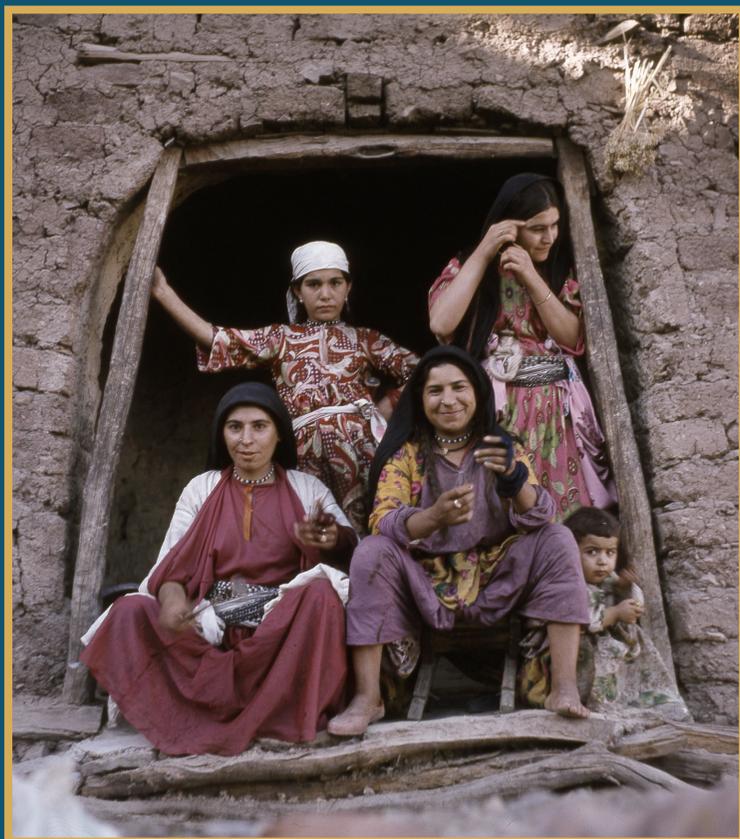


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Cover image: Women in the village of Harbole, south-eastern Turkey (photograph taken by Brunot Poizat in 1978 before the village's destruction).

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VERBAL FORMS EXPRESSING DISCOURSE DEPENDENCY IN NORTH-EASTERN NEO-ARAMAIC

Geoffrey Khan

1. Introduction

In this paper I shall draw attention to the use of various verbal forms in North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) dialects to express discourse dependency. By this I mean that certain verbal forms in certain contexts signal that the predicate of the clause they occur in continues in some way the preceding discourse. This continuation is typically either temporal sequence or some kind of elaboration. I shall propose explanations as to how the function of the expression of discourse dependency developed historically in the various verb forms in question. It will be shown that although the forms are formally different, they exhibit parallels in the historical processes of their semantic change. The data are based mainly on my studies of the C. Barwar and C. Urmi dialects, with occasional references to other dialects.¹

2. The *bət-qatāl* Form

Dialects in the northern half of the NENA dialect area and in the Mosul plain have a future construction that is derived

1 When referring to NENA dialects the abbreviation C. is used to denote a dialect spoken by a Christian community (e.g. C. Barwar, C. Urmi) and the abbreviation J. is used to refer to a dialect spoken by a Jewish community (e.g. J. Dobe).

historically from the deontic verb ‘to want’ and a subordinate complement:²

- (1) **bāʿē* *d-qāṭel*
 want.IPFV.3MS COMP-kill.SBJV.3MS
 ‘He wants to kill.’

The deontic verb has undergone morphological reduction and bonding through grammaticalisation. In the dialect of C. Barwar, for example, the basic form of the construction in slow careful speech is as follows:

- (2) C. Barwar
 bət-qaṭəl
 FUT-kill.SBJV.3MS
 ‘He will kill.’

The verb has been phonetically contracted and the subordinating complementiser has been affixed to the deontic form and devoiced. In some dialects there is no devoicing, e.g. C. Qaraqosh *bəd-qaṭəl*.

The process of grammaticalisation has reduced person distinctions in the deontic verb and the particle *bət* is used before verbs of all persons:³

2 For discussions of the future form in NENA, see Fox (2015) and Noorlander (2017).

3 This is cross-linguistically a common feature of future forms derived historically from deontic verbs (Noorlander 2017, 191).

(3) C. Barwar

3ms.	<i>bət-qaṭəl</i>
3fs.	<i>bət-qaṭla</i>
3pl.	<i>bət-qaṭli</i>
2ms.	<i>bət-qaṭlət</i>
2fs.	<i>bət-qaṭlət</i>
2pl.	<i>bət-qaṭlitu</i>
1ms.	<i>bət-qaṭlən</i>
1fs.	<i>bət-qaṭlən</i>
1pl.	<i>bət-qaṭləx</i>

In normal fast speech, moreover, the particle undergoes further phonetic reduction, resulting in the following allomorphs:

(4) C. Barwar

<i>b-garəš</i>	‘he will pull’
<i>p-šate</i>	‘he will drink’
<i>ḫ̣ṭ-azəl</i>	‘he will go’
<i>ṭ-azəl</i>	‘he will go’
<i>t-yawənnax</i>	‘I shall give you (fs)’

The construction can be shifted into the past to express a future in the past by attaching the past-shifting affix *-wa*:

(5) C. Barwar

bət-qaṭəl-wa

FUT-kill.SBJV.3MS-PST

‘He would kill.’

2.1. Functions of the *bət-qaṭəl* Form

In the C. Barwar dialect the following functions of the *bət-qaṭəl* form can be identified (Khan 2008, 598–608). These functions are the typical functions of the future construction also in other NENA dialects. They can be classified broadly into functions that involve the expression of future tense (§2.1.1.–§2.1.3.) and those that involve the expression of discourse dependency (§2.1.4.). As will be argued below, the discourse dependency function, which is the main focus of this section, has developed from the future function.

2.1.1. Deontic Future

This function retains the deontic meaning of the source construction.⁴ In such cases, it conveys an element of will and expresses various degrees of intention, obligation, request and permission regarding a future action.

When the verb has an agentive 1st singular subject the *bət-qaṭəl* form generally has a sense expressing deontic intention, e.g.

4 Cf. Noorlander (2017, 191–92).

- (6) *b-šàlyən^l* *b-tápqən* *bìye.^l*
 FUT-descend.SBJV.1MS FUT-meet.SBJV.1MS on.him
 ‘I shall go down and shall meet him.’ (A4:21)⁵

When the verb has an agentive 1st plural subject, the form often has a cohortative sense (‘Let’s ...’), e.g.

- (7) *bas-ṭ-ázexi* *ṭalbáx-la* *m-báb-a* *dìya.^l*
 but-FUT-go.SBJV.1PL ask.SBJV.1PL-3FS from-father-her of.her
 ‘But let us go and ask her father for her hand.’ (A29:38)

The form may express deontic obligation. In such cases the verb generally has an agentive 2nd person subject, e.g.

- (8) *ṭ-azítu* *qam-do-gəppa^l* ... *b-qarítu.^l*
 FUT-go.SBJV.2PL before-that-cave FUT-call.SBJV.2PL
 ʔó *Bəlbəl Hazàr!^l*
 oh Bəlbəl Hazar
 ‘You should go to the cave ... You should cry “Oh Bəlbəl Hazar.”’ (A8:28)

5 References are to texts in vol. 3 of Khan (2008). In the cited examples the sign ^l marks the end of an intonation group. An acute accent (e.g. *á*) indicates non-nuclear word-stress. A grave accent (e.g. *à*) marks the nuclear stress of the intonation group.

Occasionally the form expresses deontic obligation also in other persons, e.g.

- (9) *t-ázəl* *taláb-la* *m-be-bába* *diya.*^l
 FUT-go.3ms ask.3MS-3FS from-house-father.her of.her

‘He should go and ask her father’s family for her hand.’
 (A29:39)

2.1.2. Predictive Future

In many cases the construction does not have clear deontic force, but rather expresses a prediction of an eventuality that will happen in the future. This can be regarded as resulting from the grammaticalisation of the deontic construction, parallels to which are found in many languages. The core of this process involves a semantic extension whereby an implicature of the original deontic construction, in particular one with a 3rd person subject, is incorporated into the meaning, e.g. *he wants to go to town* implies that it is likely that he will go (Bybee 2010, 55).

The predictive future function of the *bət-qaṭəl* construction is generally found where the subject of the verb is 3rd person or where it is a non-agentive 1st or 2nd person, e.g.

- (10) *b-nayəs-li*^l *t-axəl-li.*^l
 FUT-bite.SBJV.3MS-1MS FUT-eat.SBJV.3MS-1MS

‘He will bite me. He will eat me.’ (A1:17)

- (11) *ʿáni* *b-nesí-le* *b-màyəθ*^l
 they FUT-bite.SBJV.3PL-3MS FUT-die.SBJV.3MS

‘They will bite him and he will die’ (A10:1)

2.1.3. Conditional Constructions

The *bət-qaṭəl* form is used in the apodosis of conditional sentences. In the majority of cases it expresses an eventuality that is temporally sequential to a hypothetical situation in the future, e.g.

- (12) ʾən-kpìn-ni,^l ṭ-axlàn-ne.^l
if-hunger.PFV-1S FUT-eat.SBJV.1MS-3MS

‘If I am hungry, I shall eat it.’ (A23:5)

- (13) ʾən-ʾamrón-nux ʾáp-ʾati b-šānət.^l
if-say.SBJV.1MS-2MS also-you FUT-faint.SBJV.2MS

‘If I tell you, you will faint.’ (A11:2)

In some cases it expresses a future eventuality that follows logically from a given, real situation in the present denoted by the protasis clause, e.g.

- (14) ʾən-īle xwarzàyi,^l ṭ-áθe
if-COP.3MS nephew.my FUT-come.SBJV.3MS
t-yăḏé-la ʾánna mòdi = la.^l
FUT-know.SBJV.3MS-3PL these what = COP.3PL

‘If he is my nephew, he will come and he will know what these are.’ (A25:49)

One of the most common uses of the ‘future in the past’ form *bət-qaṭəlwa* is in the apodosis of conditional sentences. Such sentences may refer to a hypothetical condition in the past that was not fulfilled, e.g.

- (15) *ʿən-mbaqrət-wa,*[|] *t-yawán-wa-lux* *zùze,*[|]
 if-ask.IPFV.2MS.-PST FUT-give.SBJV.1MS-PST-2MS money
bás *là* *mbuqár-rux.*[|]
 but NEG ask.PFV-2MS

‘If you had asked, I would have given you money, but you did not ask.’

In some cases the construction may denote a hypothetical condition in the present or future that the speaker assesses to be impossible to fulfil, e.g.

- (16) *ʿən-maşəñ-wa,*[|] *ṭ-aθəñ-wa,*[|]
 if-be.able.SBJV.1MS-PST FUT-come.SBJV.1MS-PST
bás *lè-y-maşəñ.*[|]
 but NEG-HAB-be.able.IPFV.1MS

‘If I could, I would come, but I cannot.’

2.1.4. Discourse Dependency

In conditional constructions such as those described in §2.1.3., the apodoses with the *bət-qaṭəl* and *bət-qaṭəlwa* forms are dependent syntactically on the preceding protasis. The forms are sometimes used outside of conditional constructions in clauses that are more loosely dependent on the preceding discourse. Various types of discourse dependency are attested. In some cases the forms express events that are temporally sequential to what precedes:

- (17) *čərxì-wa-la* *máθa*[|] *xásə* *dawère.*[|]...
 take.round.IPFV.3PL-PST-3FS village back.of mules

^ʔ <i>ay-t-aθyà-wa</i> ,	<i>t-orà-wa</i> ,
she-FUT-come.SBJV.3FS-PST	FUT-enter.SBJV.3FS-PST
^ʔ <i>u-t-oðá-wa</i>	<i>šlìwa</i> , <i>məšxa</i> ,
and-FUT-make.SBJV.3FS-PST	cross oil
<i>gu-tárət</i>	<i>qàšra</i> .
in-door.of	house

‘They would take her (the bride) round the village on the back of mules. ... (Then) **she would come back, enter (the house) ... and make** (the sign of) the cross in oil on the door of the house.’ (B10:34–35)

- (18) *báθar* ^ʔ*éða* *gòra*[|] ... ^ʔ*ìθena*[|] ^ʔ*éðət* *sulàqa*.[|]
 after festival big there.is festival.of ascension
- xàrθa*[|] *t-áθe* *xá-^ʔeða* *xréna* *zòra*,[|]
 afterwards FUT-come.SBJV.3MS one-festival other small
- y-amrí-le* ^ʔ*éðət* *musàrde*.[|]
 HAB-say.IPFV.3PL-3MS festival.of musarde

‘After the Great Festival ... the festival of Ascension takes place. ... **Afterwards comes** a small festival, which is called *musarde*.’ (B6:5–8)

- (19) *la-θéle* *rēš-šàwma*?[|] *b-šaqláx-wa* *kúlla*
 NEG-come.PFV.3MS head.of-fast? FUT-take.SBJV.1PL-PST all
- ^ʔ*amànən*,[|] *kúlla* *b-šaqláx-wa-la*[|] *dérəx-wa*
 vessels.our all FUT-take.SBJV.1PL-PST-3PL put.SBJV.1PL-PST
- qáṭma* *mɁallàx-wa-la*.[|]
 ash wash.SBJV.1PL-PST-3PL

‘When the beginning of the (Lent) fast came, **we would take** all our vessels, **we would take them** all to put ash on them to clean them.’ (B16:7)

In some cases the *bət-qaṭəl* and *bət-qaṭəl* forms do not express temporal sequentiality but only some kind of relevance to a preceding clause, typically elaboration:

- (20) *báwθə* *Ninwàye*[|] ^ʾ*áp-ʾay* ^ʾ*itwa*.[|]
 petition.of Ninevites also-it.3FS there.was
- šemì-la*.[|] *ṭ-ámri* *díge = u* *kθàye*[|]
 fast.IPFV.3PL-3PL FUT-say.SBJV.3PL cocks = and chickens
- ^ʾ*áp* ^ʾ*an-zóre* *xṭàye*.[|]
 also those-small lower

“The Rogation of the Ninevites was also observed (in our community). They would fast during it. **They would say** “The cocks and the chickens, and also the small lowly creatures (should observe the fast).” (B16:15)

- (21) *qam-šàwma*[|] ^ʾ*íθ* *xošébə* *bnàθa*.[|]
 before-fast there.is Sunday.of girls
- bnáθa* *kúlla* *ṭ-azí-wa* *bèθa*.[|]
 girls all FUT-go.SBJV.3PL-PST home
- b-šaqlí-wa* ^ʾ*ixála* *mən-dáwwa* *dáwwa*
 FUT-take.SBJV.3PL-PST food from-this.OBL this.OBL
- dàwwa*.[|] *ṭ-azí-wa* *gu-xa-ṭúra*.[|]
 this.OBL FUT-go.SBJV.3PL-PST in-a-mountain
- ṭ-atwì-wa*.[|] *ṭ-axlì-wa*.[|] *b-šatì-wa*.[|]
 FUT-come.SBJV.3PL-PST FUT-eat.SBJV.3PL-PST FUT-drink.SBJV-PST

‘Before the fast (of Lent) was Girls’ Sunday. All the girls **went** home, **took** food from here and from there, then **went** to the mountains, they **sat**, **ate** and **drank**.’ (B16:18)

In (20) the clause introduced by the *bət-qaṭəl* form *ṭ-ámri* constitutes an elaboration of the preceding statement that people would hold a fast, which could be paraphrased ‘with regard to this fasting they say’.

In (21) the clause containing the first *bət-qaṭəlwa* verb, *ḥṭ-azíwa*, opens a section of discourse that elaborates on the preceding general statement that the festival of Girls’ Sunday took place. The dependency expressed by the verbal forms bind them semantically to what precedes signalling that the descriptions of the specific events in the clauses are intended to be understood as components of the festival.

When the *bət-qaṭəl* and *bət-qaṭəlwa* forms have this discourse dependency function, they generally express habitual events, as is the case in the examples above. The construction is sporadically used in narratives where they refer to specific events that are dependent on, and typically sequential to, what precedes, e.g.

- (22) *ʔérbe máxe l-ğðàðe,ᵀ ṭ-ázi*
 sheep strike.SBJV.3MS to-each.other FUT-go.SBJV.3PL
xa-fâtraᵀ ʔal-salíqə zòrna.ᵀ máxe zórna
 a-while on-tune.of pipe strike.SBJV.3MS pipe
xa-salíqa xèna,ᵀ ʔérbe b-dèri,ᵀ b-ganèy.ᵀ
 one-tune other sheep FUT-return.SBJV.3PL by-themselves

‘He gathered the sheep together and they went off for a while according to the tune of the pipe. He played another tune on the pipe and the sheep returned by themselves.’ (A25:27)

- (23) *b-léle qímla šárya bānúda dīya,ᵀ*
 at-night rise.PFV.3FS untie.SBJV.3FS bands.her of.her

ʔ-àza,¹ pθíxla tára qðíla.¹
 FUT-go.SBJV.3FS open.PFV.3FS door key

‘At night she got up, untied her bands, then went and opened the door with a key.’ (A18:3)

2.2. Analysis

2.2.1. From Apodosis to Discourse Dependent

When used in the first three functions described above, viz. deontic future, predictive future and apodosis of conditionals (§2.1.1–2.1.3.), the *bət-qatəl(wa)* form expresses future tense. There is a crucial difference, however, between the deontic future and predictive future, on the one hand, and conditional constructions, on the other, with regard to the reference point of the future tense. Following the temporal analysis proposed by Reichenbach (1947), we should be careful to distinguish event time (E), speech time (S) and the temporal reference time (R). The original system of Reichenbach has undergone various modifications in more recent research, but the ‘neo-Reichenbachian’ approaches still distinguish these three components of analysis. The reference time (R), sometimes referred to as the ‘evaluation time’ (Hatav 2012), is the contextual temporal anchor to which the future verb form relates. One may say that the future form is temporally ‘bound’ to this anchor (Hatav 2012). In the case of the deontic future and predictive future functions, the reference time overlaps with speech time, i.e. the contextual temporal anchor is the speech situation. For the *bət-qatəl(wa)* form in the apodosis of conditional constructions, however, the reference time is that of the eventuality expressed in the protasis clause. In such cases the *bət-qatəl(wa)* form expresses an eventuality that is posterior to this reference time but this reference time does not necessarily overlap with speech time.

According to the original Reichenbachian system of representation, the analysis of these functions of the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form would be as follows (where a comma indicates temporal overlap and a dash — indicates temporal separation):

bət-qaṭəl

Deontic future: R,S—E

The event time is posterior to the reference time and the reference time overlaps with speech time.

Predictive future: R,S—E

The event time is posterior to the reference time and the reference time overlaps with speech time.

Apodosis: S—R—E or S,R—E

The reference time is that of the eventuality of the protasis and this may be posterior to speech time, e.g. (12—13) above, or overlap with it, e.g. (14) above. The event time is posterior to the reference time.

bət-qaṭəlwa

Apodosis: R—E—S or R,S—E

These two analyses correspond to (15) and (16) respectively. In both cases the reference time is that of the eventuality of the protasis and the event is posterior to this. The speech time varies according to whether the construction expresses a hypothetical condition in the past or in the present.

According to some Neo-Reichenbach approaches (e.g. Johnson 1981; Dinsmore 1982; Verkuyl 2012), rather than consisting of a single triple system, the analysis should consist of two pairs of components, namely S and R, on the one hand, and E and R, on the one hand. The relationship between S and R would

correspond to tense, whereas the relationship between E and R would be one of posteriority or anteriority independent of tense. The analyses, therefore, would be:

Table 1: Analysis of *bət-qaṭəl* and *bət-qaṭəl-wa*

<i>bət-qaṭəl</i>		<i>bət-qaṭəl-wa</i>	
Deontic future:	R—E R,S		
Predictive future:	R—E R,S		
Apodosis:	R—E R—S	Apodosis:	R—E R—S
	R—E R,S		R—E R,S

As can be seen, according to this temporal analysis all of these three future constructions share the common feature of R—E, i.e. the event time is posterior to the reference time.⁶ What this Reichenbachian temporal analysis does not show, however, is that the reference time in the three constructions has different locations. In the deontic and predictive future constructions the reference time is internal, i.e. it coincides with the utterance of the clause. The reference time of the verb of the apodosis, however, is external to the clause and is located in the preceding protasis clause. This distinction is referred to by Hatav (2012) as local versus long distance semantic binding of tenses.

As for the aspect of the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form, in the examples cited above for its functions of deontic future, predictive future and apodosis of a condition the verb denotes a specific temporally bounded event and so is perfective. The form in these constructions may also denote iterative events (Khan 2008, 599, 606), e.g.

6 In some NENA dialects the *bət-qaṭəl* form is used in performative expressions, e.g. Qaraqosh (Khan 2002, 315): *ʾána bəd-qārən šəmmux Tōma* 'I (hereby) call your name Toma'. This can be analysed as a deontic expression with reference time overlapping with event time: R,E.

- (24) *kút-yom t-áθi làxxa.*¹
 every-day FUT-come.SBJV.3PL here

‘They will come here every day.’

- (25) *ʿan-maṣān-wa t-yawān-wa-lux zúze*
 if-be.able.SBJV.1MS-PST COMP-give.SBJV.1MS-PST-2MS money

*kùt-yum,*¹ *t-yawān-wa-lux,*¹ *bás*
 every-day FUT-give.SBJV.1MS-PST-2MS but

*le-y-maṣān-wa.*¹
 NEG-IND-be.able.1MS-PST

‘If I had been able, I would have given you money every day, but I could not.’

It is important to distinguish iterativity from habituality (Dahl 1985, 97; Bertinetto and Lenci 2012). Verbs expressing iterativity assert the occurrence of the event on multiple occasions, typically specified by an adverbial (‘He visited us three times’, ‘He visited us every day’). Such predicates are perfective and express repeated temporally bounded events, i.e. events that are viewed as a whole typically from a reference time that is external to it (G. Carlson 2012, 835). Verbs expressing habituality present an event as a characterizing property of an individual, which occurs on the majority of occasions during a particular time interval (*He usually visits us every week*). Unlike iterative predications, habitual predications are not completely ‘lawlike’ (Dahl 1985, 97) and are contingent on circumstances (*He usually visits us every week, but he did not come last week because he was ill*). A habitual predicate is imperfective in aspect since it includes the reference time within it and is viewed from within (G. Carlson 2012, 835).

The *bət-qatəl* and *bət-qatəlwa* forms in deontic future, predictive future and apodosis constructions may express iterative predicates but not habitual predicates.

When expressing the deontic future, predictive future or the apodosis of a conditional the *bət-qaṭəl* and *bət-qaṭəlwa* forms are modal. Their modality is either root modality or epistemic modality. Root modality qualifies the subject of the clause indicating that some factor is inherent in the subject (e.g. ability, volition) or is operative upon the subject (e.g. obligation, circumstances) that influences the occurrence of the event. Epistemic modality involves the speaker's assessment of the truth value of the propositional content of the sentence as possible, probable or certain. The various types of modality inherent in the three aforementioned functions can be identified follows:

Table 2: Root and Epistemic Modality

Root modality		
volition of subject	(deontic future)	<i>t̄-azən</i> 'I will go'
obligation on subject	(deontic future)	<i>t̄-azət</i> 'you will go'
circumstantial	(conditional circumstances operative upon subject)	<i>'ən 'aθət, t̄-azəl</i> 'if you come, he will go' (conditioned by circumstances)
<hr/>		
Epistemic modality	predictive future	<i>t̄-azəl</i> 'he will go'

Turning now to the discourse dependency function of *bət-qaṭəl(wa)*, this has a close family relationship to the apodosis function in conditional constructions. Indeed, I shall argue that it developed historically by a process of extension of conditional constructions. The *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form in discourse dependency constructions exhibits long distance semantic binding, as is the case with the verbs in apodoses. The reference point precedes the event in the discourse, but, unlike in apodoses, this is not a temporal relationship. Rather the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* verb is bound to a topical reference point that has been invoked by the preceding discourse. It depends on this and continues it in some way.

This phenomenon can be represented in the dependency framework of mental spaces proposed by Fauconnier (1994) and Dinsmore (1991). According to this model, knowledge can be represented in a network of mental spaces. These spaces are constructed by the listener, interpreting grammatical or lexical cues. Spaces contain information belonging to distinct times, locations or realities. ‘Space builders’ are cues that construct new mental spaces. Dependent verbs such as the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form express events that belong to a current, already constructed mental space.

The differences from the conditional construction, therefore, involve (i) the change of the temporal reference point to a topical reference point and (ii) the dependency on preceding discourse rather than on a preceding syntactically subordinate clause. This can be explained using a model of linguistic change through schematisation of constructions (e.g. Fillmore, Kay and O’Connor 1988; Goldberg 1995; 2006; Langacker 1987; Bybee 2010). This involves extensions of components of constructions by a process of substitutions of items with a family resemblance, thereby making the slots of the components more schematic, i.e. abstract. Another feature of the extension of constructions is their incorporation of pragmatic associations and implicatures into their meaning (Bybee 2010, 48). An example of this process of extension of constructions that is often cited (e.g. Bybee 2015, 124; 2010, 55) is the development of future constructions consisting of movement verbs, e.g. English *he is going to eat*. This originated as a construction that expressed real physical movement of an animate agentive subject, but it became schematised as SUBJECT + BE + *going to* + VERB, whereby any subject or verb could fill the subject or infinitive slots. Moreover, when used in the third person, although it originally expressed an intention, it implied that the predicate would be carried out. This implicature became conventionalised in the construction and so its meaning was extended to include prediction, e.g. *The branch is going to fall*.

The temporal reference point of the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* apodosis that was in the preceding clause was schematised to being a more abstract cognitive reference point, referring to the general

situation rather than specifically to a point in time. The *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* predication, therefore, is cognitively but not temporally bound to this preceding point. It is linked to it through discourse coherence analogous to a topic—comment relationship, or, to use Fauconnier’s model, it is a continuation of the mental space of the preceding discourse. This does not mean that the topical situation itself may not have a reference time, but rather the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form no longer expresses temporal posteriority to this reference time but rather communicative posteriority to the more abstract topical situation, i.e. topical reference point—comment. One of the consequences of this is that the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* may express discourse dependency on a non-propositional topic constituent without a temporal reference time, as is the case in (28) below.

The process of extending the location of the reference point of the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form from specifically the subordinate protasis clause to a broader component of preceding discourse that establishes a topic can also be identified as schematisation. This may have been facilitated by the fact that protasis clauses can in some contexts be used pragmatically as strategies for introducing a topical frame for what follows (Khan 2008, 1005). This pragmatic usage would then have been conventionalised (see Bybee 2010, 48 and the discussion above), e.g.

- (26) *fa-ʔən-maṭīnī-wa-le* *ʔiθwa* *xàwla.*¹
 and-if-load.IPFV.3PL-PST-3MS there.was rope

‘If they loaded it (the mule), there was a rope (= As for when they loaded it ...).’ (B5:128)

The preceding topic-establishing discourse may be propositional, as in (17, 19–23), or it may be a non-propositional constituent such as an adverbial, as in (18) (repeated here as (27)), or a noun phrase (28—the example is from the C. Mawana dialect):

- (27) *xàrθa*¹ *t-áθe* *xá-ʔeða* *xréna* *zòra*.¹
 afterwards FUT-come.SBJV.3MS one-festival other small

‘Afterwards, comes a small festival.’ (B6:5–8)

- (28) C. Mawana (fieldnotes)

józə *barùzə*,¹ *hădă* ʔát *b-+răpăt-wa-lə*
 walnuts dry now you FUT-throw.SBJV.2MS-PST-3MS

józux ʔàtxa.¹
 walnut.your thus

‘As for (the game) dry walnuts, you would throw your walnut like this.’

Conditional clauses and topics are coded identically in a number of unrelated languages. This reflects the fact that their semantic analysis is very similar (Haiman 1978; Ebert, Ebert, and Hinterwimmer 2014). This would have facilitated the proposed development of the *bət-qatəl*.

2.2.2. Sequentiality and Habituality

It was noted above that when the *bət-qatəl(wa)* form expresses discourse dependency, the eventuality it presents is sometimes temporally sequential to what precedes but other times is an elaboration without temporal sequentiality. This can be understood as arising from the fact that its reference point in the preceding discourse is not temporal but rather topical. The fact that it is often used to express temporally sequential events is, therefore, an epiphenomenon arising from the fact that events expressed in successive clauses are typically temporally sequential. The construction, however, does not express temporal sequentiality directly.

When the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form is used to express discourse dependency, it most frequently expresses the imperfective aspect of habituality. It is very commonly used in expository discourse describing customs. As we have seen, the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form does not express habituality in its other functions of future and apodosis constructions. Why does the discourse dependent *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form most commonly have habitual meaning?

Since the discourse dependent *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* does not have a future meaning, we must assume that it has acquired a reference time that coincides with the eventuality that it denotes. The development can be represented as follows, where T = Topic:

Table 3: Sequentiality and Discourse Dependency of *bət-qaṭəl(wa)*

Apodosis	Discourse Dependency
R—E	T—R,E

A chain of *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* forms that comment on a topical situation would share the same topical reference point. This can be represented thus:

$$T_1—R_1,E_1 + T_1—R_2,E_2 + T_1—R_3,E_3 + T_1—R_4,E_4$$

This can be regarded as the resumption of the topic by a form of anaphora, analogously to the way topical referents are resumed by anaphoric pronouns.

These anaphoric topics are variables that are bound by and dependent on the antecedent topic, just as anaphoric pronouns are variables bound by an antecedent topic. This anaphoric binding of the topic can be regarded as a type of modality, so the construction is modal, just as a *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form in an apodosis is modal. Indeed according to some approaches, the binding of anaphoric pronouns to antecedents is also a type of modality (Roberts 1987; 1989).

It is noteworthy that the *bət-qaṭəl* form in C. Barwar is not used in generic predicates such as (29).

- (29) *tálga xwàra y-áwe.*¹
 snow white HAB.be.3MS

‘Snow is white.’

This is because such generic predicates are typically independent of discourse context and do not comment on a preceding topical situation.⁷

The normal habitual meaning of the discourse dependent *bət-qaṭəl* form most likely arises from a retention of the contingent semantics of a conditional apodosis. As remarked, habitual predications are not completely ‘lawlike’ (Dahl 1985, 97) and are contingent on circumstances.

As we have seen, the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form is attested occasionally in narratives (22–23). Following the analysis that has just been proposed, we may say that they have the communicative function of expressing a comment on a previously mentioned situation, which has been set up as a topic. This analysis is appropriate for (22) (repeated below as (30)), since it consists of two situations that are set up in contrastive opposition. Contrastive oppositions are typically expressed by contrasting topics. The topical situations can be glossed by ‘when’-clauses:

- (30) *ʔrbe máxe l-ğðàðe,*¹ *ṭ-ázi*
 sheep strike.SBJV.3MS to-each.other FUT-go.SBJV.3PL

7 There are interesting parallels here with English habitual constructions containing the auxiliary *would*. It has been observed that such habituales have a similar dependency on situations or ‘mental spaces’ established in the context, e.g. Carlson and Spejewski (1997) and Boneh and Doron (2013), who refer to this as ‘modal subordination’. A habitual sentence *used to*, on the other hand, has no such dependency, e.g. *My grandmother used to make delicious apple pies. She would go to the orchard to pick the apples herself* (adapted from Carlson and Spejewski 1997, 102). These authors do not discuss the history of the construction.

xa-fàtra[|] ʔ*al-salíqə* *zòrna*.[|] *máxe* *zórna*
 a-while on-tune.of pipe strike.SBJV.3MS pipe
xa-salíqa *xèna*,[|] ʔ*árbe* ***b-dèri***,[|] *b-ganèy*.[|]
 one-tune other sheep FUT-return.SBJV.3PL by-themselves

‘(When) he had gathered the sheep together, they went off for a while according to the tune of the pipe. (When, on the other hand,) he had played another tune on the pipe, the sheep returned by themselves.’ (A25:27)

Example (23) (repeated below as (31)) can be given a similar analysis of topical situation—comment, with the topical situation glossed by a ‘when’-clause:

(31) *b-léle* *qímla* *šárya* *bănúda* *díya*,[|]
 at-night rise.PFV.3FS untie.SBJV.3FS bands.her of.her
t-àza,[|] *pθíxla* *tára* *qðíla*.[|]
 FUT-go.SBJV.3FS open.PFV.3FS door key

‘(When) at night she had got up and untied her bands, she went and opened the door with a key.’ (A18:3)

These constructions in narrative contain what can be termed an ‘episodic topic’ with the status of an adverbial expression that sets the spatio-temporal frame for what follows. They appear to be used to mark boundaries in the discourse. In (30), as remarked, the two episodic topics set up two episodes in contrastive opposition. In (31) the episodic topic marks the onset of a new section of narrative.

In some NENA dialects the discourse dependent form with the original future particle *bət/bəd* has developed further and can be used as an actual present without first presenting a situation as its topic. This was the case in the now extinct Jewish dialect

of Dobe (on the north bank of the Zab river). In this dialect, for example, the form *bd-ez* (FUT-go.SBJV.3MS) can be used as

- (i) a deontic or predictive future: ‘he will go’
- (ii) a habitual dependent on a specified situation, such as an adverbial in (32):

(32) *kud bqatta bd-ez ʿal-ʿāra*
 every morning FUT-go.SBJV.3MS to-land

‘Every morning he goes to the (cultivated) land.’

- (iii) actual present: *bd-ez* ‘he is going (now before our eyes)’.⁸

This extension of the construction to the actual present can be explained as having arisen by a process similar to Greenberg’s (1978) ‘cycle of definiteness’, whereby anaphoric pronouns develop into non-anaphoric definite articles. The anaphoric topical component of the dependent *bət-qaṭəl* construction has come to be used where the speaker assumes the hearer can identify the situation that is being referred to without explicitly presenting an antecedent topical situation in the preceding discourse. It appears that the speaker assumes that the hearer can identify the speech situation as the situation that is being talked about, i.e. it expresses situational immediacy.

8 The data on the Dobe dialect were gathered in field work in 1999 in the Moshav Menuḥa, Israel. The usage of the *bd-* particle was identified in recorded texts and elicited sentences.

3. Past Forms with the Prefix *qam-*

3.1. Attested Constructions

In many NENA dialects, a perfective past tense is expressed by combining the prefixed particle *qam-*, or variant forms of this, with the subjunctive verb form *qatəl*. The variant forms of the prefix attested across the dialects arise from a range of phonetic reductions, e.g. *qəm* (C. Barwar, etc.: vowel centralisation), *kəm* (C. Qaraqosh, etc.: vowel centralisation and fronting of the uvular), *qa* (C. Koy Sanjak: elision), *tam*, *ta* (C. Sulemaniyya and C. Sanandaj: fronting of the uvular and elision). In the documented dialects this construction is restricted to verbs with pronominal suffixes expressing the direct or indirect object. It is used predominantly to express past perfective events in narrative (33–34) or the occurrence of a punctual event in the recent past in conversational discourse (35). In the examples the particle is given the gloss QAM:

C. Barwar (Khan 2008, 609–11)

- (33) *qəm-mparqí-li* *m-gu-ʾiθàθux*.^l
 QAM-save.SBJV.3PL-1S from-in-your.hands

‘They saved me from your hands.’ (B17:15)

- (34) *qəm-hawí-la* *xáčča* *ʾixàla*.^l
 QAM-give.SBJV.3PL-3PL some food

‘They gave them some food.’ (A8:12)

- (35) *ʾáti* *qəm-xalšàt-li*.^l *mən-dáwwa* *mòθa*.^l
 your QAM-save.SBJV.3FS-1S from-this death

‘You have saved me from death.’ (A14:35)

Various hypotheses have been proposed for the historical origin of this verbal construction.⁹ Pennacchietti (1997) argued that it developed from a construction consisting of the verb *qayəm* ‘he gets up’ followed by the subjunctive, e.g. *qayəm qaṭəl-le*. He found support for this in the grammar of Rhétoré (1912, 225–26), who states that such a construction could be used in the sense of ‘aussitôt il le tua’ (‘he immediately killed him’), i.e. the event happened immediately after the event mentioned before it. Rhétoré, who unfortunately does not specify in which dialect(s) he found this construction, states that its original meaning was ‘se levant, il le tue’ (‘getting up, he kills him’), i.e. a sequence of events in the present.¹⁰ Pennacchietti, however, proposes that it originated as a construction expressing the immediate future ‘he will immediately kill him’, comparing constructions such as *qemən ʿazən* ‘I shall immediately go’, which are found in various NENA dialects. He draws attention to the fact that several languages use a construction that originated as the expression of the immediate future to narrate a sequence of events in the past, e.g. Catalan¹¹ (36) and late medieval French (14th-16th century) (37):

(36) Catalan

vaig cantar

I.go to.sing

‘I sang’

9 See Fassberg (2015) who surveys the various proposals.

10 Eleanor Coghill in an unpublished paper given at the 23rd International Conference on *Historical Linguistics*, San Antonio, Texas, 2017, argued in favour of this view.

11 For further discussion of the Catalan construction see, for example, Jacobs (2011).

(37) Late medieval French

et comme elle faisoit ce partage,
 and when she was.making this division

son mari va revenir à l'ostel
 her husband goes to return at the.hostel

‘While she was making this division, her husband returned home.’

The second verb in the original construction *qayam qaṭal-le* would, therefore, have been a subjunctive in a purpose clause ‘he gets up in order to kill him’ rather than an indicative present, as suggested by Rhétoré’s translation ‘se levant, il le tue’.

Here I would like to present some additional data that strengthen Pennacchietti’s hypothesis.

In some NENA dialects a subordinating particle regularly occurs before initial /ʔ/ verbs after the *qam* in the *qam-qaṭalle* construction, e.g.

(38) C. Meze (field notes):

qam-d-axəl-le
 QAM-COMP-eat.SBJV.3MS-3MS

‘He ate it’

This reflects the fact that the verb after the *qam* was originally a subordinate subjunctive. Some isolated cases of the subordinating particle are found before initial /ʔ/ verbs in C. Barwar, (Khan 2008, 609), e.g.

(39) C. Barwar

qəm-t̪-amár-ra

QAM-COMP-say.SBJV.3MS-3FS

‘He said to her.’ (A4:4)

The crucial missing link in the evidence, however, is provided by the dialects from the north-western sector of NENA. In some dialects in this region, such as the dialects in the area of the Cudi mountain and Billin, the initial inflected verb in immediate future constructions such as *qəmən ʔazən* has become grammaticalised to *qəm* without person inflection. Most of my data come from the Harbole dialect (Cudi), e.g.

Harbole (field notes)¹²

(40) *qəm-ʔàzən.*¹

QAM-go.SBJV.1MS

‘I am about to go/I am going to go right now.’

This immediate future construction can be used with both intransitive and transitive verbs. An example with a transitive verb is (41):

(41) *qəm-ʔaxlən-ne.*¹

QAM-eat.SBJV.1MS-3MS

‘I am about to eat it/I am going to eat it immediately.’

12 Most of the material from the Harbole dialect that I present below was gathered from consultations with Professor Efrem Yildiz (University of Salamanca), who is a native speaker of the dialect. I would like to express here my gratitude to him for his help.

The future construction may be given a past reference time ('was about to') by adding the past shifting suffix *-wa*, e.g.

- (42) *qam-ʿaxlān-wa*.¹
 QAM-eat.SBJV.1MS-PST
 'I was about to eat.'

This can be used in initial position in a discourse such as the following:

- (43) *qam-ʿaxlān-wa* ʿixāla,¹ *bās lā bréla*
 QAM-eat.SBJV.1MS-PST food but NEG be.possible.PFV-3FS

mānni.¹
 from.me

'I was about to eat food but I have not been able to.'

The construction is also used in narrative discourse in the Harbole dialect to express an event that occurred immediately after the event mentioned in the preceding clause. According to speakers, an event expressed by the construction in this context is typically unexpected and surprising, i.e. it has a mirative function. The immediate future form is used with or without the past shifting *-wa* suffix, i.e. *qam-ʿaxlān* or *qam-ʿaxlānwa*, e.g.

- (44) *pləṭli*,¹ ʿu-*qam-xazān-na* *bāxti*.¹
 go.out.PFV.1S and-QAM-see.SBJV.1MS-3FS my.wife

'I went out and I (suddenly, unexpectedly) saw my wife'

- (45) ʾána bitáya lāxxa,¹ qam-xazán-wa
 I come.PROG. here QAM-see.SBJV.1MS-PST
- xa ʾárya b-ùrxa.¹
 one lion on-road

‘When I was coming here, I saw (unexpectedly) a lion on the road.’

As can be seen in (45), the lexical verb of the construction does not have to have a pronominal object suffix, as is the case in most other NENA dialects. Indeed the verb can be intransitive, e.g.

- (46) ʾána ʾu-xáwri plàṭlan¹
 I and-my.friend go.out.PFV.1PL
- ʾu-qam-màyəṭ xáwri.¹
 and-QAM-die.SBJV.3MS my.friend

‘I and a friend went out and (suddenly unexpectedly) my friend died.’

- (47) m-bátər plàṭlan ʾána ʾu-xàwri,¹
 from-after go.out.PFV.1PL I and-my.friend
- qam-nápəl go-šaqìta.¹
 QAM-fall.SBJV.3MS in-canal

‘After I and my friend went out, he (suddenly unexpectedly) fell into the canal.’

A further variant of the construction is the substitution of the *qaṭəl* form by the *qṭalle* form after the *qam* in past narratives, e.g.

- (48) ʿána ʿu-xáwri plàṭlan¹ ʿu-qam-màtle
 I and-my.friend go.out.PFV.1PL and.QAM-die.PFV.3MS
 xáwri.¹
 my.friend

‘I and a friend went out and my friend died.’

Speakers judge constructions such as *qam-màtle* in (48) to express an unexpected and surprising event, but to be in the less immediate past than *qam-mayət* (46).

3.2. Analysis

In this section I should like to propose an explanation as to how the immediate future constructions with *qam* came to be used to express past events in narrative.

An example such as (44) above is likely to have originated in a juxtaposition of the immediate future construction with the previously mentioned situation, which meant ‘I went out and I was about to see my wife’. The reference time of the immediate future, therefore, coincided with the reference time of the first event. This can be represented as follows, with the index on R indicating the coincidence of reference time:

R₁,E *I went outside*
 R₁-E *I was about to see my wife*

This was a strategy for expressing the immediate succession of the events. The preparatory onset phase of the second event overlaps with the first event. The events are connected together cognitively in the same mental space. It was also a strategy for giving prominence to the second event by anticipating it before it had occurred in the narration of events.

An immediate future construction such as *qam-ʿazən* ‘I am about to go’ would have been a deontic future, but as with other future constructions, when used with a third person, i.e. *qam-ʿazəl* ‘he is about to go’, there is an implicature that the event will happen, and so the construction comes to function also as a predictive future, presenting the event as a certainty. When combined with a past event, as in (44), the certainty of the future occurrence shifts to the assertion of the occurrence of the event in close succession to the preceding event. This comes about by the *qam*-construction acquiring a reference time that coincides with its event:

R_1, E_1 *I went out*
 $R_1—R_2, E_2$ *I saw my wife (R_2) after going out (R_1)*

The original reference time of the *qam*-construction is retained (R_1) and this expresses a sequential or continuative meaning, i.e. the event took place at reference time R_2 in relation to reference time R_1 . The past tense of *qam-xazənnā* is not expressed morphologically. The form can be assumed to have had a ‘relative tense’ that was determined by being bound to the R_1 of the past verb *plətli*. This past verb was marked morphologically as past, i.e. its reference time was before speech time ($R_1—S$).¹³

When the construction developed the meaning of immediate sequence, this marked type of sequence was associated with the implicature of mirativity (surprise), and also with salience and, in turn, with the recent past. Speakers of the Harbole dialect report that the construction has these associations.

The *qam*-constructions in examples such as (45), with a preceding imperfective circumstantial expression (‘When I was coming here’) and (47) with a posterior temporal adverbial clause (‘After I and my friend went out’) cannot be so easily analysed as having the temporal structure $R_1—R_2, E$ with two reference times,

13 For the possibility of a verb having two reference points see Comrie (1985, 128).

one anterior to the other. This is because from a temporal point of view the eventuality in the *qam*-clause is overlapping with, rather than sequential to, what is expressed by the circumstantial construction and the ‘after’ adverbial clause. It appears that the first reference point is no longer temporal but rather has become a cognitive topical anchor, similar to the process described in §2.2. in the development of the discourse dependency *bət-qaṭal(wa)* form. This can be represented as T—R,E, where T = the episodic topical situation that acts as the spatio-temporal frame for what follows:

When I was coming here (topical frame)—I saw a lion.

After I and my friend went out (topical frame)—he fell into the canal.

Note that in (45) the past shifting suffix *-wa* is added to the *qam*-construction (*qam-xazənwa*), indicating that it has its own tense marking, i.e. its tense is absolute and it is not bound as a relative tense to the tense of a preceding verb. This is likely to be because it is preceded by a tenseless expression (‘*ana bitaya* ‘I coming’).

The *qam*-construction is not obligatory in constructions of the type illustrated in the preceding examples. Contrast the following:

(49) *xəzyali* vs. *qam-xazənnā*

- a. ‘*ána bitáya lāxxa, xəzyá-li bàxti b-úrxa.*¹
I come.PROG here see.PFV.3FS-1S my.wife on.road

‘While I was coming here, I saw my wife on the road.’

- b. ‘*ána bitáya lāxxa,*¹ *qam-xazən-na bàxti*
I come.PROG here QAM-see.SBJV.1MS-3FS my.wife
*b-úrxa.*¹
on.road

‘While I was coming here, I saw my wife on the road.’

(50) *štélan* vs. *qam-šatuxwa*

a. ʔáxni bəplàxa,¹ štélan čày.¹
 we work.PROG drink.PFV.1PL tea

‘Whilst we were working, we drank tea.’

b. ʔáxni bəplàxa,¹ qam-šatúx-wa sàhma.¹
 we work.PROG QAM-drink.SBJV.1PL-PST poison

‘Whilst we were working, we drank poison.’

The (a) sentences of (49) and (50) with the past perfective *qtəlle* form are matter-of-fact descriptions of events. The (b) sentences present the events as surprising and unexpected.

As has been remarked, a hybrid construction exists, in which the *qatəl* form in the *qam*-construction is substituted by the *qtəlle* form ((48) repeated below as (51)). This still has a different pragmatic association from a corresponding construction with *qtəlle* without the preceding *qam*- (52):

(51) ʔána ʔu-xáwri plə̀tlan¹ ʔu-qam-mə̀tle
 I and-my.friend go.out.PFV.1PL and.QAM-die.PFV.3MS

*xáwri.*¹
 my.friend

‘I and a friend went out and my friend died.’

(52) ʔána ʔu-xáwri plə̀tlan¹ ʔu-mə̀tle
 I and-my.friend go.out.PFV.1PL and-die.PFV.3MS

*xáwri.*¹
 my.friend

‘I and a friend went out and my friend died.’

According to my consultant for the dialect, (51) implies a causal connection between the going out and the death whereas there is no such implicature in (52). This could arise from the fact that the *qam-qtalle* construction, like the *qam*-construction with the *qaṭəl* form, expresses immediate succession and close cohesion in the same mental space, an implicature of which could be causal connection.

In Harbole, as we have seen, the *qam*-construction with the *qaṭəl* form can be used in narrative in both transitive and intransitive clauses. There is no obvious feature of behaviour of the construction in this dialect that could explain why it became restricted to transitive verbs with pronominal objects in most of NENA. This specific distribution in other dialects appears to have been a strategy to avoid using internal pronominal objects in the *qtalle* form, especially 1st and 2nd person objects.¹⁴ In such dialects the *qam*-construction became a general past perfective form substituting for *qtalle* where the verb would have had pronominal objects. One can compare this to, for example, to the *vaig cantar* construction in Catalan (see (36)), which became a general past perfective form. This development of the *qam*-construction would doubtless have been facilitated by the fact that already in Harbole the temporal reference point of the construction in the preceding clause came to be analysed as a topical reference point in some contexts (i.e. R_1-R_2,E became $T-R,E$). As with the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form, this would have facilitated the use of a series of *qam*-constructions with the same spatio-temporal topical frame in narratives.

The generalised *qam*-construction did, however, retain some of the features of its embryonic form seen in the Harbole dialect. Firstly, when it takes 3rd person pronominal objects in narrative, these are anaphoric to the preceding discourse so the verb is sequential to or at least continuative of what precedes, as it is in Harbole. Secondly, speakers of some dialects report that in conversational discourse where the expression of a pronominal

14 See the studies of expression of pronominal objects in Pennacchiotti (1994), Coghill (2016), Khan (2017), Noorlander (2018).

object is possible in both a *qtalle* or *qam*-construction, the *qam*-construction refers specifically to the recent past whereas the *qtalle* form does not have this restriction, e.g. *qam-xazən-a* (QAM-see.SBJV.1MS-3FS) ‘I have just seen her’ vs *xəzy-a-li* (see.PST-3FS-1S) ‘I saw her’ (not necessarily recently) (Shaqława dialect, field notes). This is reflected by the fact that the particle *na*, which is used in the Shaqława dialect to express immediacy, is more frequently used with the form *qam-xazəna* than with *xəzyali*.¹⁵

4. Narrative Subjunctive

4.1. Attested Constructions

In NENA dialects the bare present stem *qaṭəl* functions as a subjunctive. This is used in a variety of irrealis contexts, including jussive main clauses, irrealis subordinate clauses and conditional clauses. An example of a subjunctive clause in a subordinate purpose clause from the C. Barwar dialect is given in (53):

- (53) *şəḷyε = le^l* *ta-t-ʔázəl* *ʔürxa.^l*
 go.PTCP=COP.3MS to-COMP-go.SBJV.3MS road
 ‘He went down in order to set off on the road.’ (A15:5)

15 The verb *q-y-m* ‘to rise’ is used in various other types of constructions, the discussion of which is beyond the scope of this paper. For example, a past form of the verb *q-y-m* is used in NENA dialects in a serial construction with another past verb to express the onset of an activity at a discourse boundary, e.g. C. Barwar *qímla wídla təğbir^l* (rise.PST.3PL make.PST.3PL plan) ‘They made a plan.’ (Khan 2008, 937–38). The preverbal particle *qam-* is used in the dialect of J. Bəjil to express the progressive, e.g. *qam-patəxle* ‘he is opening it’ (Mutzafi 2002) (I thank Paul Noorlander for drawing my attention to this reference). This is likely to have had a different semantic development from the construction with *qam-* that is discussed in this paper.

The indicative present, such as the progressive and habitual, are typically expressed by innovative forms, such as the following in the C. Barwar dialect:

Indicative habitual

^ʿ*i-qaṭəl*:

- (54) *kút-yum y-áxəl ləxma.¹*
 every-day HAB-eat.IPFV.3MS bread

‘Every day he eats bread.’

Progressive

hole qṭala (deictic copula + progressive stem) or *qṭalə=le* (progressive stem + enclitic copula). The progressive stem is derived historically from the infinitive:

(55)

- a. *hole zala*
 DEIC.COP.3MS go.PROG

‘He is going.’

- b. *zalə=le*
 go.PROG = COP.3MS

‘He is going.’

In the C. Barwar dialect the *qaṭəl* subjunctive form is often used in narratives as a perfective sequential form. It typically continues an event or events that are expressed by a narrative past form (*qṭille* or *qṭiləle*), e.g.

- (56) *ʔáp ʔaw-léle xéna qimla,[|] sáʔət t̥láθa*
 also that-night other rise.PFV.3FS hour.of three
b-lèle,[|] šárya bǎnúda d̥iya,[|] ʔu-ʔáza
 at-night untie.SBJV.3FS bands.her of.her and-go.SBJV.3FS
ʔáxla xá-brona xéna ʔu-d̥èra,[|]
 eat.SBJV.3FS one-son other and-return.SBJV.3FS
d̥ámxa.[|] páθxa t̥ǎra,[|] d̥ámxa
 sleep.SBJV.3FS open.SBJV.3FS door sleep.SBJV.3FS
gu-dud̥iya.[|]
 in-cradle

‘Also the next night she got up, at three o’clock in the morning, **untied** her bands, **went** and **ate** another child, then **returned** and **went to sleep**. She **opened** the door and **went to sleep** in the cradle.’ (A18:5–6)

- (57) *šq̣l̥ = l-le x̣màra[|] ʔu-tàwra.[|]*
 take.PTCP. = COP.3MS-3MS ass and-ox
ʔu-ẓil̥ = le.[|] šúrye = le zṛàya.[|]
 and-go.PTCP = COP.3MS begin.PTCP = COP.3MS cultivate.PROG
šúrye = ele zṛáya ḥàl-ʔaṣ̌arta.[|] ʔaṣ̌arta
 begin.PTCP = COP.3MS cultivate.PROG until-evening evening
ʔáθe l-bèθa.[|] ṃànyax,[|] ʔázal ṣàxe[|]
 come.SBJV.3MS to-house rest.SBJV.3MS go.SBJV.3MS swim.SBJV.3MS
ʔu-ʔàwər.[|]
 and-enter.SBJV.3MS

‘He took the ass and the ox and went off. He began cultivating. He began cultivating (and continued) until evening. In the evening he **came** home. He **rested**, **went** and **bathed** and **entered** (the house).’ (A21:12)

Sporadically the *qatəl* form is used as a sequential habitual:

- (58) ^ʾ*u-máxa* *xa-mášxa* *gu-be-ʾéne* *dìye*^l
 and-put.SBJV.3PL one-oil in-place.of-eyes.his of.him
- ^ʾ*ođí-le* *rúšma* ^ʾ*ax-šliwa*.^l
 do.SBJV.3PL-3MS sing like-cross

‘And they put some oil on his forehead and make the sign of the cross.’ (B6:36)

The use of the bare *qatəl* form in narratives looks *prima facie* like the active participles that are commonly found in narratives in earlier types of Aramaic, such as Biblical Aramaic, e.g.

- (59) קרא מלפא בְּחַיִּל ... עָנָה מִלְפָּא וְאַמְרָא | לְחַכְמַי בְּזָל
^q*ra:má:ar* *malkó:* *ba-ḥá:yil* ^ʿ*né:* *malkó:*
 call.PTCP.MS king with-force answer.PTCP.MS king
- ^v*ʿ:ʿ:má:ar* *la-ḥakki:mé:* ^v*vé:el*
 and-say.PTCP.MS to-sages.of Babylon

‘The king **cries aloud** ... The king **answers** and **says** to the wise men of Babylon.’ (Dan. 5:7)

This is, however, a false analogy, since the Barwar *qatəl* form, although derived historically from the active participle of earlier Aramaic, now has a subjunctive function. A closer analogy to the use of active participles in earlier Aramaic narratives is the occasional use of the progressive form inflected by a copula (*qatalē = le*) or sometimes without a copula (*qatala*) in C. Barwar narratives, e.g.

- (60) *yómə t̪l̪əθa^l máɾɛ = le xóne díye*
 day.of three say.PROG = COP.3MS brother.his of.him
- mára t̪-ázəx ʃèda.^l ’ánnə plàtɛ = la,^l*
 say.PROG FUT-go.SBJV.1PL hunt they go.out.PROG = COP.3PL
- kúlla zála ʃèda.^l*
 all go.PROG hunt

‘On the third day his brother says .. **he says** “Let’s go hunting.” **They go out, they all go** hunting.’ (A13:7)

In some NENA dialects the progressive construction is, indeed, the verb form that is most commonly used in narratives. This is the case, for example, in the C. Urmi dialect:

- (61) C. Urmi (Khan 2016, vol. 2, 186–87)
- +bar-dáha bərráxšə = lə cəs-màlca.^l*
 after-OBL.this go.PROG = COP.3MS at-king
- +bət̪lábə = lə +paxàlta mánnu.^l*
 ask.PROG = COP.3MS forgiveness from.him

‘After that **he goes** to the king. **He asks** for forgiveness from him.’ (A 3:54)

4.2. Analysis

I should like to argue here that the narrative *qatəl* form is indeed a modal subjunctive, which has been extended from its use in subordinate clauses, in particular purpose clauses. In C. Barwar, purpose clauses are introduced by a particle, typically a directional preposition such as *ta* ‘to’ as in (62), or are asyndetic

without an introductory particle (63) (Khan 2008, 582–83, 667, 995–95):

- (62) *šàlye = le^l* *ta-t-’ázal* *’ùrxa.^l*
 go.down.PTCP = COP.3MS to-COMP-go.SBJV.3MS way

‘He went down **to go** on the road.’ (A15:5)

- (63) *’ána* *θíθ = ən* *mpaltán-nux*
 I come.PTCP = COP.1FS bring.out.SBJV.1FS-2MS

m-gu-sàjən.^l
 from-in-prison

‘I have come to bring you out of the prison.’ (A26:82)

Purpose clause constructions are also used to express the final outcome or result of a preceding action, whereby the speaker presents the chain of events from the viewpoint of this outcome (Khan 2008, 995), e.g.

- (64) *šlàya,^l* *šálya* *šátya* *mìya,^l*
 go.down.PROG go.down.SBJV.3FS drink.SBJV.3FS water

ta-t-qàlba *xá-bena* *xéna.^l*
 to-COMP-return.SBJV.3FS a-time other

‘She went down to drink water and then finally returned again.’ (A33:8)

Such result clauses appear to have developed from the common implicature of purpose clauses that the event took place, especially after verbs of movement, e.g. *I went to buy some bread* has the implicature that I did in fact buy bread (Schmidtke-Bode

2009, 178). This conventionalisation of an implicature as the expression of a real event that is reflected in result clauses is likely to have been the pathway of development also of dependent narrative *qaṭal* forms. This may be represented as follows:

(65)

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. | Main clause | Purpose clause |
| | R_1, E | $R_1 - E$ |
| b. | Main clause | Result clause |
| | R_1, E | $R_1 - R_2, E$ |
| c. | Main clause | Narrative sequential |
| | R_1, E | $R_1 - R_2, E$ |

This analysis is similar to that of the development of the *qam*-construction forms discussed above. In the purpose clause construction the subjunctive verb is irrealis and takes as its reference time that of the main clause (represented by the repeated R_1 in (65a)). The event time of the purpose clause, therefore, is posterior to its reference time and so the predicate is analogous to a future construction such as the immediate future *qam*-construction. In (65b) and (65c) the subjunctive clause has been reanalysed as a real asserted event. This involves the acquisition of a reference time coinciding with the event (R_2). It can be assumed that the clause retains the R_1 reference time, to which it is posterior. This reflects its reanalysis as a real asserted event that is sequential to what precedes.

As remarked, in the C. Urmi dialect the normal narrative verb form is the progressive. The narrative subjunctive is, however, sporadically used in this dialect. It is significant that in the attested examples in my text corpus it occurs predominantly after verbs of movement:

(66) C. Urmi (Khan 2016, vol. 2, 122)

májjət = da ʾá náša xəšlə^l jásəḵ
 indeed = also this man go.PFV.3MS see.SBJV.3MS

ʾó bētu súra víyyə = va xá yácca
 that his.house small become.PTCP = COP.PST.3MS a big

máx bətət mālca víyyə = va.^l
 like house.of kings become.PTCP = COP.PST.3MS

‘Indeed the man went off and **saw** that his small house had become huge, it had become like the house of kings.’ (A 54:5)

Cross-linguistically purpose clauses are very commonly preceded by verbs of movement (Schmidtke-Bode 2009, 98) and this is also the case in NENA dialects, see (60)–(61) from C. Barwar. An example from C. Urmi is (67), where the purpose clause is asyndetic:

(67) C. Urmi (Khan 2016, vol. 2, 122)

xəšla baxta +tárta patxà-lə^l
 go.PFV.3FS woman door open.SBJV.3FS-3MS

‘The woman went to open the door.’ (A 18:2)

This can be taken as evidence, therefore, that the sequential narrative subjunctive had its origin in subordinate purpose clauses.

The subjunctive *qatəl* form in purpose clauses is neutral as to aspect and can be used in habitual contexts, e.g.

(68) C. Barwar

kut-béna béna 'áxni y-ázax 'axlâx
 every-time time we HAB-go.IPFV.1PL eat.SBJV.1PL

*kas-xòni.*¹
 with-my.brother

'From time to time we go to eat with my brother.'

This could explain the sporadic use of *qatəl* as a habitual sequential (see (58)).

According to (65) the narrative subjunctive, which developed from subordinate clauses, retained the temporal structure of result clauses, i.e.

Main clause Narrative sequential

R_1, E $R_1—R_2, E$

The 'main clause' in this model of its development would be a clause in the preceding discourse. As can be seen in the examples (56) and (57) the narrative subjunctive can be used in chains of clauses. This could be represented thus:

$R_1—R_2, E_2 + R_2—R_3, E_3 + R_3—R_4, E_4 + R_4—R_5, E_5$

Each subjunctive form would take as its anterior reference time the reference time of the previous verb.

Alternatively, it could be proposed that by a further development the anterior reference time in the structure $R_1—R_2, E$ has become schematised to a cognitive topical reference point analogously to the analysis we have proposed for the development of the *bət-qatəl* and *qam-qatəl* forms, i.e. T(opic)— R, E . This, therefore, would not be a temporal point in the preceding discourse but rather a topical frame, which in narrative would be typically a spatio-temporal frame. The chain of narrative subjunctives would all

*tíwe mṭawóle b-šātrānjāne.*¹
 sit.PTCP.PL play.PROG at-chess

‘See your brother and Māmo who are sitting playing chess.’ (A26:64)

(72) C. Urmi (Khan 2016, vol. 2, 190)

*ʔana jəddālu¹ +hāzər vid-è = vən.*¹
 I its.threads ready make.PTCP-3PL = COP.1MS

*partúla +ʔal-+ʔuydāla.*¹
 twist.PROG on-each.other

‘I have prepared its threads, twisting (them) together.’
 (A 3:74)

The sequential narrative use of the progressive may, therefore, have also developed through the pathway of a purpose clause.

5. Conclusions

In this paper I have discussed various verbal forms in NENA dialects that express dependency on the preceding discourse beyond the syntactic confines of a sentence. These include the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form, the *qam-qaṭəl* form and the narrative subjunctive form. These can be used to express continuity of the preceding discourse, which can be interpreted as temporal sequence or elaboration according to the context. The proposed historical development of the three verbal forms with these functions share several common features. In all cases the verbs originally expressed some kind of future or, to be more precise, an event time that was posterior to its reference time. From the perspective of this reference time they expressed contingent events that were modally dependent on a preceding eventuality.

Parallels to such discourse dependent verbal forms have been documented in a variety of other languages. Numerous languages of Africa have special verbal forms for the expression of continuity in discourse. These are used, for example, for the chaining of clauses in narratives and descriptions of habitual procedures.¹⁶ This continuity may be temporal sequence or elaboration. Such forms are often identical to forms that express modal subordination in subordinate clauses and so have been referred to as narrative subjunctives (R. Carlson 1992; Seidel 2015, 180). In some African languages the consecutive forms can be used independently of preceding discourse as a future or modal form denoting an unrealised action (e.g. Seidel 2015, 186). Historical reconstructions of Oceanic languages have revealed connections between narrative continuity devices and future verbal forms (Lichtenberk 2014).

Within Semitic one can find some parallels to what has been described in this paper. Owens (2018) argues persuasively that the preverbal particle *b-* that is found in a variety of Arabic dialects originates in the deontic verb *baġa* ‘to want’ (cognate with Aramaic *baʿe*). What is of interest is that although it has retained its deontic or modal sense in some dialects of the Gulf, in some dialects it has developed into an indicative (e.g. Levant). The missing link, Owens claims, is its use in Nigerian Arabic to express what he calls ‘propositional adjacency’, which corresponds to what I have been calling here discourse dependency. The situation in the J. Dobe dialect, where the *bət-qaṭəl* form can be used as an indicative, would represent the same advanced stage of development as indicative *b-* in Levant Arabic.

The indicative preverbal particle *ka-* in Moroccan Arabic appears to have its origin in the modal use of the auxiliary verb *kān* in conditional clauses (Corriente 1977, 140–41; Stewart 1998, 111–12; Hanitsch 2019, 256–58). This also, therefore, may

16 Verbal forms of this type in numerous African languages are discussed in the papers of the volume edited by Payne and Shirtz (2015). See also Palmer (1986, 204–07), Longacre (1990) and Persohn (2017, §7.1).

have followed a similar pathway of development as Neo-Aramaic *bət-qaṭəl*.

Tsukanova (2008) has identified the use of dependent subjunctive forms containing the modal auxiliary *čān* in Gulf Arabic as a continuative form in narratives.

The Neo-Aramaic discourse dependent *bət-qaṭəl* and the narrative subjunctive exhibit close parallels also with continuative verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew.¹⁷

Finally, in addition to cross-linguistic typological parallels one should also take into account the factor of language contact. It is noteworthy, for example, that the NENA dialects that exhibit the *bət-qaṭəl* future forms are/were mainly in the region of Northern Kurdish (Kurmanji). The NENA dialects in the region of Central Kurdish (Sorani) do not generally exhibit a specific future marker. This distribution corresponds to the presence of a dedicated future verbal prefix in Northern Kurdish and the absence of such a prefix in Central Kurdish. What is of particular interest is that in Northern Kurdish verbs with the future particle are sometimes used as discourse dependency habitual forms just like the *bət-qaṭəl(wa)* form in Neo-Aramaic (Haig 2018, 292).

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17 These parallels with the Biblical Hebrew verbal system are discussed in Khan (2021 to appear).

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