjectives that only allow NP subjects describing a physical property of their subject. Here we find adjectives describing colour, size, width, weight, material and shape. These adjectives only allow NP subjects. They do not allow infinitive subjects. As expected, they do not show the *viktig*-pattern.

- |       |  |               |
|-------|--|---------------|
| (130) | a. Blod er rødt.<br><i>Blood is red</i><br>b. *Det er rødt med blod.<br><i>It is red with blood</i><br>c. *Å stoppe blod er rødt.<br><i>To stop blood is red</i>       | <i>Colour</i> |
| (131) | a. Hester er store.<br><i>Horses are big</i><br>b. *Det er stor med hester.<br><i>It is big with horses</i><br>c. *Å ri hest er stor.<br><i>To ride a horse is big</i> | <i>Size</i>   |
| (132) | a. Vinterjakker er tykke.<br><i>Winter jackets are thick</i><br>b. *Det er tykt med vinterjakker.<br><i>It is thick with winter jackets</i>                            | <i>Width</i>  |

- c. \*Å ha på seg vinterjakke er tykt.  
*To have on self winter jacket is thick*  
 'To wear a winter jacket is thick'.
- (133) a. Elefanter er tunge. *Weight*  
*Elephants are heavy*  
 b. \*Det er tungt med elefanter  
*It is heavy with elephants*  
 c. Å løfte elefanter er tungt.  
*To lift elephants is heavy*
- (134) a. Gifteringer er gullbelagt. *Material*  
*Wedding rings are gold plated*  
 b. \*Det er gullbelagt med giftringer.  
*It is gold plated with wedding rings*  
 c. \*Å lage giftringer er gull.  
*To make wedding rings is gold*
- (135) a. En pizza er rund. *Shape*  
*A pizza is round*  
 b. \*Det er rundt med pizza  
*It is round with pizza*  
 c. \*Å spise pizza er rundt.  
*To eat pizza is round*

Sentence (133c) is an example of a *weight*-adjective that allows an infinitive subject. The sentence is acceptable in Norwegian. The meaning of the sentence is 'heavy work'. However, weight in the physical meaning of 'heavy= 4000 kilograms' is not acceptable. Sentence (133b) has the physical meaning of 'heavy' in the *med*-structure, and the sentence is rated as not acceptable. Therefore, we argue that *weight*-adjectives are not allowed to enter the ViktigAlt.

#### 4.5.2 Adjectives that Only Take NP Subjects or Finite Clause but not Infinitive Subject

In the results, we find adjectives that only takes NP subjects or finite clauses. These do not take infinitive subjects. Faarlund (1977) addresses adjectives such as *sann* ('true') and *tydelig* ('obvious') and argues that they are excluded from "the construction without agreement" (Faarlund, 1977, p. 244) (the construction we address as the *regular structure* of the ViktigAlt). Moreover, he argues that these adjectives do not take an infinitive subject and only allow finite clauses as the subject. His arguments are illustrated in (136) and (137).

- (136) a. \*Bøker er sant. *Regular structure*  
*books are true*  
 b. \*Å lese bøker er sant. *Infinitive clause subject*  
*to read books is true*  
 c. Det er sant at Per har lesi bøker. *Finite clause subject*  
*it is true that Per has read book*

(Faarlund, 1977, pp. 243-244).



- (137) a. \*Grammatikk er tydelig. *Regular structure*  
*grammar is obvious*  
 b. \*Å studere grammatikk er tydelig. *Infinitive clause subject*  
*to study grammar is obvious*  
 c. Det er tydeleg at Else har studert grammatikk. *Finite clause subject*  
*it is obvious that Else has studied grammar*  
 (Faarlund, 1977, pp. 243-244).

We do, however, find that these adjectives allow NP subjects as well as finite clause subjects. Examples (138) and (139) illustrates that the predicate adjectives *sant* and *tydelig* can take an NP subject. These are nevertheless not *pancake* sentences as the adjective show plural agreement with the plural NP subject.

- (138) Slike rykter er (alltid) usanne.  
*Such rumours are (always) untrue*  
 (139) Noen instruksjer er tydelige.  
*Some instructions are obvious*

Both Faarlund (1977, p. 249) and Josefsson (2009, p. 53) observed that the NP subjects allowed in the *pancake* sentences were indefinite. The NPs in (138) and (139) are both definite. Faarlund and Josefsson's observation of 'indefinite NPs only' were tested in the investigation. The results show that definite NPs are in many cases allowed in the regular structure. However, only indefinite adjectives were allowed in the special structure. Sentence (140a) is in the regular structure and has the definite NP *hjemmekontoret* ('the home office') in the subject position. (140b) is the special structure of the same sentence. Neither the regular nor the special structure is grammatical or acceptable. (140c) and (140d) with an indefinite form of the same NP, on the other hand, are grammatical.

- (140) a. \*Hjemmekontoret er utfordrende.  
*Home office.the is challenging*  
 b. \*Det er utfordrende med hjemmekontoret.  
*It is challenging with home office.the*  
 'The home office is challenging.'  
 c. Hjemmekontor er utfordrende.  
*Home office is challenging*  
 d. Det er utfordrende med hjemmekontor.  
*It is challenging with home office.a*  
 'Home office is challenging.'

#### 4.5.3 Evaluative Adjectives

In section 2.2, evaluative adjectives were introduced as a group of predicates that could enter an argument alternation, as exemplified in sentence (15). As a result, we tested this group of predicates in the ViktigAlt. The results show that we were able to find several evaluative adjectives that allowed the ViktigAlt.

*Smart* ('smart'), *hyggelig* ('nice'), *tullete* ('silly'), *grusom* ('cruel'), *human* ('humane'), *dum* ('stupid'), *idiotisk* ('idiotic'), *feig* ('cowardly'), *tåpelig* ('foolish') seem to be allowed in the *viktig* alternation.

We were not able to find examples of *viktig* sentences that allowed the adjectives *frekk* ('rude'), *slem* ('mean'), *uforsiktig* ('imprudent'), *sjenerøs* ('generous'), *gal* ('mad'), *hensynsfull* ('considerate'), *ydmyk* ('humble'), *intelligent* ('intelligent'), *edel* ('noble'), *flink* ('clever'), *snill* ('kind'), *uhøflig* ('impolite'), *høflig* ('courteous'), etc.

(141) and (142) are examples of *smart* and *nice* entering ViktigAlt, allowed in both structures as well as allowing an infinitive subject.

- (141) a. En smarttelefon på tur er smart.  
*Smartphone.a on trip.a is smart*  
 b. Det er smart med en smarttelefon på tur.  
*It is smart with a smartphone on trip.a*  
 c. Å ta med en smarttelefon på tur er smart.  
*To take with a smartphone on trip.a is smart*  
 'To bring a smartphone on a trip is smart.'
- (142) a. Gode naboer er hyggelig.  
*Good neighbours are nice*  
 b. Det er hyggelig med gode naboer.  
*It is nice with good neighbours*  
 c. Å ha gode naboer er hyggelig.  
*To have good neighbours is nice*  
 'It is nice to have good neighbours.'

We have not detected reasons as to why examples for several of the adjectives were not found. This issue deserves further research.

#### 4.5.4 Interim Summary

We have now looked at two groups of adjectives which both behave in accordance with the hypothesis. Group 1 consists of predicates that allow both an infinitive clause and an NP in the subject position. Moreover, their arguments can be realised in both the regular structure and the special structure. These adjectives make up specific groups of adjectives: Effort, necessity, possibility, importance, frequency, and experienter adjectives. The groups were then compared to the *tough*-movement predicates, which had the same classification of adjective groups and proved to take some of the same noun and verb predicates. Furthermore, we looked at noun and verb predicates allowed in the ViktigAlt. Group 2 consists of predicates which behave in accordance with the hypothesis because they do not allow infinitive subject and do not enter ViktigAlt. We have looked at examples of adjectives that only allow NP subjects, some allow only NP or finite clause as subject, but none of them allows an infinitive clause in the subject position. As a result, the hypothesis appears to be correct for all cases discussed so far. We will now look at the third group, which contains problem cases.

## 4.6 Group 3: Problem Cases

When investigating what adjectives could enter the *viktig* alternation, we found some exceptions to the hypothesis. We will now look at three problem cases.

### 4.6.1 *Sannsynlig*

Our hypothesis states that the adjectives allowed to enter the *ViktigAlt* can take both NP and infinitive clauses in the subject position. Until now, the hypothesis seems to be correct. The adjectives *sannsynlig/usannsynlig* ('likely')/('unlikely') are an exception. *Sannsynlig* is one of the adjectives that only allows an NP in the subject position, not taking an infinitive clause as the subject. Nevertheless, *sannsynlig* can enter the *ViktigAlt*:

- (143) a. \*Å reise jorda rundt I 2020 er sannsynlig/usannsynlig.  
*To travel earth.the round in 2020 is likely/unlikely*  
'To travel around the world in 2020 is likely/unlikely.'
- b. Flere terrorangrep er sannsynlig de neste årene.  
*More terror attacks are likely the next years*  
'More terror attacks are likely to happen in the next years.'
- c. Det er sannsynlig med flere terrorangrep de neste årene.  
*It is likely with more terror attacks the next years*

In the investigation, we also tested whether the adjectives allowed in *ViktigAlt* allowed NPs denoting both physical entities as well as events. The results showed that about half the adjectives tested allowed both, whereas the other half only allowed NPs denoting event. This result is possibly connected to Faarlund's (1977) 'hidden clause' hypothesis, where he argued that a reduced clause could be the reason for the disagreement in gender, as his idea came from the subject's reading of HAVE. *Sannsynlig* was one of the adjectives that only allowed NPs denoting events.

- (144) \*Hasj/\*biler/\*en gjeng tenåringer er sannsynlig/usannsynlig.  
*Hash/cars/ a geng teenagers is likely/unlikely*

These results provide the understanding that not all *viktig*-adjectives share the same properties. However, they do all allow NPs in the subject position.

### 4.6.2 Adjectives with 'Extent' Meaning

Some of the adjectives we encountered in the investigation did not allow its arguments to be realised in the regular structure, yet they could be realised in what looks like the special structure. In section 4.2.2.2, we encountered the adjective *lite* ('not much') and recognised its ability to take on two different structures, yet not being able to enter the *vitkigAlt*. 'Amount' and 'extent' adjectives seem to have two different structures, where one seems to be a *viktig* sentence. Example (145) and (146) show the first structure, which is in the same category as the adjectives in section 4.5.1, only taking NPs denoting physical entities.

- (145) a. En kake er lite. *Amount*  
*One cake is little*
- b. \*Det er lite med én kake.  
*It is little with one cake*

- (146) c. \*Å servere en kake er lite. Extent  
 a. Fiskemarkedet er enormt.  
*Fish market.the is enormous*  
 b. \*Det er enormt med fiskemarkedet.  
*It is enormous with fish marked.the*  
 c. \*Å handle på fiskemarkedet er enormt.  
*To shop at the fish marked is enormous*

The second structure seem to take the *med*-structure, but not the regular structure:

- (147) a. Det er lite med snø ute.  
*It is little with snow outside*  
 b. \*Snø ute er lite.  
*Snow outside is little*  
 c. \*Å måke snø ute er lite.  
*To shovel snow outside is little*
- (148) a. Det er enormt med muligheter her.  
*It is enormous with possibilities here*  
 b. \*Muligheter her er enormt.  
*Possibilities here are enormous*  
 c. \*Å ha muligheter her er enormt.  
*To have possibilities here is enormous*

Wilder (2020c) suggest that the 'extent' adjectives are not allowed in ViktigAlt. Moreover, he suggests [A + *med* + N] "functioning as a larger NP, quantity expression in a NP" (Wilder, 2020c), describing an unlimited amount. The idea is illustrated in (149).

- (149) Vi har opplevd [enormt med muligheter] på universitet.  
 NP+ transitive V DO NP  
*We have experienced enormous with possibilities on university.the*

As illustrated in section 4.2.2, we often find sentences that seem to have the properties of a *viktig* sentence before analysing the elements and meaning. In both structures containing 'extent'-adjectives, the [A + *med* + NP] element functions as one NP unit, and not as 'predicate + *med* + NP'. (150) illustrates the structure of (148). The subject is an expletive *det* ('it'), the verb *er* ('is') has an 'existential meaning' like *finnes* ('exist'), and the NP *enormt med muligheter* is one unit.

- (150) Det er [NP enormt med muligheter] her.  
*It is enormous with possibilities here*

#### 4.6.3 Temperature Adjectives

Another group of adjectives we could expect to be found in the results in section 4.5.1 is temperature adjectives. Temperature is a physical property of a physical entity, and we might expect temperature adjectives to behave like colour, size, shape adjectives. We have, nevertheless, found examples of adjectives allowing their arguments to be realised in both the regular and the special structure of ViktigAlt. Moreover, temperature adjectives can take infinitive clauses in the subject position.

- (151) a. Vinterjakke på sommeren er varmt. Temperature  
*Winter jackets on summer.the is warm*  
 b. Det er varmt med vinterjakke på sommeren.  
*It is warm with winter jackets on summer.the*  
 c. Å ha på seg vinterjakke på sommeren er varmt.  
*To have on self winter jacket on summer.the is warm*  
 'To wear a winter jacket in the summer is hot.'
- (152) a. Minus 20 grader er kaldt.  
*Minus 20 degrees is cold*  
 b. Det er kaldt med minus 20 grader.  
*It is cold with minus 20 degrees*  
 c. Å være ute i minus 20 grader er kaldt.  
*To be outside in minus 20 degrees is cold*

As illustrated, temperature adjectives act in accordance with the hypothesis. Example (151) and (152) might not be acceptable in some dialects. Moreover, there might be a difference in acceptability depending on oral and written communication.

## 4.7 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have looked at cases where adjectives behave in accordance with the hypothesis. As a result, we find that the hypothesis is correct in most cases; ViktigAlt adjectives take both NPs and infinitive clauses in the subject position. The adjective *sannsynlig* is the one case we have found that do not support the hypothesis, only allowing NPs denoting events in the subject position. We did find that some of the *viktig*-adjectives allowed NPs denoting physical entities. However, we also found groups of adjectives not allowed in the ViktigAlt. These included adjectives which only allowed NPs denoting physical entities; *sann* ('true') and *tydelig* ('obvious') only allowing NPs or finite clauses in subject position; 'extent' adjectives with structures that looked like ViktigAlt but proves to have different properties. There might be a connection between these findings and why *sannsynlig* can enter the ViktigAlt, but we leave that question open for later research. Furthermore, the link between *tough*-movement and ViktigAlt is yet another interesting question of future research.

# 5. Conclusion

## 5.1 Main Points

Throughout this thesis, we have provided a descriptive analysis of the *viktig* alternation. From first recognizing and confirming the usage of a special sentence structure used by Norwegian speakers of English, we have gone through three major phases. The first was in chapter 2. Here, we first establish the sentence structure as part of an argument alternation. Confirming that the predicates' arguments could be realised in two different structures, one regular and one special including a *med*-phrase. In the same chapter, we established the special structure's properties. We have argued the pronoun *det* to be an expletive *it* acting as a placeholder to abide by the 'Extended projection principle'. Further, we have argued the adjective to be the main predicate assigning theta-roles, followed by a copula *be* that carries the tense of the sentence. The *viktig*-adjectives we

have argued to assign arguments with the role of a POSSESSOR. The *med*-phrase is argued to be a special obligatory adjunct as it contains the external argument.

The second phase was elaborated on in chapter 3. Here, we encountered *pancake* sentences and established that Josefsson's (2009) construction PROP sentences are *viktig* sentences. Both share the same properties in the regular and special structure, and both have adjective disagreement in gender. Both Faarlund (1977) and Josefsson argued for a 'hidden clause' hypothesis as a cause to the adjective gender disagreement the regular structure presents. As a response to their hypothesis, we called attention to some weaknesses, which resulted in our decision to treat the subject NP as a simple NP and not a hidden clause.

In the third phase, we conducted an informal investigation, based on ideas by Faarlund (1977), where our hypothesis was "ViktigAlt predicates = predicates that allow an infinitive clause subject as well as an NP subject". The hypothesis was based on the research question "What is the class of predicates that enter the *viktig* alternation?". Results showed that the hypothesis was correct for most cases, except for the adjective *sannsynlig*, adjectives with 'extent' meaning and temperature adjectives. The predicates allowed to enter ViktigAlt consists of specific groups of adjectives: Effort, necessity, possibility, importance, frequency and experienter adjectives, as well as verbs *irriterer* ('annoy'), *hjelper* ('helps'), *lønner seg* ('worthwhile'), *tar tid* ('take time'), *gir mening* ('makes sense') and noun *ein fordel* ('advantage'). Furthermore, we observed a possible relation to the *tough*-predicates.

## 5.2 Issues for Further Research

The *viktig* alternation is, to our knowledge, a new topic within Norwegian linguistics. We have only laid down the groundwork for what can later become a much more researched topic. We have presented our analysis of the sentence structure, argued that it is part of an argument alternation and found some predicates allowed to enter the alternation. In chapter 2, we found relations between *pancake* sentences and ViktigAlt. Later research on either topic can present new analysis and ideas for the other. Further investigation on the 'hidden clause' hypothesis can present answers to why the NPs in the *viktig*-pattern carries eventive reading as in example (91c). Moreover, investigating whether the NPs in ViktigAlt carries only eventive reading might give interesting answers to why adjectives describing physical entities cannot enter ViktigAlt.

As already mentioned, we observed similarities between *viktig*-predicates and *tough*-predicates. Many *viktig*-predicates show the *tough*-movement; the classification of *viktig* and *tough* seems to be the same, and they make up similar groups of adjectives. We have not investigated any further into the similarities, but the topic can be interesting to follow up in later research.

The cases that proved to be exceptions to the hypothesis, especially the adjectives *sannsynlig/usannsynlig* could be interesting to investigate further to find possible reasons why the ViktigAlt allows these particular adjectives. Furthermore, investigating whether the evaluative adjectives we did not find examples for are acceptable in ViktigAlt or not can have a connection to the problem cases.

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# Appendix A

## The Master's Thesis's Relevance for my Profession as a Secondary Teacher

At a dinner party with middle to highly educated Norwegians, I spoke with a group of people who showed interest in my master thesis. I decided to test their acceptability on this one sentence: *Det er viktig med et godt arbeidsmiljø*. They accepted the sentence. I then tested their acceptability on the English version of the sentence: *It is important with a good working environment*. Again, the group of people accepted the sentence. However, one person in this group had lived in an English-speaking country, and this person rated the sentence as unacceptable in English. This person knew that the English version was unacceptable because of an experience while living abroad. The ungrammaticality was invisible to the other Norwegians in this group.

From a didactic perspective, the teacher's knowledge of common grammatical mistakes can determine the pupil's language proficiency level. The differences between Norwegian and English are by many pupils believed to be small enough to do a word-by-word translation from one language to the other (Mahan & Brevik, 2013), which this thesis proves is not the case. The Norwegian curriculum system focuses on the communication aspect of English. The most important aim is for the pupils to make himself/herself understood in English with sentences that convey meaning (Newby, 2018, p. 202). Pupils might get away with Norwegian sentence structures when speaking English. However, teaching pupils specific structures that are not grammatical, as the *viktig* alternation, can help the pupils with their communication and make themselves even more understood by English speakers.

My interest in English/Norwegian differences comes from the awareness of my own errors. Even as a master's student, I still find myself writing and speaking ungrammatical and unacceptable sentences. Nevertheless, the more aware I am of the errors, the more I learn. I believe the same applies to my future pupils. It is challenging to improve one's English when the rules and grammar are not acquired knowledge. Therefore, it is essential that I, as an English teacher, am aware of the common grammatical mistakes, as I want to give my pupils the best possible foundation for them to grow on.

Through the process of researching and writing this thesis, I have understood the importance of improving one's work through drafts and revisions. I believe I have become more equipped to assist my future pupils with study techniques and different types of feedback. When writing this thesis, I have become more familiar with using corpora and working through academic papers, which will come in handy when teaching to improve my own knowledge but also to incorporate in tasks in class.

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