Developing a new perfect: the rise of the Icelandic vera búinn að-perfect

Höskuldur Thráinsson

To cite this article: Höskuldur Thráinsson (2017) Developing a new perfect: the rise of the Icelandic vera búinn að-perfect, Acta Linguistica Hafniensia, 49:2, 118-142, DOI: 10.1080/03740463.2017.1357267

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03740463.2017.1357267

Published online: 10 Oct 2017.
Developing a new perfect: the rise of the Icelandic 
vera búinn að-perfect

Höskuldur Thráinsson

Department of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Iceland, Reykjavík, Iceland

ABSTRACT

Icelandic is basically a “straight-have-perfect” language, where constructions with be + participle are virtually restricted to stative expressions like er farinn “is gone”. But since around 1600, Icelandic has been developing a new perfect consisting of the verb “be” together with the adjective (or participle) búinn + infinitive. The word búinn normally means “finished, done” so it is not surprising that the earliest examples of this construction typically involved transitive telic predicates and animate agentive subjects and had a clear resultative reading. Gradually, the construction developed into a more general perfect, which today can be used with predicates of different types and have a universal and even to some extent experiential (existential) reading. This development is traced and the restrictions on this new perfect in the modern language are described. It is shown that this new perfect has been gaining ground for centuries and is apparently still on the rise, as can be seen from the fact that it is more popular among young speakers than with the older generations. It is also acquired early and apparently more frequent in child language than the standard have-perfect.

KEYWORDS
Perfect; have-perfect; búinn-perfect; resultative reading; universal reading; experiential/existential reading; Icelandic

1. Introduction

It is standardly assumed that Icelandic is a “straight-have-perfect” language in the sense of McFadden (2007, 675ff.), for instance. First, the auxiliary hafa “have” can be used with a wide variety of predicates which typically take the auxiliary “be” in languages that show “have/be” alternation (Jónsson 1992; Thráinsson 2007, 11, 12, see also Sorace 2000):

1Note that if oft “often” is left out in (1a), the most natural reading will be inferential: Flugvél hefur komið of seint = “The plane has apparently arrived late”. Similarly, leaving aldrei “never” out in (1c) would most naturally lead to an inferential interpretation: Jón hefur þvegið sér = “John has apparently washed.” Thanks to a reviewer for pointing this out. See also the discussion around (26)–(27).
(1a) Flugvélin hefur oft komið of seint. change of location
   ‘The plane has often arrived late.’

(1b) Hitinn hefur vaxið. change of state
    ‘The temperature has risen.’

(1c) Jón hefur aldrei þvegið sér. reflexive
    ‘John has never washed.’

(1d) Jón hefur oft verið í Kaupmannahöfn. intransitive stative
    ‘John has often been in Copenhagen.’

(1e) Þessi bók hefur aldrei verið lesin. passive
    ‘This book has never been read.’

All of the examples in (1) would be ungrammatical with the auxilary vera “be” (+the relevant inflected PTCP) substituted for hafa “have” (+the SUP (supine) or uninflected PTCP). Second, there are no predicates that exclusively take the auxilary vera “be”, although a limited class of predicates appear to allow it, including fara “go” (cf. Jónsson 1992; Thráinsson 2007, 11, 12):

(2) Jón hefur farið /er farinn til Boston. change of location
    John has gone.sup /is gone.ptcp to Boston

As has frequently been demonstrated, this vera + PTCP construction has a strictly stative (or adjectival) reading and cannot, for instance, have the experiential (or existential) reading typical of many perfect constructions (see e.g., Kress 1982, 152–154; Friðjónsson 1989, 99; Jónsson 1992, 143, 144; Thráinsson 2007, 11, 12; Sigurðsson 2010; cf. also McFadden and Alexiadou 2010, 407). Evidence for this claim includes the contrasts between the hafa-perfect and vera + PTCP illustrated in (3):

(3a) Jón hefur oft farið /*er oft farinn til Boston.
    John has often gone.sup /*is often gone.ptcp to Boston

(3b) Hefur Jón einhvern tíma farið /*Er Jón einhvern tíma
    has John ever gone.sup /*is John ever
    farinn til Boston?
    gone.ptcp to Boston

In contrast with the hafa-perfect, the vera + PTCP construction is incompatible with iteration of the sort illustrated in (3a) and it is incompatible with
an adverbial meaning “ever”, as illustrated in (3b). Conversely, the (stative adjectival) participle farinn “gone” used with vera in (2) can take the typical adjectival prefix ð- “un-” whereas the (verbal) supine farið “gone” cannot, as shown in (4):

(4) Jón *hafði ófaríð / var ófarínn þégar ég kom.  
John *had ungone.SUP / was ungone.PTCP when I arrived

Contrasts like those in (3) and (4) have been taken to show that vera + PTCP is not a true perfect construction in Icelandic. While this may be debatable, the vera + PTCP construction will not be considered further in this paper.5

But in addition to the standard have-perfect, Icelandic has developed a second type of perfect illustrated in (5):

(5) María er búinn að lesa þessa bók.  
Mary is BÚNN to read.inf this book
‘Mary has read this book.’

Jónsson (1992) refers to this second perfect as the bf-perfect (bf for “be finished”) since the literal meaning of búinn is typically “finished” (cf. the gloss in (5)). Hence, it is not surprising that this second perfect often has a resultative reading, as it does in (5). Some examples of this perfect do not carry any sense of completion, however, as pointed out by Jónsson, for instance (1992, 129n, 136)6:

(6) María er búinn að vera veik.  
Mary is BÚNN to be sick
‘Mary has been sick.’

4Interestingly, examples like (3a, b) improve when a temporal specification is added as in (i)–(ii):

(i) Jón er oft farinn til Boston þegar ég reynir að ná í hann.  
John is often gone to Boston when I try to reach him
‘John has often (already) left for Boston when I try to reach him.’

(ii) Er Jón einhvern tíma farinn til Boston þegar þú reynir að ná í hann?  
is John ever gone to Boston when you try to reach him
‘Has John ever (already) left for Boston when you try to reach him?’

This was pointed out to me by a reviewer and I don’t know why this is so (nor did he).

5Whether or not the construction vera + PTCP in Icelandic should be called a perfect is arguably a terminological issue. Sigurðsson (2010, 39, 40), for instance, calls this construction a stative perfect but points out that it can only be used with a limited set of verbs, as already mentioned, and can only have the stative reading. Other researchers seem to consider stative resultatives with “be” + PTCP more like a starting point in the development of true perfects (see e.g., McFadden and Alexiadou 2010 and references cited there). We will briefly return to this question in the conclusion. –Yamaguchi and Pétursson (2003) assume, on the other hand, that vera + PTCP is a true perfect construction in Icelandic and they maintain that it can have an experiential (or existential) reading and not only a stative (or resultative) one as standardly assumed (see also Yamaguchi 2000). The arguments they present for this conclusion are unconvincing, however, since most of the examples that are crucial for their argumentation sound unnatural.

6Following Wide (2002), I will use the item BÚNN when glossing the new perfect, regardless of the actual form of the word in the relevant example (e.g., fem. búin, neuter búið, etc.). The reason is that glossing búinn as “finished” in such examples is actually misleading. In idiomatic translations into English I will just use a have-perfect and comment on differences in reading when necessary.
Despite containing búinn, (6) implies that Mary has been sick for a while and possibly still is, i.e., it can have the so-called universal reading (cf. Section 2.1). Hence, I will simply refer to this construction as the búinn-perfect (pace Jakub 1970; Wide 2002; Larsson 2008) and the “original” perfect as the hafa-perfect.

Various properties of the búinn-construction in Modern Icelandic have been discussed in the linguistic literature (see e.g., Smári 1920, 182, 183; Einarsrson 1945, 146, 147; Jakub 1970; Árnason 1977; Kress 1982, 154, 155; Friðjónsson 1989, 103–107; Jónsson 1992; Harðarson 2000; Wide 2002; Thráinsson 2007, 12, 13; Larsson 2008; Sigurðsson 2010; Thráinsson and Torfadóttir 2015). Although the researchers basically agree that this construction has various properties of a “true perfect”, there has been some controversy as to its semantic characteristics and domain of use. The purpose of the present paper is partly to review the characteristics of the búinn-perfect but more importantly to demonstrate how it has developed – and is still developing. This demonstration should be of general theoretical interest and it is possible because of the existence of extensive corpora and research materials that have recently become available. For reasons of space, the discussion will be limited to examples with the verb vera “be” in the present tense and counterfactual constructions will not be considered at all.

---

7Jónsson (1992, 136) assumes that examples like (6) can only have the universal reading. But consider the following:

(i) María er búin að vera veik síðan á mánuðag.
Mary has been sick since Monday.

(ii) A: María hefur lagt af.
‘Mary has lost weight.’
B: Já, hún er búin að vera en er orðin góð núna.
‘Yes, she has been sick (lately), but she is fine now.’

While the búinn-perfect in (i), with the durational adverbial “since Monday”, can only have the universal reading (i.e., Mary must still be sick), the conversation in (ii) shows that there the expression er búin að vera veik “has been sick” cannot be so understood. The reading is more like “a perfect of recent past” (cf. also Larsson 2008, 86).

8Jakub (1970, 179) claims that the búinn-construction is a marginal lexical construction and not a true perfect. The main reasons for this conclusion are the various restrictions on the búinn-perfect that will be discussed in Section 2.2. Wide also maintains that the búinn-construction “has not yet been fully grammaticalized as a perfect” (2002, 7) although it is “not restricted to a limited set of verbs” (2002, 179). Similarly, Larsson (2008, 87, 88) concludes that it “has not yet developed all the properties of a perfect tense” although it “might be about to become a perfect”. The facts to be discussed below should shed some light on this (again, partly terminological) issue.

9Counterfactual constructions in Icelandic are characterized by past tense subjunctive morphology:

(i) a Ef Jón kemur, fer ég.
if John comes, I will go.
    if John comes, I’ll go:

b Ef Jón kaem, færi ég.
if John came, I would go.

As pointed out by Larsson (2008, 67), the hafa-perfect in counterfactual constructions is compatible with past tense adverbials whereas the búinn-perfect is not:

(ii) a Ef Jón hefsi lesið bókina núna/í gær, færi ég.
if John had the book now/yesterday, I would go.
    if John had read the book now/yesterday, I’d go:

b Ef Jón veri búinn að lesa bókina núna/í gær færi ég.
if John were to read the book now/yesterday go, I would go.
    if John were to read the book now, I’d go! (the past tense adverbial ‘gær’ ‘yesterday’ unacceptable here)

This seems to be the main reason why Larsson (2008) does not consider the búinn-construction a true perfect.
2. Basic properties of the búinn-perfect in Modern Icelandic

The most extensive discussion of the búinn-construction is found in Wide’s dissertation (2002). She mainly focuses on the usage of the construction in spoken language corpora of different kinds. But she also gives an overview of previous research on the “syntactic-semantic context in which the construction occurs” (2002, 180). In this overview, she often contrasts descriptive statements by previous researchers with her own findings in the corpora. Another useful overview of the possible (and impossible) readings of the búinn-construction is given by Larsson (2008). In the following subsections, I will first describe different readings of the búinn-perfect and then give an overview of some of the restrictions that seem to hold of this construction. The main purpose of this section, which relies heavily on previous research, is to provide a basis for an overview of the historical development of the búinn-construction to be given in Section 3.

2.1. Possible readings

The following three types of perfects are frequently discussed in the literature (see e.g., McCawley 1971; Comrie 1976; Jónsson 1992; Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou, and Izworski 2003; Mittwoch 2008; Larsson 2008, 2009; Sigurðsson 2010; McFadden and Alexiadou 2010; Guéron 2015 and many others):

(7)a Ég hef þekkt Frans síðan 1971. Universal
‘I have known Frans since 1971.’

b Ég hef lesið Aspects fimm sinnum. Experiential
‘I have read Aspects five times.’

c Ég get ekki komið í partíð í kvöld. Ég hef líklega Resultative
fengið flensu. Resultative
‘I can’t come to the party tonight. I’ve probably caught the flu.’

There are some terminological and even theoretical differences between the works cited above, but these need not concern us here. We can instead cite a few representative descriptions of the three types. First, the defining property of the universal perfect has been said to be “to indicate that a state of affairs prevailed throughout some interval stretching from the past into the present” (McCawley 1971, 104). Experiential (also called existential) perfects “place the entire event time anterior to reference time and therefore typically allow it
to be repeated” (Larsson 2009, 71). Finally, the resultative perfect is “used to emphasize the present effect of a past event” (Jónsson 1992, 131).

As illustrated in (7) the hafa-perfect can have all the three perfect readings under discussion. We have in fact already seen that the búinn-perfect can have the universal and the resultative readings and this can be demonstrated very clearly by substituting vera búinn að + infinitive for hafa + supine in (7a, c). The results are the completely natural and semantically (roughly) equivalent examples in (8a, b), respectively, (possibly a bit more colloquial than (7a, c)):

(8)a Ég er búinn að þekkja Frans síðan 1971. Universal
   ‘I have known Frans since 1971.’

   b Ég get ekki komið í partíið í kvöld. Ég er líklega búinn að flensu. Resultative
   ‘I can’t come to the party tonight. I’ve probably caught the flu.’

The question whether the búinn-perfect can have experiential reading is not as clear. Thus, it is not obvious that substituting vera búinn að for hafa in (7b) gives the exact same meaning:

(9) Ég er búinn að lesa Aspects fimm sinnum.
   ‘I have read Aspects five times.’

It seems to me that (9) focuses more on the result of the reading than (7b) does. Thus, the continuation in (10) would be very natural:

(10) Ég er búinn að lesa Aspects fimm sinnum en samt skil ég hana ekki.
   ‘I have read Aspects five times but I still don’t understand it.’

Note also that the hafa-perfect in (11a) is ambiguous between a resultative reading and an experiential one, as the English gloss would be (see Mittwoch 2008, 325): In the resultative reading, the passport is still lost but not in the experiential one. The búinn-perfect in (11b), on the other hand, only seems to have the resultative reading:

(11)a Ég hef týnt vegabréfinu mínú.
       b Ég er búinn að týna vegabréfinu mínú.
       ‘I have lost my passport.’

11McCawley used the term existential in his influential paper (1971) and it is also the term used by Jónsson (1992), Thraínsson (2007) and Sigurðsson (2010). Here I will mainly use the term experiential about the relevant type of perfect since it seems to be more common in recent literature on tense and aspect (see e.g., Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou, and Izworski 2003; McFadden 2007; Larsson 2008, 2009; McFadden and Alexiadou 2010; see also Comrie 1976). Another reason for this choice of terminology is the fact that the term existential sometimes has a wider meaning in the literature.
This is probably also the reason why the hafa-perfect in (12a) is fine but the búinn-perfect in (12b) sounds odd, since repeatability is a typical property of the experiential perfect:

(12)a  Eg hef oft verið í Kaupmannahöfn.  Experiential
       'I have often been to Copenhagen.'

b  'Eg er oft búinn að vera í Kaupmannahöfn.

Despite this, it is possible to create contexts where the búinn-perfect seems to have an experiential reading:

(13)a  Eg er búinn að týna lyklunum fimm sinnum en ég er þó med þá núna.
       'I have lost the keys five times but I have them with me now anyway.'

b  Ég veit ekki hvað ég er oft búinn að brjóta gleraugun mín!
       'I don’t know how many times I have broken my glasses!'

Thus Jónsson’s conclusion (1992, 142) that búinn-perfects cannot be experiential (alias existential) does not seem entirely accurate. His main argument is the fact that the búinn-perfect is incompatible with adverbs like nokkurn tíma “ever”, witness the contrast in (14) (cf. Jónsson 1992, 136):

(14)a  Hrútar eru besta mynd sem ég hef nokkurn tíma séð.
       Rams is best movie that I have any time seen 'Rams is the best movie that I have ever seen.'

b  *Hrútar eru besta mynd sem ég er nokkurn tíma búinn að sjá.

We conclude, therefore, that while the universal reading and (especially) the resultative reading are easy to get with the búinn-perfect, the experiential perfect is often difficult to get but not completely excluded. Further examples will be discussed in the next section.

2.2. Some restrictions

In his discussion of the Icelandic perfect and perfect-like constructions, Kress (1982, 155) implies that the búinn-perfect is restricted to transitive verbs

---

12Jónsson (1992, 139n) maintains that examples like (13a) have a resultative reading of sorts. Examples beginning with the búinn-perfect Ég veit ekkí hvað X er oft búin(n) ... “I don’t know how many times X has ...”, similar to (13b), are easy to find on the Internet.
("wird von transitiven Vorgangsverben gebildet"). Similarly, Friðjónsson states (1989, 104) that the búinn-perfect is “typically only used with animate subjects and only if they are agents”. While this is not entirely accurate, as we have already seen (cf. (6)), it is true that the búinn-perfect is often used in a resultative reading with telic transitive agentive verbs. An interesting subcase pointed out by Kress (1982, 156) and Friðjónsson (1989, 105) is an expletive active construction where no agent is mentioned. This is illustrated in (15):

(15) Það er búið að stela hjólinu mínu.
    there is BÚNN to steal bike my
    ‘Someone has stolen my bike.’

Although this impersonal active has a resultative reading in these examples, (15) could be modified by an adverb like þrisvar “three times”, giving a reading that seems more like an experiential one. We shall return to this construction below and we will see that it is very common from early on.

While the búinn-perfect is not restricted to transitive agentive verbs, it does not go equally well with all types of predicates, as many researchers have noted. Wide (2002, 190) maintains that the classes of verbs described in the literature as being incompatible with the búinn-perfect are the following (her labels and examples):

(16)a durative verbs, e.g. standa ‘stand’, sitja ‘sit’
b verbs expressing physical or mental states, e.g. sofa ‘sleep’, leiðast ‘be bored’
c momentary verbs, e.g. detta ‘fall’, falla ‘fall, tumble’
d verbs indicating the beginning or end of an action or event, e.g. sofna ‘fall asleep’, deyja ‘die’

Although the terms used by Wide do not correspond exactly to those that are commonly used in the typological literature on perfects, the examples she gives should make their meaning clear enough for our purposes. We shall now look at these predicate types in turn, although they overlap to some extent. In the process, we will try to relate the examples to recent discussions of perfects by referring to predicate classifications familiar from the literature.

First, it has often been pointed out that although durative and stative verbs like the ones mentioned in (16a–b) do not easily go with the búinn-perfect, they can do so when the duration of the state is specified or the state is at least delimited in some way. This is illustrated in (17)–(19) (see also Einarsson 1945, 147; Friðjónsson 1989, 105; Kress 1982, 155n; Wide 2002, 190, 191, 215–223):
(17)a Bókin er bíun að *liðja á golfinu/liðja á golfinu book.DEF is BÚNN to *lie.INF on the floor/lie.INF on the floor í tvo daga. in two days ‘The book has been lying on the floor for two days.’

b Ég er bíun að *eiga heima á Akureyri/eiga heima á I am BÚNN to *live.INF in Akureyri/live.INF in Akureyri í tvö ár. Akureyri in two years ‘I have lived in Akureyri for two years.’

(18)a Jón er bíun að *sofa/sofa í klukkútíma.13 John is BÚNN to *sleep.INF/sleep.INF for an hour ‘Jón has slept for an hour.’

b Hann er bíun að *hata mig/hata mig lengi. he is BÚNN to *hate.INF me/hate.INF me for a long time ‘He has hated me for a long time.’

These judgements can easily be corroborated by examples from corpora, e.g., by searching timarit.is:14

(19)a Bíllinn er bíun að standa hér inni í (NT May 6, 1984) the.car  is BÚNN to stand here inside in allan vetur all winter ‘The car has been standing in here for the whole winter.’

b Henni er bíúð að vera kalt í allan dag (Vikan, 13(16), 1950) she.dat is BÚNN to be cold in all day ‘She has been cold the whole day.’

Note that in example (19b) we have dative experiencer subject. Accusative experiencers are also compatible with the bíun-perfect:

(20)a Mig er bíúð að vanta peninga lengi. Universal I.ACC is BÚNN to lack money long ‘I have been needing money for a long time.’

b Mig er oft bíúð að vanta peninga. Experiential I.ACC is often BÚNN to need money ‘I have often tended to need money.’

It has also been pointed out in the literature that although intransitive telic punctual verbs like the ones exemplified by Wide in (16c, d) above do not go easily with the bíun-perfect, it becomes compatible with such predicates if adverbial modification signifying iteration is added. No such restrictions hold

13Note that if sofa means something like “take a scheduled nap”, e.g., as babies do, then Barnið er bíúð að sofa is fine in the sense “The baby has (already) taken his/her nap”.

14timarit.is is an on-line corpus containing materials from newspapers and journals in Iceland, the Faroes and Greenland from the nineteenth century onwards.
for the *hafa*-perfect. Some examples are given in (21)–(23) (see also Wide 2002, 190–192, 241; Larsson 2008, 76, 77; Svavarsdóttir and Jónsdóttir 2009, 78):

(21)a Barnið *er búið að *detta / detta mörgum sinnum.*
child.DEF is BÚNN to *fall / fall many times
‘The child has fallen many times.’

b Jón *er búinn að *sofna / sofna mörgum sinnum.*
John is BÚNN to *fall asleep / fall asleep many times
en vaknar allt af aftur
but wakes always up again.
‘John has fallen asleep many times but always wakes up again.’

(22)a Jónas *hefur líklega dáið 1845.*
Jonas has presumably died 1845.

b *Jónas *er líklega búinn að deyja 1845.*
c Jónas er líklega búinn að fæðast fimn sinnum og
Jonas is probably BÚNN to be born five times and
búinn að deyja jafnoft.
BÚNN to die equally frequently
‘Jonas has presumably been born five times and has died as many times.’

It seems that adverbial modification can in fact save the *búinn*-perfect with a number of unaccusative verbs that have been claimed to be incompatible with it. The following are based on examples given by Friðjónsson (1989, 104, 105), who uses them as an illustration of the alleged incompatibility of the *búinn*-perfect with non-agentive verbs:

(23)a Bíllinn *hefur ryðgað / *er búinn að ryðga í vetur.*
Intended: ‘The car has rusted this winter.’

b Hann *hefur fitnað / *er búinn að fitna í þessum mánuði.*
Intended: ‘He has gained weight this month.’

But once a “measure” modification is added, the examples typically improve as shown in (24):

(24)a Bíllin *er búinn að ryðga mikið í vetur.*
(my example)
the.car is BÚNN to rust much in winter
‘The car has rusted a lot this winter.’

b Þú *ert náttúrlega búinn að fitna um* (Tíminn Dec. 28, 1995)
you are naturally BÚNN to fatten by
tvö og hálft kiló
two and half kilo
‘You have of course gained [weight by] 2.5 kilos’

c Þetta *er búið að bráðna nóg núna.*
This is BÚNN to melt enough now
‘This has melted enough now.’

15This example sounds like something you could find in a recipe, as can be verified by a Google search.
Some speakers do not seem to require this kind of adverbial modification with all unaccusative verbs, witness the following example from a cartoon in Morgunblaðið (a picture of two polar bears on a small ice floe):

(25) Verðum við ennþá ísbirnir eftir að allur ísinn er
búinn að bráðna?

‘Will we still be polar bears when all the ice has melted?’

This example sounds odd to me, however, and probably for many others of my generation.

We see, then, that adverbial modification can influence the acceptability of the búinn-perfect with various types of predicates, be they durative or punctual, and the búinn-perfect is much more sensitive in this respect than the hafa-perfect. Some additional examples are given in (26)–(27), where we see that reference to a single event does not work well with the búinn-perfect if vera “be” is in the present tense, but corresponding examples with the hafa-perfect are fine (typically or perhaps exclusively with the inferential reading mentioned above, as indicated in the glosses):16

(26) a Hann hefur lesið bókina í gær.
   ‘He has [evidently] read the book (yesterday).’

   b Hann er búinn að lesa bókina (*í gær).17

(27) a Ég hef verið veikur í gær.
   ‘I [must] have been sick yesterday.’

   b Ég er búinn að vera veikur (*í gær).

As pointed out by Jónsson (1992, 140, 141), modification with aldrei “never” is often difficult with the búinn-perfect but fine with the hafa-perfect. Iterative contexts (and wide scope of “never”) can help, however, as shown in (28):

(28) a Ég hef aldrei hitað kaffi.
   ‘I have never made coffee.’

   b *Ég er aldrei búinn að hita kaffi.

16Inferential readings of “perfects” seem to occur in a number of languages, whatever the reason may be (see e.g., Jónsson (1992, 137), who cites Dahl (1985)). See also Guéron (2015, 107), who gives the examples in (i) while (ii) is from Rothstein (2005, 5):

(i) a It has rained.
   b Il a été dansé dans cette salle.
   [evidence: wet ground]
   [evidence: overturned chairs, audio equipment]

   it has been danced in this room
   ‘Someone has danced in this room.’

(ii) Björn har tydligen gått.
   ‘The bear has probably left.’

17Examples of this sort are fine if vera “be” is in the past tense: Hann var búinn að lesa bókina í gær “He had read the book yesterday.”
c Ég er aldrei búinn að hita kaffi þegar Sigga vaknar á morgnana.
'It is never the case that I have (already) made coffee when Sigga wakes up in the morning.'

The situation is much more clear cut in the case of modal verbs: The búinn-perfect seems completely incompatible with modal verbs whereas the hafa-perfect is not (modal verbs in Icelandic can occur in the supine, cf. Thráinsson and Vikner 1995):

\[(29)\]
\[\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \text{Hann } \text{hefur kunnað } að tefla. \\
& \quad \text{‘He has known how to play chess.’ (root sense of kunna ‘can, know how’) } \\
\text{(b)} & \quad \ast \text{Hann } \text{er búinn að kunna } að tefla.
\end{align*}\]

Finally, the búinn-perfect is typically incompatible with the passive, as noted by Friðjónsson (1989, 105), but the hafa-perfect is not:

\[(30)\]
\[\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \text{Bókin } \text{hefur verið lesin.} \\
& \quad \text{‘The book has been read.’} \\
\text{(b)} & \quad \ast \text{Bókin } \text{er búin að vera lesin.}
\end{align*}\]

It seems, however, that passive examples with the búinn-perfect slightly improve with a durative modification. \((31a)\) is my example with my own judgements and \((31b)\) is from the Internet with my judgements:

\[(31)\]
\[\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \ast \text{Þessi bók } \text{er búin að vera lesin í skólum í mörg ár.} \\
& \quad \text{‘This book has been read in schools for many years.’} \\
\text{(b)} & \quad \ast \text{[Þau eru ] } \text{búin að vera seld í a.m.k. 7 ár.} \\
& \quad \text{‘[they] have been being sold for at least 7 years.’}
\end{align*}\]

Internet examples like \((31b)\) suggest that the domain of the búinn-perfect may be expanding in colloquial Icelandic. We will return to that issue in Section 4.

Similarly, the búinn-perfect is normally incompatible with middle or st-verbs that have a passive reading, often similar to get-passives in English. Again, the hafa-perfect is fine with these:

\[(32)\]
\[\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \text{Bókin } \text{hefur týnst.} \\
& \quad \text{‘The book has got lost.’} \\
\text{(b)} & \quad \ast \text{Bókin } \text{er búin að týnast.}
\end{align*}\]

But it is possible to use adverbial modification to create contexts where the búinn-perfect is compatible with this kind of middle, e.g., iterative contexts like the following:

\[\text{18It is also possible that týnast ‘get lost’ is not immediately compatible with the búinn-perfect because it is an intranstive inherently telic predicate like detta ‘fall’ and deyja ‘die’, cf. the discussion around (21)–(22).}\]
This book has got lost three times but we have always found it again.

We have obviously not done justice to the subtle semantics of the $\text{búinn}$-perfect here but this will have to do as a foundation for the discussion of the historical development outlined in the next section. But first an interim conclusion and some predictions are in order:

(34)a Once $\text{vera búinn að + inf.}$ becomes an auxiliary construction (i.e. grammaticalized), its frequency should increase.

b Given the fact that the (new) literal meaning of $\text{búinn}$ is ‘finished, done’, we might expect that the earliest attested examples of the $\text{búinn}$-passive would have a resultative reading and most likely involve agentive, telic transitive predicates.

c Some of the examples presented here and in Wide’s dissertation (2002) violating restrictions on the $\text{búinn}$-perfect proposed by Einarsson (1945), Kress (1982), Friðjónsson (1989) and others, such as examples involving non-agentive and/or intransitive predicates of various kinds, are relatively young or belong to informal registers. This suggests that the domain of the $\text{búinn}$-perfect may (still) be expanding.

In the next section, we will see how well these predictions hold up.

3. The origin and historical development of the $\text{búinn}$-perfect

The adjective$^{19}$ $\text{búinn}$ in Old Icelandic (Old Norse) means “ready, prepared”, among other things, and the construction $\text{vera búinn að + inf.}$ thus means “be ready to”, as illustrated by the following examples (collected from the corpus Mörkuð íslensk málheild$^{20}$):

(35)a $\text{Að hann væri þegar búinn að fara að þeim}$ (Eyrbyggja saga) Óspaki er Snorri vildi …

‘That he was already ready to attack Ó. and his team when S. wanted …’

b og $\text{varst þá búinn að veita mér bana}$ (Hallfreðar saga) ‘and [you] were then ready to kill me’

As stated above, $\text{búinn}$ all by itself usually means “finished” in Modern Icelandic. Interestingly, however, the cognate $\text{búgvin}$ in Modern Faroese has

---

$^{19}$ Originally past participle of the verb $\text{búa}$ “prepare”.

$^{20}$ A quick search in the online version of the Ordbog over det nordiske prosasprog (https://onp.ku.dk/, under the verb $\text{búa}$) did not reveal any Old Norse examples of the $\text{búinn}$-construction in the modern meaning.
preserved the Old Norse meaning and hence \textit{vera búgvin at} means “be ready to”. Some examples are given in (36):

(36) a Altíð hevði hon \textbf{verið búgvin at lønt} (Regin í Líð 1909)
always had she been ready to paid
Jógvani tað aftur
Jogvan.DAT it back
‘she had always been ready to pay it back to Jógvan’

b Kommunurnar hava vist … at tær \textbf{eru búnar at taka} (Internet)
avgerðir
‘The communities have shown that they are ready to make decisions.’

This is interesting in itself since Icelandic is typically more conservative and more similar to Old Norse in its syntax (and morphology) than Faroese is. The Icelandic Dictionary Project at the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies has collected materials for a historical dictionary spanning the period from 1540 to the present. A selection of this material is accessible on the Internet (https://lexis.hi.is/cgi-bin/ritmal/leitord.cgi?adg=innsl). The earliest example of \textit{vera búinn að + inf.} with the modern reading found in this collection dates from 1593 and reads as follows (with the spelling modernized, cf. Árnason 1977; Wide 2002, 211, 212; see also Fálkinn July 10, 1959):

(37) Þá \textbf{búið var að brenna}, féll í ösku og fölskaðist
when \textit{búinn} was to burn fell to ashes and turned.to.white.ash
allt saman …
all together
‘when one had burned (it), everything fell into ashes and turned to white ash …’

Interestingly, this first attested example is an impersonal active of the kind illustrated in (15) above and it has a resultative reading.$^{21}$

When Árnason (1977) was looking for the earliest examples of the \textit{búinn}-construction in the modern sense, he did not find any examples older than the one just cited but he found a few from the seventeenth century. He was able to use the materials compiled by the dictionary project mentioned above,$^{22}$ but he did not have access to a historical corpus. The Icelandic Parsed Historical Corpus, IcePaHC (see Rögnvaldsson et al. 2012) offers a more systematic way of studying

$^{21}$Example (37) is difficult to interpret because the infinitive \textit{brenna} could either be the weak transitive \textit{brenna} (past tense \textit{brenndi}) or the strong intransitive \textit{brenna} (past tense \textit{brann}). The weak transitive verb is used in the immediately preceding context (\textit{brenndi upp Reiðingahúsið og allt það þar var inni}; “burned up the tool shed and everything inside it”) and since the \textit{búinn}-construction does not go well with intransitive verbs like \textit{brenna} and other early examples typically involve transitive (and telic) verbs, I am assuming here that \textit{brenna} in (37) is the weak transitive verb and the structure of the first clause is elliptic (object of \textit{brenna} omitted).

$^{22}$Unfortunately, many of their citations are so short that one has to look the examples up in the original sources to determine the meaning.
the historical development of this construction. IcePaHC spans the period from the twelfth to the twenty-first centuries. An overview of the size of the corpus and the genres included for each century is shown in Table 1 (see Rögnvaldsson et al. 2012). As can be seen there, the corpus typically contains over 100,000 words from each century (the average is a little above 114,000), except for the twelfth and the twenty-first centuries, a total of a little over a million words. More than half of the material is from narrative texts but other genres are also included, especially from the centuries where there is a lack of narrative material.

Since we have an approximately equal number of words for each century (with the exception of the first and last), it is simple to test the predictions stated in (34): assuming that the búinn-construction gradually turned into the systematic perfect that it is in the modern language, we would expect its frequency to gradually increase from the point in time when it is first introduced until today, because it has become grammaticalized and thus eventually being extended to more types of predicates and taking on new readings.

As shown in Figure 1, the prediction about increased frequency through the ages is clearly borne out.

As expected, no examples were found in texts from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, then we get eight examples in the seventeenth-century texts, 17 examples in the eighteenth-century texts, and so on. The actual number of examples drops in the sample for the twenty-first century, but the reason is that this sample is much smaller than the average (only a little over 43 thousand words). Assuming the same ratio for 125 thousand words (which is the size of the corpus for the twentieth century), the predicted number of búinn-perfects in the twenty-first century would be 78, as shown by the last column in Figure 1.23

We can also try to determine if the nature of the examples changes through the ages. In (38), we have a representative set of examples from the seventeenth

\[\text{Table 1. Coverage and size (number of running words) of the IcePaHC corpus.}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Biographies</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40,871</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,439</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td>93,463</td>
<td>21,196</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,183</td>
<td>120,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td>77,370</td>
<td>21,315</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>98,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>111,560</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>111,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>35,733</td>
<td>60,464</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>96,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th</td>
<td>46,281</td>
<td>28,134</td>
<td>52,997</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>127,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>63,322</td>
<td>22,963</td>
<td>22,099</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>108,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th</td>
<td>100,362</td>
<td>20,370</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,268</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>124,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th</td>
<td>103,921</td>
<td>21,234</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>125,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st</td>
<td>43,102</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675,114</td>
<td>236,547</td>
<td>75,096</td>
<td>7,707</td>
<td>6,183</td>
<td>1,000,647</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23This figure is still much lower than typical figures reported by Wide (2002, 172) for the occurrences of the búinn-perfect in the spoken language corpora she studied. In her study the frequency of the búinn-perfect varied considerably depending on the type of spoken language data considered, being proportionately highest for child language data, as will be discussed in Section 4.
century. As we can see, they are all rather clearly resultative in meaning and the subjects are animate and agentive:

(38)a  sem allar sínar kornhlödur var búinn að fylla
that all his.refl grain.barns was BÜNN to fill
'who had filled all his grain-barns'

b  þar hann er búinn að skapa þig eftir sinni eigin mynd
as he is BÜNN to create you after his.refl own image
'as he has created you in his own image'

None of the seventeenth-century examples found in the corpus are of the impersonal active type illustrated in (15), although the oldest attested example (i.e., (37)) is of that kind and Árnason (1977, 47) points out that three of the twelve oldest examples of the búinn-construction in the modern meaning were actually impersonal.24

In the eighteenth century, we see an increased variety of examples, as illustrated in (39):

(39)a  Eftir það ég var búinn að nema undirheimamálið. Resultative
after that I was BÜNN to learn underworld.language.DEF
'After I had learned the language of the subterraneans.'

b  sem einu sinni er opinberlega búið að staðfesta Impers. active
that once is officially BÜNN to confirm reslutive
'that one has confirmed officially'

24In addition to (37) these examples are (with the spelling modernized): korn var búið að vinna ‘one had (already) harvested the grain’, eftir það að búið var að halda kvöldsöng ‘when one had performed the evening song’.
c þá þeir voru búinir að dvelja þar Universal, non-agentive
hálft annað ár
half another year
‘when they had stayed there for a year and a half’

The first one is of the common resultative type, the second is also resultative but impersonal and then in (39c) we get a búinn-perfect with a non-agentive, durative stative verb (the subject being a theme rather than an agent) and as expected the duration is specified (see the discussion around examples (17)–(19)), an indication of a domain expansion of the búinn-perfect.

In the nineteenth century, we partly see more of the same but also some indication of a further domain expansion of the búinn-perfect. Consider the examples in (40):

(40a) þessi vísindagrein … verði búin fá að Non-animate
this science.branch will.be BÚINN to get
annað fallergra úlit
another more.beautiful look
‘This branch of science will have got a more beautiful look.’

b nú er ég búinn að ná Experiential(?)
now am I BÚINN to catch ball.DEF four
sinnum …en þú aldrei
times but you never
‘Now I have caught the ball four times but you never.’

(40a) is the first attested example in the corpus of a non-animate subject and the semantic role of the subject is a goal (or “recipient”) rather than the common agent. (40b) arguably has an experiential rather than resultative reading (witness the repetition modification), but that could perhaps be debated (cf. the discussion around examples (9)–(13)).

The examples found in the IcePaHC-corpus from the twentieth to twenty-first century confirm the picture presented in Section 2: the predicates (and hence the subjects) are becoming less and less restricted and we get recipient and even experiencer subjects (see also examples (18)–(20) above):

(41a) Ég er búin að eignast prinsessuna Recipient subject
I am BÚINN to get princess.DEF
‘I have got the princess’

b hún er búinn að þjást af heimþrá Universal, experiencer subject
she is BÚINN to suffer of homesickness
alveg frá því fyrst við …
ever since first we
‘She has suffered from homesickness ever since we first …’

The results of this historical overview can be summarized as in Table 2, focusing on the kinds of subjects, predicates and readings found in the IcePaHC corpus for each century.
Parentheses indicate that the particular type of example was not found in the IcePaHC corpus itself but we have other evidence for its existence at the relevant time. Question marks indicate some doubt about the analysis.

Given the development just outlined, we might expect the domain expansion of the *búinn*-perfect to continue. We will turn to that issue in the next section.

4. Recent extensions in the use of the *búinn*-perfect

4.1. Preferences of young native speakers

In the Icelandic Dialect Syntax project (IceDiaSyn) 2005–2007, speakers were asked to evaluate the following two sentences that are relevant to the domain expansion of the *búinn*-perfect, the stative verb *eiga heima* “live” and the weather verb *snjóa* “snow”, both with appropriate adverbial modification as shown in (42):

(42)a Hann *hefur líka átt / er líka búinn að eiga* heima í mörgum löndum.
‘He has also lived in many countries.’

(42)b Það *hefur snjóað / er búið að snjóa* í marga daga.
‘It has snowed for many days.’

A written questionnaire was used and the subjects were asked to pick one or both of the alternatives shown (the *hafa*-perfect and the *búinn*-perfect). Table 3 shows the different selections by four age groups: 15 year olds (N 201), 20–25 (N 179), 40–45 (N 168), 65–70 (N 166, cf. Thráinsson and Torfadóttir 2015, 150):

Although we expected both variants to be accepted by some speakers of all generations, we suspected that this test might reveal different preferences.

---

This project was a part of the Scandinavian Dialect Syntax network, cf. https://websim.arkivert.uit.no/scandiasyn/.
Table 3 shows that the results were very similar for both examples, as summarized in (43):

(43) a  The oldest age group is more likely than the others to show preference for the *hafa*-perfect with these verbs.
    b  The youngest age group is more likely than the others to show preference for the *búinn*-perfect with these verbs.
    c  The two middle groups are more likely than the others to select both variants.
    d  The overall difference between the age groups is highly significant.

This can be compared to the results from a couple of corpus studies. The figures in Table 4 are taken from Larsson’s paper (2008). They indicate that the *búinn*-perfect is still rare in formal language (discussions in the Icelandic Parliament) and although the *búinn*-perfect occurs more frequently in the informal language of adults and adolescents, it is less common than the *hafa*-perfect there too.

Wide had obtained similar results in her corpus study (2002) except that she found that the frequency of the *búinn*-perfect is higher than that of the *hafa*-perfect (both token frequency and type frequency) in the child language corpus whereas the *hafa*-perfect is more frequent in the other corpora, especially in the call-in programme with adult speakers, as shown in Table 5.26

The speakers in the everyday conversations were in their mid to late twenties whereas those who called into the radio programme (the first corpus) were “mostly middle aged or older” (Wide 2002, 259).

Taken together, the figures in Tables 3–5 (and Figure 1) suggest that the *búinn*-perfect is still on the rise. It is particularly interesting to note the dominance of the *búinn*-perfect in child language. This suggests that it is easy to acquire. The *búinn*-part is apparently often simplified to the invariant form *búna* for the various gender and number forms of *búinn* + the infinitival

26In this table, token frequency refers to the total number of occurrences of each type of perfect in the relevant corpus and type frequency is the total number of occurrences divided by the number of different verbs that each type of perfect is used with (see Wide 2002, 176).
að (cf. Wide 2002, 61, quoting the Icelandic child language acquisitionist Hrafnhildur Ragnarsdóttir). Maybe this simplification enables children to acquire the búinn-perfect early. Morphologically, the búinn-perfect is much more complex in the adult language than the hafa-perfect (the búinn-part has (or should have) a number of inflectionally distinct forms whereas the supine (uninflected participle) part of the hafa-perfect only has one) so one might have expected the hafa-perfect to be easier to acquire. The other possibility is that “inflectional complexity does not really contribute much to acquisition complexity”, to quote a referee of the present paper. This is obviously an interesting research question.

### 4.2. Extensions by speakers of Icelandic as a second language

While the child language data reported on by Wide (2002) do not present clear evidence for extension of the búinn-perfect to new types of predicates as they are presented here, Andrason (2008) points out that some students of Icelandic as a second language both simplify the form of the vera búinn að-perfect to an invariant búna-form (like Icelandic children) and also extend its use.

First, Andrason shows (2008, 134) that this búna-perfect is extended to certain predicates that do not allow it in native Icelandic, including modal verbs:27

---

27Andrason bases his paper on a corpus of about 500 sentences uttered by adult students that attended courses he gave for workers at three different companies in the fishing industry in Reykjavík (see Andrason 2008, 124). He does not give any information on the speakers’ background. I follow Andrason in glossing the invariant búna as BUNA to distinguish it from the normally inflected form glossed here as BÚNN.
As illustrated in (29) above, modal verbs are incompatible with the búinn-perfect.
Second, these speakers use the búna-perfect with unaccusative verbs and middles without the necessary adverbial modification (Andrason 2008, 134):

(45)a Bíll búna fara.
car BÚNA leave.INF
'The car has left.'
b Bók búna týnast.
book BÚNA get.lost.INF
'The book has got lost.'

As pointed out in the discussion around (21)–(24), it is not possible to use the búinn-perfect with verbs of this kind without adding appropriate adverbial modification, typically indicating amount or iteration.

Third, this búna-perfect is used by these speakers with adverbs referring to a single event in the past (Andrason 2008, 136), which is normally not possible with the regular búinn-perfect in native Icelandic (see the discussion around (26)–(27)):

(46)a Ég búna kaupa bíl í gær.
I BÚNA buy.INF car yesterday
'I bought a car yesterday.'
b Ég búna vera veikur í gær.
I BÚNA be.INF sick yesterday
'I was sick yesterday.'

As the glosses show, the búna-perfect is used here as a simple past rather than perfect.

Fourth, the búna-perfect occurs freely with the adverb aldrei “never” (Andrason 2008, 137), whereas the búinn-perfect in native Icelandic only does to a limited extent (see the examples in (28) above):

(47) Ég aldrei búna vera í Kína.
I never BÚNA be.INF in China
'I have never been to China.'

28It should be noted in this connection that since the auxiliary vera “be” is omitted in the búna-perfect, no tense distinctions can be shown.
It will be interesting to see whether the use of the búinn-perfect in native Icelandic develops in a similar fashion in the future.

5. Concluding remarks

In this paper, we have seen how a construction that originally only had a resultative reading and was typically used with telic predicates and animate agentive subjects has gradually developed into a more general type of perfect in Icelandic, through a process of grammaticalization, although it is still more restricted than the hafa-perfect. This development is obviously interesting from a general typological and comparative point of view.

First, it has been claimed that the development of tense and aspect constructions tends to follow similar paths in the languages of the world. One such path is the following, according to Bybee and Dahl (1989, 57, boldface mine):29

expressions with a copula or possession verb plus a past participle, or verbs meaning “finish” [...] develop into grams marking anterior or perfect, which in turn develop into perfectives or pasts.

The development of the Icelandic búinn-perfect has obviously followed this path, as described above.

Second, one of the possible grammaticalization paths described by Bybee and Dahl as leading to a periphrastic perfect involves the copula plus a past participle. Now recall that the construction vera “be” + ptcp, as in Jón er farinn til Boston “John is gone to Boston”, is so heavily restricted in Icelandic that it has been debated whether it is a “true perfect” (see the discussion around (2)–(4)). As shown by Heycock and Petersen (2017), the corresponding construction is now much less restricted in Faroese and can convey a perfect reading with a variety of predicates. There is no sign of a similar development in Icelandic yet but maybe we will see it some day.

Third, it was pointed out above that a prerequisite for the rise of the búinn-perfect in Icelandic was a change (or extension) of the meaning of the adjective (participle) búinn from “being ready” to “finished”. This may seem surprising since the two meanings appear to be quite different. Upon closer inspection it turns out, however, that they are closer to each other than they might seem. Consider the following Danish examples:30

(48)a “og om lidt er kaffen klar” (Benny Andersen)
‘the coffee will soon be ready’

b Vores plan er klar.
‘Our plan is finished.’

29Thanks to a referee for pointing this out to me.
30Thanks to Peter Juul Nielsen for pointing out a similar example in Finnish. See also Wide (2002, 63) for a Swedish example.
Here the word *klar* can either mean "ready" or "finished", depending on the context. The Swedish word *färdig* has similar properties (and so does *klar* in Swedish, in fact):

(49) a Maten är *färdig*!
   ‘Dinner is ready!’

b Arbetet är *färdigt*.
   ‘The job is finished.’

This shows that the semantic change (or extension) in *büinn* in Icelandic is not some isolated and odd phenomenon. Note also that since the old meaning of *büinn* did not die out as soon as the new one emerged (see e.g., Árnason 1977), the change means that *vera büinn að*-examples like the following must have been genuinely ambiguous in Icelandic for a while:

(50) Ég er *büinn* að berjast við hann.
   ‘I am ready to fight him. / I have already fought him.’

As illustrated in this paper, the construction *vera büinn að* + inf. has gradually been grammaticalized into a genuine (if still somewhat restricted) perfect construction in Icelandic. Maybe something similar will happen in Danish and Swedish in the future. The semantic prerequisites are there already.31

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the organizers and the audience at the auxiliary symposium at Bernstorff Slot, Denmark, in June 2016 for useful discussion, and to two anonymous reviewers of this paper for valuable comments.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Funding

The paper is based on research supported by a grant from the Icelandic Research Fund.

Notes on contributor

*Höskuldur Thráinsson* is a Professor emeritus in the Department of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Iceland. His research interests include Icelandic, Faroese, syntax, linguistic variation, and comparative Scandinavian.

---

31Wide (2002, 52n) reports, in fact, that something reminiscent of the Icelandic *büinn*-perfect is found in the Finland Swedish Munsala (Ostrobothnian) dialect, namely *ha* “have” *färdig* “ready” + supine, e.g., *jag har färdigskađat teve* “I have watched TV.”
References


