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Övdalian from 1909 to 2009

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1 Introduction

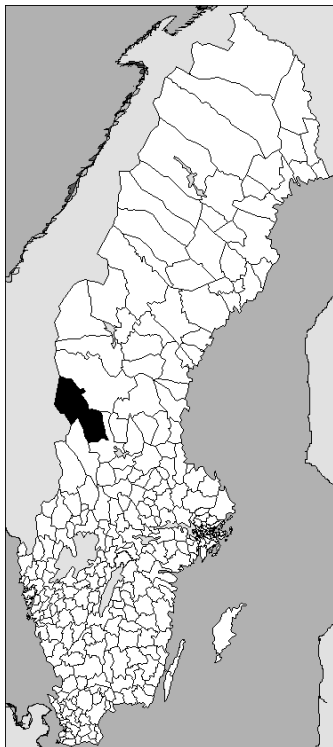
1.1 Goal and structure

The paper is structured as follows. Section 1 gives some background information on Övdalian, as its territory, number of speakers, history and relation to the other Scandinavian languages, as well as it presents the sources to our knowledge on Övdalian, the bibliography and the empirical base of this paper. Section 2 gives an overview of Classical and Traditional Övdalian; vocabulary, phonology, morphology and syntax. This section also offers a comparison between Övdalian and the other Scandinavian languages. We will see that Övdalian for some features is closer to Mainland Scandinavian, while for others it is closer to Insular Scandinavian. There are also some features that are Övdalian innovations (as for example null subjects, double subjects, negative concord etc.). Section 3 focuses on the morphology and syntax as seen in the Övdalian Speech Corpus. Section 4 sums up the findings. All the Övdalian examples given in this paper are written according to the orthography of *Råðdjärum* (The Övdalian Language Council).

1.2 Background on Övdalian

Övdalian is a Scandinavian variety spoken in the parish of Älvdalen in the province of Dalecarlia in western Sweden, see Map 1. The map shows the whole municipality of Älvdalen, whereas Övdalian is only spoken in the south-eastern part of it (see Map 2 and Map 3).

Map 1: The municipality
of Älvdalen in Sweden¹



In his seminal work on the variety, Levander (1909b: 5) enumerates the following twenty-one villages where Övdalian was spoken at the time: Åsen, Brunnsberg, Karlsarvet, Loka, Månsta, Klitten, Liden, Kittan, Holen, Näset, Rot, Östmyckeläng / Kyrkbyn, Kåtilla, Mjågen, Västmyckeläng, Väsa, Gåsvarv, Dysberg, Evertsberg, Blyberg, Garberg, the region of Finnmarken and, according to Noreen (1881: 7), also in the parish of Våmhus and in the village of Bonäs. The villages are situated within a radius of 60 km of the village of Älvdalen (to be found a bit north of the centre of Map 2). To the best of our knowledge, these are also the villages where we find speakers of Övdalian today.

¹ <http://commons.wikimedia.org>

Map 2: The province of Dalarna and the territory where Övdalian is spoken²



The number of people speaking Övdalian today was recently calculated in a study done in 2007 and presented in Larsson et al. (2008). According to this count, there are 2400 people speaking Övdalian.

² http://www.kart-bosse.se/idrefjall/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=824&Itemid=2

1.3 The history and the relation to the Scandinavian languages

Övdalian has been spoken continuously in Älvdalen since at least the Middle Ages, but the first longer Övdalian text was written in 1622 (Prytz 1622). Övdalian has its roots in the Dalecarlian dialects and has traditionally been seen as a Swedish dialect, one of the large group of the *Sveamål*-dialects (Garbacz 2010: 27). Övdalian is mutually incomprehensible to its closest standard relatives, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. There are differences between Övdalian and both mainland Scandinavian and the other Dalecarlian dialects on every linguistic level: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary (Dahl 2009). Having applied the Swadesh test to Övdalian, Swedish and Icelandic, Dahl (2005: 10) claims that Övdalian is approximately as distant from spoken standard Swedish as Swedish is from spoken Icelandic.

Övdalian is a descendent of an East Scandinavian variety. This language group arose when the more or less uniform Proto-Nordic language differentiated into two dialect groups during the 8th and the 9th century A.D, see Levander (1925: 5–45) for more details.

Following Garbacz (2010: 33–36), we distinguish here three stages in Övdalian: (1) *Classical Övdalian* (spoken by the generations born before ca. 1920), (2) *Traditional Övdalian* (spoken by the generation born between ca. 1920 and the end of the 1940's) and (3) *Modern Övdalian* (spoken by the generations born ca. 1950 and later). These stages are set up given the changes in Övdalian in the 19th and the 20th century.

1.4 Övdalian texts

The oldest known text from Älvdalen is a runic inscription found on a wooden bowl dating from 1596 (Björklund 1974). The inscription is written in Older Modern Swedish, but with two Övdalian forms (Björklund 1974: 44). Another well-known early runic inscription, dated to the beginning of the 17th century, is the so-called *Härjedalsstolen* (cf. Gustavson & Hallonqvist 1985 for an overview of runic inscriptions in Dalecarlia). The oldest known text of any length written in Övdalian dates from the beginning of the 17th century and is an 870 word passage in a historical drama (Prytz 1622), in which Övdalian has been used to render the conversation between farmers in Upper Dalarna and the future Swedish king Gustav Vasa. According to Noreen (1883: 74), the passage provides an adequate picture of the 17th century spoken Övdalian. There are also recordings of Övdalian made in the 20th century to be found in The Institute of Language and Folklore (Swe. *Institutet för språk och folkminnen*) and in Rots Skans in Älvdalen, an assembly hall for the *Elfdalens Hembygdsförening* (Älvdalen home district association).

1.5 The situation of Övdalian today

The Övdalian spoken today is highly variable; the old geographical variation is still substantial and there is a higher degree of variation between generations (and between individuals within generations) when compared with the situation at the start of the 20th century. The development of the Dalecarlia dialects (including Övdalian) has been the subject of studies done by Helgander

(1990, 1994, 1996, 2004, 2005). Sapir (2005a: 3), describing the present-day situation of Övdalian, talks about the “dissolution of Elfdalian”.³ He states the following:

“The percentage of Elfdalians who speak Elfdalian diminishes the further down in age one goes. Their Elfdalian is likewise less fluent, more mixed up with Swedish, and the grammar and pronunciation is more simplified or influenced by Swedish” (Sapir 2005a: 3).

There is a strong movement to revive and revitalize Övdalian. On the one hand, Övdalian is becoming more like standard Swedish and on the other hand, efforts are being made to revitalize it. The revitalization is often heavily prescriptive. The norm based on Classical Övdalian has its source in the dissertation of Lars Levander (1909b), in which he describes Övdalian morphology and, to a smaller extent, syntax. Levander collected material for his dissertation during a four year long stay in Älvdalen in the beginning of the 20th century. The book had for a long time been the largest study of Övdalian and, consequently, of Övdalian syntax, even though it is mostly concerned with morphology. It is an attempt to give a solid survey of the inflectional system of Övdalian and of some other phenomena, mostly those that Levander considers different from standard Swedish. Although only less than four pages of the book are explicitly devoted to word order, it is possible to retrieve information on the word order of Classical Övdalian in the other parts of the book by studying the examples provided. This information is invaluable for a modern reader who is interested in obtaining syntactic information on Classical Övdalian syntax. One should however remember that the language described is that of people born long before the year 1900, why Levander’s data do not reflect any Övdalian spoken today. Another important

³ Sapir’s term for Övdalian is *Elfdalian*. See the discussion on the terms *Övdalian* vs. *Elfdalian* in section 1.2 above.

fact to keep in mind is that the Classical Övdalian described by Levander is for the most part the variant that was spoken in the village of Åsen, in which the language was assumed to be “in almost every respect most typically developed and best preserved” [our translation] (Levander 1909b: 4). Levander’s dissertation has been the foremost source of knowledge of Övdalian up to now. The Övdalian grammars and textbooks that were written in the beginning of the 21st century (i.e. Åkerberg 2000, Åkerberg 2004 and Nyström & Sapir 2005a,b) are heavily based on Levander and are thus more prescriptive than descriptive. The Övdalian spoken today is not reflected in those handbooks.

In the last few years, serious attempts have been made to standardize Övdalian. In 1984 an association for preservation of Övdalian was established under the name *Ulum Dalska* ‘shall.1.PL.IND./IMP speak-Övdalian.INF’ (i.e. *we shall speak Övdalian / let us speak Övdalian*). Its activities have included the organization of conferences, the publication of books and a newspaper in Övdalian etc. Standardization of Övdalian has also resulted in the first Övdalian–Swedish/Swedish–Övdalian dictionary (Steensland 1986b), revised as Steensland (2006b).⁴ In August 2004, the Övdalian language council – *Rådjdjörum*, was established and in 2005, it proposed a new orthography for Övdalian, preliminarily accepted by *Ulum Dalska*. Language courses in Övdalian have also been organized, both for speakers of Övdalian and for ‘foreigners’. The Övdalian taught has been Classical Övdalian. This Classical Övdalian norm is also the norm used in several translations.

⁴ A more extensive Swedish–Övdalian and Övdalian–Swedish dictionary, containing about 17 000 words is being prepared (Steensland, in preparation).

1.6 Dialect or language?

A subject that has engaged many Övdalians and even a number of linguists is the question of whether Övdalian should be considered a dialect of Swedish or rather a separate language. Officially, Övdalian has the status of a dialect and not a minority language in Sweden, although many linguists have argued that the variety is a separate language. The question of whether Övdalian is a language or a dialect has been discussed, mostly in Steensland (1986a), (1990), Berglund (2001), Koch (2006), Melerska (2006), Dahl (2008) and in Rosenkvist (2008b).⁵ These authors give several arguments in favour of classifying Övdalian as a language and not a dialect. The only criterion normally used to classify a variety as a language that is not met by Övdalian is the fact that Övdalian has no official functions; all other criteria seem to be met. In this paper, we term Övdalian a language, following both the above-mentioned authors and the people of Älvdalen.

1.7 A bibliography of works on Övdalian

The modern research on Övdalian begins with the works of Adolf Noreen, especially with Noreen (1881) that also contains information on older literature on the subject. The seminal work on Övdalian is Levander (1909b), see above, and the seminal work on the Dalecarlia dialects in general are Levander (1925) and (1928). More recent general surveys on Övdalian are for example Steensland (2000a), Dahl (2005), Sapir (2005a,b) and Dahl (2009). Björklund (1956) is a published doctoral dissertation on the development of Övdalian (mostly dealing with phonology and morphology). There are also more specialized studies on phonetics and phonology,

⁵ And, to smaller extent, even in Dahl (2005) and in Rosenkvist (2008).

vocabulary, morphology and syntax. The most important literature on the latter two subjects is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Works on Övdalian morphology and syntax

TYPE OF WORK	REFERENCE	LANGUAGE	CONTENT	COMMENTS
Works on Övdalian morphology	Levander (1909b)	Swedish	An overview work on Övdalian morphology and syntax	
	Levander (1928)	Swedish	An overview work on morphology of Dalecarlian dialects	
	Åkerberg (1957)	Swedish	Development of nominal inflection of feminine nouns	Unpublished.
	Nyström (1982)	Swedish	On inflection of masculine nouns ending on /l/	
	Nyström (2000)	Swedish	On the recent findings in Övdalian morphology	
	Ringmar (2005)	Swedish	A comparison of the morphology of Classical Övdalian with the one of Icelandic and Faroese	
Works on Övdalian syntax	Levander (1909b)	Swedish	An overview work on Övdalian morphology and syntax	
	Rosenkvist (1994)	Swedish	On the recent syntactic development of Övdalian	
	Platzack (1996)	Swedish	On the correlation between null subjects and V^0 -to- I^0 movement in Övdalian	
	Wiklund (2002)	English	On the correlation between verbal agreement and V^0 -to- I^0 movement in Övdalian	
	Dahl & Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2006)	English	On dative in Scandinavian varieties	
	Garbacz (2006)	English	On the negation system and V^0 -to- I^0 movement in Övdalian	
	Rosenkvist (2006)	English	On null subjects in Övdalian	
	Rosenkvist (2007)	English	On multiple subjects in Övdalian	
	Tungseth (2007)	English	On beneficiary event participants in Scandinavian	
	Garbacz (2008a)	Swedish	On factors determining V^0 -to- I^0 movement in Övdalian	
	Garbacz (2008b)	Swedish	On the negation system in Övdalian	
	Rosenkvist (2008)	English	On multiple subjects in Övdalian	
	Garbacz (2010)	English	Dissertation on aspects of Övdalian syntax, especially on V^0 -to- I^0 movement and Stylistic Fronting	

1.8 The Övdalian Speech Corpus

A corpus is a collection of language text samples, organised in a certain way and available for advanced search via a computer. The Övdalian Speech Corpus is the Övdalian part of the Nordic Dialect Corpus, and has been developed at the Text Laboratory, University of Oslo, in close collaboration with the University of Lund.⁶

The Övdalian Speech Corpus consists of the speech of 18 people from the villages of Blyberg, Brunnsberg, Evertsberg, Klitten, Kåtilla, Västäng, Älvdalen (Kyrkbyn), and Åsen, and contains a total of 15,385 words. There are nine males and nine females. Four informants are teenagers, the others are over 30 years of age.

Interviews with and conversations between these Övdalian informants have been recorded by audio and video and have been transcribed using two different transcriptions: the Övdalian orthography and standard Swedish orthography.

The result is a web-searchable corpus where the researcher can write a given search string (word(s) or suffix(es)) in either standard Swedish orthography or in Övdalian orthography, and where the results are given as concordance lines that are linked directly to audio and video. This makes it possible for linguists to observe a high amount of speech within a reasonable time period.

We will consider many of the topics that have been raised on Övdalian syntax and morphology over the years, and investigate the corpus with respect to these phenomena comparing the corpus data with the picture of Övdalian syntax mediated by Levander (1909b).

⁶ The corpus is based on recordings done by Janne Bondi Johannessen and her colleagues from the Text Laboratory in Älvdalen during a NORMS dialect workshop in 2007. Lars Steensland, professor of Slavonic Languages and a near-native speaker of Övdalian, was indispensable as recording assistant. The recordings have been transcribed by Piotr Garbacz with assistance from Gunnar Beronius and Lars Steensland. The Swedish transcription was arrived at using a semi-automatic dialect transliterator developed at the Text Laboratory. The corpus is in the process of being grammatically tagged. The work has been financed by NORMS, NordForsk and the University of Oslo.

We believe that using the corpus, even if it is rather limited in size, has helped us to get a picture of contemporary Övdalian in broad outline.

1.9 The empirical base of the present study

Many syntax studies, independently of language, are based on information given to the researcher by native speakers, in the form of formal tasks, for example grammaticality judgements. Sometimes researchers also report informally on utterances they have heard. Unfortunately, both these methods come with problems (see Schütze 1996 for a deeper treatment of the subject). The formal tasks demand a very high linguistic awareness of the informants, and the informal reporting method demands an astute ability of observation by the researcher, with data that can never be verified. Corpora, in turn, often suffer from the fact that they tend to be quite limited, especially for syntactic phenomena, which are less common than phonological and morphological phenomena, broadly speaking. In this paper, we have combined all the above-mentioned sources of knowledge: the data we use have been collected through observation, elicitation and corpus study.

2 The structure of Övdalian

In this section, we will present an overview of Classical and Traditional Övdalian. It should be kept in mind that there is more variation in Traditional Övdalian when compared with Classical Övdalian. Although the present volume is mostly concerned with syntax, this section will also

present data from other aspects of the Övdalian language. When we refer to other Scandinavian languages, we are not concerned with the non-standard varieties, unless explicitly stated.

2.1 Övdalian vocabulary

Most words in the core vocabulary of Övdalian are of Nordic origin and we find related counterparts for the majority in the other varieties of Mainland Scandinavian. Although, the connection may be difficult to see at first glance, due to the fact that the phonological system of Övdalian has developed differently when compared to the other Mainland Scandinavian varieties (Steensland 2003–2008). See also Dahl (2005) and Sapir (2005a: 31–32).

2.2 Övdalian phonology

In contrast to Modern Swedish, Övdalian has preserved three syllable lengths in stressed syllables, namely (1) syllables that in their core have the structure V(C), i.e. short syllables, examples include *tågå* ‘take’, (2) syllables that in their core have the structure V:(C) or VC:, i.e. long syllables, for example, *båt* ‘boat’, as well as (3) syllables that in their core have the structure V:C:, that is, overlong syllables, for example *ro’tt* ‘red.NEUTR’. More on syllable length in Övdalian can be found in Levander (1925: 60–85), Steensland (2000a), Bye (2005), Kristoffersen (2005), Riad (2005) and in Sapir (2005a).

In Övdalian, as is the case in Swedish and Norwegian, word accent can be acute (accent I) or grave (accent II), but accent II can also be realized as level stress in short syllable words, as is also the case in some Norwegian dialects (see also Steensland 2000a and Kristoffersen 2005 on level stress in Övdalian). Also vowel harmony is present in the variety, see Steensland (2000a),

Bye (2005) and Riad (2005). Another prominent feature of Övdalian is apocope, which normally affects morph-final and word-final vowels under certain circumstances (see Levander 1920, Steensland 2000a: 365, Åkerberg 2004: 8–11, Sapir 2005a: 17–18 and Nyström & Sapir 2005b).

In our presentation of the sound system of Övdalian below, we have chosen to start from the orthographic level, indicated with < > in the tables. By doing so we do not wish to take a stand in issues related to the phonological analysis of Övdalian. Here, we follow the survey of the Övdalian consonant and vowel system given in Steensland (2000a: 362–365). Our presentation adheres to the variant of Traditional Övdalian spoken in the village of Brunnsberg.

Table 2: Övdalian consonants

	STOP		FRICATIVE		AFFRICATE		NASAL		LATERAL		TRILL	SEMI-VOWEL
VOICENESS	+	–	+	–	+	–	+	–	+	–	+	+
BILABIAL	 [b]	<p> [p ^h]					<m> [m]					<w> [w]
LABIO-DENTAL			<v> [v]	<f> [f]								
DENTAL	<d> [d]	<t> [t ^h]	<ð> [ð]	<s> [s]			<n> [n]		<l> [l]	<s> [l̥]		
ALVEOLAR											<r> [r]	
ALVEO-PALATAL					<dj> [dʒ']	<tj> [tʃ]						
PALATAL					<j> [j]				<l> [ɭ]			<i> [i]
VELAR	<g> [g]	<k> [k ^h]	<g> [ɣ]				<ng> [ŋ]					
LARYNGAL				<h> [h] ⁷								

⁷ The glottal fricative /h/ is attested only in a few Swedish borrowings, out of which the interjection *häj!* (hi!) is most known.

Table 3: Övdalian vowels

Monoftongs	FRONT		CENTRAL/BACK	
	UNROUNDED	ROUNDED	UNROUNDED	ROUNDED
HIGH	<i> [ɪ]	<y> [ɣ]		<u> [ʊ]
CLOSE-MID	<e> [ɛ̟]			<o> [o̟]
OPEN-MID	<ä> [æ]	<ö> [œ̟]		<å> [ɔ̟]
LOW			<a> [ɑ]	
Diphthongs				
HIGH	<ie> [ɪɛ̟]	<yö> [ɣœ̟]		<uo> [ʊø̟]
MID				<åy> [ɔĩ]
LOW			<ai> [ɑĩ] <au> [ɑʌ̟]	
Triphthongs				
HIGH				<iuo> [ĩʊø̟]

The number of vocalic allophones in Övdalian is, dependently on the local variant between 32 and 36, which places the language among the most vowel-rich languages in the world (Parkvall 2006). All the Övdalian monophthongs can be short or long. This is also true for the three diphthongs, represented orthographically as <ie>, <yö> and <uo>. All monophthongs, except the two rendered as <ö> and <y>, and all diphthongs with the exception of these represented by <au> and <åy> can further be phonologically nasalized. There is also one Övdalian triphthong <iuo>, which can be phonologically nasal, e.g. *triuo* ‘three.ACC.MASC’. Nasalization in Övdalian is a result of Proto-Nordic assimilations as well as assimilations that occurred during the Middle Ages and later. For more on the phonology of Övdalian, see Steensland (2000a: 362–367), and Sapir (2005a: 14–24) and references therein.

2.3 Övdalian morphology

In the following, we mainly focus our presentation of Övdalian morphology on the variant termed as Traditional Övdalian, whilst we bring the Classical Övdalian morphology up for discussion only to contrast it with the traditional one, in cases when it has changed considerably. Övdalian morphology displays a number of features absent in the standard Mainland Scandinavian languages. In particular, it is more complex. There is no category in the Övdalian morphological system that has not also been present in Swedish at some point. Starting with nominal morphology, here represented by the variant spoken in the village of Brunnsberg, case inflection of nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and especially of numerals (one to four) is reduced compared to Classical Övdalian. These categories were inflected for case in Classical Övdalian: nominative, genitive, dative and accusative (with exception of adjectives that were not inflected for genitive) and even for vocative (in case of proper names and kinship terms, see Levander 1909b: 24, 36), but in Traditional Övdalian the old accusative forms are normally mixed up with the old nominative forms (in such a way that either the originally accusative or the originally nominative form is used for both cases), and dative inflection of nouns in indefinite form is rare. However, nouns and adjectives are still inflected for number (singular and plural), nouns have three genders (masculine, feminine and neuter) and may exhibit different forms according to definiteness, and adjectives and adverbs exhibit comparative morphology. Examples of nominal inflection are presented in the tables below (after Garbacz 2010: 40 ff.) and the variant given in them is used in the village of Brunnsberg. Traditional Övdalian forms that are different from the Classical Övdalian ones have been shaded. For an overview of Övdalian morphology see Garbacz (2010), Nyström & Sapir (2005b), Åkerberg (2000), (2004) and Levander (1909b), (1925).

Table 4. Traditional Övdalian: Inflection of the strong masculine noun *kall* (man)

	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	INDEFINITE	DEFINITE	INDEFINITE	DEFINITE
NOMINATIVE	<i>kall</i>	<i>kalln</i>	<i>kaller</i>	<i>kaller</i>
GENITIVE	-	<i>kallemes</i>	-	<i>kallumes</i>
DATIVE	<i>kall</i>	<i>kallem</i>	<i>kallum</i>	<i>kallum</i>
ACCUSATIVE	<i>kall</i>	<i>kalln</i>	<i>kaller</i>	<i>kaller</i>

As can be seen from the table, a separate inflection of nouns in accusative is lost in Traditional Övdalian. It is nowadays only found in a small number of expressions, as is the case of dative forms of indefinite nouns. The old difference between the definite and the indefinite forms of masculine and feminine nouns in plural (e.g. *kaller* – *kallär* ‘men’) still exists for some speakers of Traditional Övdalian in some villages (e.g. in Brunnsberg), whereas otherwise these forms have merged into one form (normally the old indefinite one, e.g. *kaller* ‘men’), see also Svenonius (this volume). The tendency to syncretize forms is present in Traditional Övdalian also in the inflection of other parts of speech presented in the tables below.

The indefinite inflection of adjectives in Traditional Övdalian has changed substantially – the case endings have been lost and only gender and number are expressed by means of different morphological forms. The only exception is the form *sturum* ‘big.DAT’ that still is present in some older speakers’ language.

Table 5. Traditional Övdalian: Indefinite inflection of the adjective *stur* ‘big’

	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
	MASCULINE	FEMININE	NEUTRAL	MASCULINE	FEMININE	NEUTER
NOMINATIVE	<i>stur</i>	<i>stur</i>	<i>sturt</i>	<i>sturer</i>	<i>sturer</i>	<i>sturer</i>
GENITIVE	—	—	—	—	—	—
DATIVE	<i>stur</i>	<i>stur</i>	<i>sturt</i>	<i>sturer</i> /sturum	<i>sturer</i> /sturum	<i>sturer</i> /sturum
ACCUSATIVE	<i>stur</i>	<i>stur</i>	<i>sturt</i>	<i>sturer</i>	<i>sturer</i>	<i>sturer</i>

There is no difference in the declension of personal pronouns between Classical and Traditional Övdalian; however, as will be shown in what follows (section 3.1.3), the newest findings indicate that in Modern Övdalian the system is on its way to neutralize the morphological opposition between the dative and the accusative forms of 3rd person pronoun in singular.

Table 6. Traditional Övdalian: Inflection of personal pronouns

NUMBER	SINGULAR					PLURAL		
PERSON	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD			1 ST	2 ND	3 RD
GENDER & CASE	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.
NOMINATIVE	<i>ig</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>o</i> _ε	<i>eð</i>	<i>wið</i>	<i>ið</i>	<i>dier</i>
GENITIVE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DATIVE	<i>mig</i>	<i>dig</i>	<i>onum</i> /om	<i>enner</i> /en	<i>dyö</i>	<i>uoss</i>	<i>ið</i>	<i>diem</i>
ACCUSATIVE	<i>mig</i>	<i>dig</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>ona</i>	<i>eð</i>	<i>uoss</i>	<i>ið</i>	<i>diem</i>

There has been great simplification in the inflection of possessive pronouns in Traditional Övdalian, cf. Table 7. The dative inflection forms are particularly interesting. When the possessive pronoun precedes the indefinite singular noun in a dative context, it tends to have the same form as in nominative and accusative, since the noun is then normally not inflected for dative. On the other hand, when the possessive pronoun follows the definite singular noun in a dative context, both the pronoun and the noun tend to be inflected for dative. In plural, the form *main* ‘mine’ is used when preceding the indefinite noun, whereas the form *mainum* ‘mine.DAT.PL’ is used when following the definite noun. In indefinite noun phrases the dative forms are normally not used. The form *mainy* ‘mine.NEUTR.PL’ is used attributively, whereas the form *mainer* ‘mine.PL’ is used predicatively.

Table 7. Traditional Övdalian: Inflection of the possessive pronoun *menn* ‘mine’

	SINGULAR			PLURAL		
	MASCULINE	FEMININE	NEUTER	MASCULINE	FEMININE	NEUTER
NOMINATIVE	<i>menn</i>	<i>mqi</i>	<i>mett</i>	<i>main/ mainer</i>	<i>main/ mainer</i>	<i>mainu / mainer</i>
GENITIVE	—	—	—	—	—	—
DATIVE	<i>menn/ mainum</i>	<i>mqi/ menner</i>	<i>mett/ mainu</i>	<i>main/ mainum</i>	<i>main/ mainum</i>	<i>main/ mainum</i>
ACCUSATIVE	<i>menn</i>	<i>mqi</i>	<i>mett</i>	<i>main/ mainer</i>	<i>main/ mainer</i>	<i>mainu / mainer</i>

In contrast to Modern Swedish, both Classical and Traditional Övdalian display verbal agreement in both person and number. Verbs are inflected for number (singular and plural) and all persons in the plural, see table 8. The tense system consists of present, preterite, present perfect, pluperfect, and future tense. Present perfect, pluperfect and future are all expressed by means of auxiliaries. Verbs are also inflected for two moods (indicative and imperative) and three voices (active, passive and reflexive). Simple morphological subjunctive is only preserved with two verbs, *åvå* ‘have’ and *wårå* ‘be’, which are also inflected for number and person, e.g. *edde* ‘have.SUBJ.SG.PRET’ and *wäre* ‘be.SUBJ.SG.PRET’ (Levander 1909b: 88). The verbs *spilå* ‘play’ and *fårå* ‘go’ have three imperative forms in Classical Övdalian: (1) *spilå!* ‘play.2.SG.IMP’, *fari!* ‘go.2.SG.IMP’; (2) *spilum!* ‘play.1.PL.IMP’, *farum* ‘go.1.PL.IMP’ and (3) *spilið* ‘play.2.PL.IMP’, *farið* ‘go.2.PL.IMP’ (Åkerberg 2004: 134). Imperatives in Traditional Övdalian are constructed in the same way as in Classical Övdalian, although the imperative forms that end with *–i* are declining (Lars Steensland p.c.). Passive voice and reflexive voice are seldom expressed morphologically and mostly occur with infinitivals in a few restricted expressions formed by the addition of an *–s*, e.g. *truska* ‘thresh.ACT’ > *truskas* ‘thresh.PASS’ (Levander 1909b: 112–113). Reflexive voice is expressed by means of the addition of the reflexive pronoun to the verb.

Verbal inflection in Classical and in Traditional Övdalian is reminiscent of the Old Swedish paradigm. There are however some important differences. Firstly, Old Swedish lacked apocope and as a result displayed an orthographic difference between the singular and the 3rd person plural. Secondly, the Old Swedish ending of 2nd person plural is *–in*, whereas in Övdalian this ending is *–ir/–ið* (dependently on local variety, cf. Levander 1909b: 86). Björklund (1956: 98–107) has shown that the ending *–ir/–ið* etymologically is a reanalysed pronoun (see, for example, Fuß 2005 on verbal endings as reanalyzed pronouns), whereas the older Övdalian ending, *–in* was lost in the 17th century. The reanalysis of a personal pronoun into an inflectional ending has been claimed to be the cause of the possibility of 2nd person plural null subjects in Övdalian (Rosenkvist 2008: 17).

Table 8. Traditional Övdalian: The indicative inflection forms of the weak verb *spilå* ‘play’

TYPE OF CONJUGATION	PRESENT		PRETERITE	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1 st	<i>spilär</i>	<i>spilum</i>	<i>spiläð</i>	<i>spiläðum</i>
2 nd	<i>spilär</i>	<i>spilið</i>	<i>spiläð</i>	<i>spiläðið</i>
3 rd	<i>spilär</i>	<i>spilå</i>	<i>spiläð</i>	<i>spiläð</i>

Table 9. Traditional Övdalian: The indicative inflection forms of the strong verb *fåå* ‘go’

TYPE OF CONJUGATION	PRESENT		PRETERITE	
	SINGULAR	PLURAL	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1 st	<i>far</i>	<i>farum</i>	<i>fuor</i>	<i>fuorum</i>
2 nd	<i>far</i>	<i>farið</i>	<i>fuor</i>	<i>fuorið</i>
3 rd	<i>far</i>	<i>fåå</i>	<i>fuor</i>	<i>fuoru</i>

There is syncretism between all persons in the singular form both for weak and strong verbs and in both present and past tense in Traditional (as well as in Classical) Övdalian. In the past tense of weak verbs, the singular form is furthermore identical to 3rd person plural, e.g. *spiläð* ‘played.SG/3.PL’. This syncretism is also present in the present tense of some irregular verbs, e.g. the defective auxiliaries *iess* ‘be likely to, be said to’, *luss* ‘seem’, *syökse* ‘seem’, and *lär* ‘be likely to’. In the past tense of strong verbs, however, the 3rd person plural form ending is apocopated within a phrase and it is then orthographically identical to the singular form, e.g. *fuoru* > *fuor*. The forms differ however prosodically, as the singular form has acute accent (accent I) and the plural form keeps grave accent (accent II).

We refer the reader to Levander (1909b) and Levander (1928: 109 ff.), as well as Steensland (2000a: 367–372), Åkerberg (2004), Sapir (2005a: 25–29), Nyström & Sapir (2005b) and Svenonius (this volume) for detailed descriptions of Övdalian morphology.

2.4 Övdalian syntax

Övdalian, being a Northern Germanic variety, shares the majority of its syntactic features with its Germanic and Scandinavian relatives. In this section, we present the central syntactic properties of Traditional Övdalian and compare them with the properties of the other Scandinavian languages. As will be shown, Traditional Övdalian syntax is in many respects similar to Modern Swedish syntax, but Övdalian also displays some properties that are not found in Swedish. Some of these are present in Modern Icelandic, others are alien to (at least the majority of) all the Scandinavian languages including the non-standard varieties, being Övdalian innovations.

On the basis of a number of syntactic and morphologic characteristics, clustering in different ways, Holmberg & Platzack (1995: 8) divide the Scandinavian languages into Mainland Scandinavian and Insular Scandinavian.

“[F]rom a syntactic point of view, the Scandinavian languages can be divided in two main groups: the Mainland Scandinavian (MSc.), consisting of modern Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish, and Insular Scandinavian (ISc.), consisting of modern Icelandic and modern Faroese, as well as of all old Scandinavian languages (roughly the medieval variants) and at least one dialect on the Scandinavian mainland, namely the Swedish dialect spoken in Älvdalen in Dalecarlia in central Sweden” (Holmberg & Platzack 1995: 8).⁸

The division of Scandinavian languages presented by Holmberg & Platzack (1995) is based on a parametric approach to syntax, as developed in the principles and parameters theory (Chomsky 1981), in which the differences between languages are seen as an effect of different values of parameters. Following this assumption, Holmberg & Platzack (1995: 223) maintain that the syntactic differences between Mainland and Insular Scandinavian can be related to two morphological parameters: subject-verb agreement and morphological case. Icelandic, representing the Insular Scandinavian branch, displays both morphological case and subject-verb agreement.

Word order properties of Traditional Övdalian can be divided into four groups, accordingly to how they pattern with word order properties found attested in the other

⁸ As Holmberg & Platzack (1995: 8) point out, including Faroese in Insular Scandinavian “is not uncontroversial”. In many respects, Faroese behaves syntactically as a Mainland Scandinavian variety. Therefore, they propose that Faroese should be constituting a third group of Scandinavian languages (1995: 12). As will be shown in the following, it is neither uncontroversial to include Övdalian in Insular Scandinavian; the fact that Holmberg & Platzack chose to do so most probably depends on the fragmentary set of data that they had at their disposal.

Scandinavian languages: (1) properties in common with all Scandinavian languages, (2) properties in common with Mainland Scandinavian languages, (3) properties in common with Insular Scandinavian languages and (4) specific properties of Traditional Övdalian. The structure of the section follows the above mentioned division with addition of a section where we describe nominal phrase properties. When nothing else is stated, data on Övdalian presented in this section are gathered from Övdalian informants, see Garbacz (2010: 65–88).

2.4.1 *Properties Traditional Övdalian has in common with all Scandinavian languages*

As stated above, Övdalian shares a number of syntactic properties with its Scandinavian relatives. Below, only the most important of these are mentioned: verb second (V2), verb-object word order (VO), possessive reflexive in 3rd person, and predicative adjective agreement.

2.4.1.1 *Verb second.* As in every other standard Scandinavian language (indeed every Germanic language apart from English), only one syntactic constituent may precede the finite verb in the main clause in Övdalian, hence Övdalian is a V2-language, cf. (1).

- (1) a. *Nu will ig it tjööp an-dar biln.*
 now want.to I not buy.INF him-there car.DEF
 ‘Now, I don’t want to buy this car.’
- (1) b. **Nu ig will it tjööp an-dar biln.*
 now I want.to not buy.INF him-there car.DEF
 Intended meaning: ‘Now, I don’t want to buy this car.’

2.4.1.2 *Verb-Object word order*. In Traditional Övdalian, as in the other Scandinavian languages, non-negative objects are placed after the non-finite verb and in front of adverbials of time, location, manner, and other content adverbials, see the examples in (2). Consequently, the basic word order of the verb phrase is verb-object (VO).

- (2) a. *Ig al ev etter **biln** iem i morgu.*
 I will heave after car.DEF home tomorrow
 Intended meaning: ‘I will leave the car at home tomorrow.’
- (2) b. **Ig al **biln** ev etter iem i morgu.*
 I will car.DEF leave after home tomorrow
 Intended meaning: ‘I will leave the car at home tomorrow.’
- (2) c. **Ig al ev etter iem i morgu **biln**.*
 I will heave after home tomorrow car.DEF
 Intended meaning: ‘I will leave the car at home tomorrow.’

The VO pattern is an innovation in the Scandinavian languages, as their medieval ancestors exhibited both VO and OV pattern (Delsing 1999, Hróarsdóttir 2000, and others). For Classical Övdalian, Levander (1909b: 122) gives examples in which pronominal objects precede the infinite verb, see (3):

- (3) *Add dier int **ånum** stjuo'ssað, eld?*
 had they not him given.a.lift or
 ‘Had they not given him a lift?’

This may suggest that remnants of an earlier OV-pattern were still present in Classical Övdalian at the beginning of the 20th century.

2.4.1.3 *Possessive reflexives*. Similarly to the other Scandinavian languages, Övdalian displays a possessive reflexive in 3rd person singular and plural, which in 3rd person singular masculine is Övd. *senn* (Swe. *sin*, Ice. *sinn*) and in 3rd person plural masculine Övd. *sainer* (Swe. *sina*, Ice. *sínir*).

2.4.1.4 *Predicative adjective agreement*. Predicative adjective agreement is present in Övdalian and in all the Scandinavian languages, see (4). Some Swedish and Norwegian dialects have, however, lost predicative adjective agreement. Predicative adjective agreement in gender and in plural was present in Classical Övdalian (Levander 1909: 45 ff.), but has disappeared in Traditional Övdalian.

- (4) a. *Ny̆ aus irå sturer.*
new.PL houses are big.PL
'New houses are big.'
- (4) b. **Ny̆ aus irå stur.*
new.PL houses are big.SG
Intended meaning: 'New houses are big.'

As shown above, Traditional Övdalian shares some core properties with the other Scandinavian languages, both Mainland and Insular Scandinavian. The properties listed in this section thus do not divide the Scandinavian languages into subgroups.

2.4.2 Properties of Traditional Övdalian in common with Mainland Scandinavian

Many of the properties that according to Holmberg & Platzack (1995) are due to the lack of rich agreement or morphological case are attested in Traditional Övdalian, despite the fact that Övdalian has preserved rich agreement and morphological case. Some of these properties are discussed in this section.

2.4.2.1 Weather-subjects and expletive subjects. The so-called weather-subjects (as *it* in ‘it rains’ or in ‘it has snowed’) cannot be omitted in Övdalian, in contrast to Insular Scandinavian, but in line with Mainland Scandinavian (Falk 1993). This is shown in (5).

- (5) a. *I nã ,t ar *(eð) snieð mitjið.*
in night has it snowed much
‘It has snowed much in the night.’
- (5) b. *Nu far *(eð) raingen.*
now goes it rain.INF
‘It starts raining now.’

Some examples attested in an Övdalian recording from 1976 (published on a CD “Dialekter i Dalarna”) indicate that non-referential subjects could be omitted in coordination in older stages of Övdalian, see (6).

- (6) *... ulld legg patiens an-dar Elfström, add kuortlietjin, **og war sãmårn**, an war daraute.*
should lay patience he-there Elfström had pack.of.cards.DEF and was summer.DEF he was outside
‘... [he] was going to play patience, this Elfström, [he] had the pack of cards and **it** was summer, so he was outside.’

Omission of expletive subjects appears to be at best only marginally possible in Övdalian as shown in (7), contrary to Swedish, where the omission is grammatical (Falk 1993: 270).⁹

- (7) a. *I grasj kann ?(eð) wårå uormer.*
 in grass.DEF can it be snakes
 ‘There can be snakes in the grass.’

- (7) b. *I Lund ir ?(eð) mikkell studenter.*
 in Lund is it many students
 ‘There live many students in Lund.’

In this respect, Övdalian patterns with Mainland Scandinavian rather than with Insular Scandinavian.

2.4.2.2 *Dative alternation.* Dative alternation, where an indirect object is replaced with a prepositional phrase, is found both in Övdalian and the Mainland Scandinavian languages. In Icelandic dative alternation is, according to Thráinsson (2007: 174), ‘‘pretty much restricted to N[ominative]D[ative]A[ccusative] verbs that express actual movement of the direct object.’’ In Övdalian, dative alternation seems to be more restricted when compared with Swedish (Garbacz 2010: 69), but is possible as shown in (8).

- (8) a. *Kullq mqi gav miq å .-dar buotje.*
 girl.DEF mine gave me she-there book.DEF
 ‘My daughter gave me that book.’

- (8) b. *Kullq mqi gav å .-dar buotje að miq.*
 girl.DEF mine gave she-there book.DEF to me
 ‘My daughter gave me that book.’

⁹ For example _{Swe.} *I gräset kan finnas ormar* (lit. In grass.DEF can be snakes), after Falk (1993: 270).

2.4.2.3 *Word order between the direct and the indirect object.* The possibility of inverting the order between the direct (DO) and the indirect object (IO) is known from both Old Icelandic, and, with some verbs, in Modern Icelandic (Collins & Thráinsson 1996; Thráinsson 2007: 131 ff.). This inversion construction is absent in both Mainland Scandinavian and in Övdalian, as illustrated in (9).

- (9) a. **Ig gav **dukkur** kullum.*
 I gave dolls.ACC girls.DAT
 Intended meaning: ‘I gave (the) dolls to the girls’
- (9) b. *Ig gav kullum **dukkur**.*
 I gave girls.DAT dolls.ACC
 ‘I gave (the) dolls to the girls’

2.4.2.4 *Lack of oblique subjects.* Subjects that display a case other than nominative are not attested in Traditional Övdalian; this is shown in (10). In this way, Traditional Övdalian patterns with Mainland Scandinavian, but differs from Icelandic and Faroese.

- (10) *I går drömd ig / ***mig** ien underlin dröm.*
 yesterday dreamed I / me a strange dream
 ‘I dreamed a strange dream yesterday.’

2.4.2.5 *Lack of Stylistic Fronting.* Stylistic Fronting refers to a construction where a constituent other than the subject is placed between the subordinating complementizer and the finite verb in subjectless clauses. This possibility is known from Old Swedish and Modern Icelandic (cf.

Thráinsson 2007: 352 ff. and references therein), but is absent in Traditional Övdalian, cf. (11).

Stylistic Fronting is also absent in Swedish and the other Mainland Scandinavian languages.

- (11) a. **Såg du á , -dar kelindjē so **aut** fuor?*
saw you she-there woman.DEF that out went
Intended meaning: ‘Did you see the women that went out?’
- (11) b. *Såg du á , -dar kelindjē so fuor **aut**?*
saw you she-there woman.DEF that went out
‘Did you see the women that went out?’

2.4.2.6 *Lack of transitive expletives.* Transitive expletive constructions, where an initial expletive element co-occurs with an overt subject and a transitive verb, are possible in Modern Icelandic (cf. Thráinsson 2007: 47 ff. and references therein), but are absent in both Övdalian, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish.

- (12) a. ****Eð** ar **ien övkall** tjiöpt stugū.*
it has an Övdalian bought house.DEF
Intended meaning: ‘An Övdalian has bought the house.’
- (12) b. ***Ien övkall** ar tjiöpt stugū.*
an Övdalian has bought house.DEF
‘An Övdalian has bought the house.’

Data presented in Levander (1909b: 111) suggest that transitive expletives were possible in Classical Övdalian, see (12c).

(12) c. *Eð dug dá , int **waundjindier** áv **diem** bjärå mig.*

it can then not none of them carry me

‘None of them can carry me.’

2.4.2.7 *Indirect subject questions with a resumptive element.* Övdalian requires the presence of a complementizer after the *wh*-word in an embedded subject question as shown in (13). The same requirement is found in Mainland Scandinavian, whereas no resumptive element is present in Insular Scandinavian.

(13) a. **Å , spuord etter **wen** låg i dragtjistun.*

she asked after what laid in drawer.DEF

Intended meaning: ‘She asked what was lying in the drawer.’

(13) b. *Å , spuord etter **wen so** låg i dragtjistun.*

she asked after what that laid in drawer.DEF

‘She asked what was lying in the drawer.’

2.4.2.8 *Lack of null generic subjects.* Traditional Övdalian does not allow null generic subject pronouns as given in (14). In this respect, Traditional Övdalian behaves as Mainland Scandinavian and contrary to Modern Icelandic (Sigurðsson 1989: 161 ff.):

(14) a. **Jär får it rötja.*

here may not smoke

Intended meaning: ‘It is not allowed to smoke here.’

(14) b. *Jär får **an** it rötja.*

here may one not smoke

‘It is not allowed to smoke here.’

2.4.2.9 *Lack of verb movement in infinitivals.* In Övdalian infinitival clauses (control infinitivals), the verb follows sentential adverbials including negation (Garbacz 2006: 180), which indicates lack of verb movement.¹⁰ This is shown in (15). The Övdalian pattern is the opposite of the pattern found in Icelandic, where the finite verb precedes sentential adverbials (Thráinsson 2007: 421).

(15) a. **An luveð aut tä kum(å) **aldri** att.*

he promised out to come never back

Intended meaning: ‘He promised never to come back.’

(15) b. *An luveð aut tä **aldri** kum(å) att.*

he promised out to never come back

‘He promised never to come back.’

(15) c. *An fuorkeð mig tä **int** djärå eð-dar.*

he encouraged me to not do it-there

‘He encouraged me not to do this.’

(from Garbacz 2006: 180)

¹⁰ Traditional Övdalian exhibits two negation forms, *int* and *it*, see section 3.2.5 below and Garbacz (2010: 96 ff.).

- (15) d. **An fuorkeð mig tä djärå it eð-dar.*

he encouraged me to do not it-there

Intended meaning: ‘He encouraged me not to do this.’

(from Garbacz 2006: 180)

2.4.2.10 *Lack of Long Distance Reflexives.* Long Distance Reflexives are a well-known phenomenon in Icelandic (Thráinsson 2007: 465 ff. and references therein) and it is also found (at least to some extent) in Norwegian (Strahan 2003). The Icelandic type of Long Distance Reflexives is ungrammatical in Traditional Övdalian, as shown in the examples in (16).

- (16) a. **Olga_i ar sagt (at) Andes elsker sig_i*

Olga has said that Anders loves self

Intended meaning: ‘Olga has said that Anders loves her.’

- (16) b. *Olga_i ar sagt at Andes elsker **ån(a)**_i*

Olga has said that Anders loves her

‘Olga has said that Anders loves her.’

2.4.2.11 *No Object Shift of DPs.* As in the other Mainland Scandinavian languages, Traditional Övdalian does not allow object shift with full DP-objects, that is, the DP-object cannot precede the negation in a main clause, see (17). As will be shown in section 2.4.4.2, Traditional Övdalian does not display Object Shift of pronominal objects. The examples illustrating the lack of Object Shift in Traditional Övdalian contain both forms of negation attested in Övdalian, *int(e)* and *it*, cf. Garbacz (2010: 96 ff.). Among the modern Insular Scandinavian languages, only Icelandic displays Object Shift of full DP-objects.

- (17) a. **Ig t jyöpt **buotjē** inte.*
 I bought book.DEF not
 Intended meaning: ‘I didn’t buy the book’
- (17) b. **Ig t jyöpt **buotjē** it.*
 I bought book.DEF not
 Intended meaning: ‘I didn’t buy the book’
- (17) c. *Ig t jyöpt int **buotjē**.*
 I bought not book.DEF
 ‘I didn’t buy the book’
- (17) d. *Ig t jyöpt it **buotjē**.*
 I bought not book.DEF
 ‘I didn’t buy the book’

2.4.2.12 *Summary.* In this section we have illustrated a number of cases where the word order of Traditional Övdalian patterns with the word order of the Mainland Scandinavian languages.¹¹ In the next section, we present properties that Övdalian shares with Insular Scandinavian (represented here by Icelandic), but not with Mainland Scandinavian.

2.4.3 *Properties of Traditional Övdalian in common with Insular Scandinavian*

In some aspects, Traditional Övdalian word order is similar to the word order found in Icelandic and other Insular Scandinavian languages.

¹¹ Another property that Övdalian shares with Mainland Scandinavian is the lack of full-DP object shift. This is discussed in the next section in connection with Object Shift.

2.4.3.1 *Embedded V⁰-to-I⁰ movement.* In Övdalian, the finite verb may precede sentential adverbials in embedded clauses under a non-bridge verb, as is the case in Icelandic and the medieval Scandinavian languages (Vikner 1995 and many others).¹² Examples of relative clause word order are given in (18).

- (18) a. *Eð ir biln so an will **it** åvå.*
 it is car.DEF that he wants.to not have
 ‘It is the car that he doesn’t want to have.’
- (18) b. *Eð ir biln so an **int** will åvå.*
 it is car.DEF that he not wants.to have
 ‘It is the car that he doesn’t want to have.’

2.4.3.2 *VP-fronting.* Övdalian does not allow VP-fronting as shown in (19), which is similar to Icelandic. In Swedish, on the other hand, VP-fronting is generally accepted.

- (19) a. ****Skuotið an-dar brindan** ar an fel it.*
 shot him-there elk.DEF has he probably not
 Intended meaning: ‘He hasn’t of course shot this elk.’
- (19) b. *An ar fel it **skuotið an-dar brindan**.*
 he has probably not shot him-there elk.DEF
 ‘He hasn’t of course shot this elk.’

¹² Icelandic relative clauses form a case in point; although the SUBJ-Vfin-ADV order is obligatory in most cases in Icelandic embedded clauses, some clauses allow the SUBJ-ADV-Vfin order, see Angantýsson (2007), Wiklund et al (2007). For Faroese, many recent studies have shown that the finite verb tends to precede only some time adverbials, but not negation (Bentzen et al. 2009, Heycock et al. 2009), although in older Faroese the verb could precede the negation in all embedded clauses (Thráinsson et al. 2004: 297).

2.4.3.3 *Pseudopassives*. Pseudopassives, where the subject is promoted from a position as the complement of a preposition (Eng. *He was laughed at*), are not possible in Övdalian, as shown in (20), nor in Icelandic. However, they are attested in (varieties of) Swedish.

- (20) a. **Gunnar wart stjemtað min.*
 Gunnar became made.fun with
 Intended meaning: ‘People made fun of Gunnar.’
- (20) b. *Fuotjeð stjemteð min Gunnar.*
 people.DEF made.fun with Gunnar
 ‘People made fun of Gunnar.’

2.4.3.4. *The Present Participle Construction*. The use of the Present Participle Construction is attested both in Övdalian and in Insular Scandinavian, see Garbacz (2010: 77) for Övdalian, Sigurðsson (1989: 340 ff.) for Icelandic, and Thráinsson et al. (2004: 317) for Faroese. In the Mainland Scandinavian languages, this phenomenon is found in Norwegian (Faarlund et al. 1997: 119), but is absent in standard Swedish and Danish. An Övdalian example is given in (21).

- (21) *Ittað-jär wattneð ir it drikkend.*
 it-there water.DEF is not drinking
 ‘This water was not drinkable.’

2.4.3.5 *Summary*. Traditional Övdalian shares a small number of word order patterns with Insular Scandinavian. It retains case morphology and subject-verb agreement and it also allows embedded V^0 -to- I^0 movement and the use of the Present Participle Construction, but disallows both VP-fronting and pseudopassives.

2.4.4 Syntactic innovations in Traditional Övdalian

Traditional Övdalian displays some syntactic properties not found in any of the standard Scandinavian languages. Some of them, such as referential null subjects, subject doubling and negative concord are also rare among the other standard Germanic languages, being only attested in a smaller number of non-standard varieties. These properties are most probably Övdalian innovations.

2.4.4.1 *Referential null subjects*. Traditional Övdalian allows for referential null subjects in 1st and 2nd person plural as shown in (22), whereas neither Insular nor Mainland Scandinavian do.¹³

- (22) a. *Wiso kåytið?*
 why run.2.PL
 ‘Why are you running?’
- (22) b. *Wiso kåytið ið?*
 why run.2.PL you.PL
 ‘Why are YOU running?’

2.4.4.2 *Object Shift of pronominal objects*. As one of the very few Scandinavian varieties and as no other standard Scandinavian language does, Traditional Övdalian disallows object shift of pronominal objects as shown in (23). This is a property that Övdalian shares with Fenno-Swedish and the variant of Danish spoken on the islands Lolland and Falster (Christensen 2005: 153).¹⁴

¹³ The occurrence of Övdalian referential null subjects is discussed extensively in Rosenkvist (2008) and we refer the reader to this work for an overview. A small percentage of referential null subjects is also found in Old Swedish (Håkansson 2008) and in the other Old Scandinavian languages (Rosenkvist 2009).

¹⁴ The examples illustrating the lack of Object Shift in Traditional Övdalian contain both forms of negation: attested in Övdalian, *int(e)* and *it*. See Garbacz (2010: 96 ff.).

- (23) a. *An såg int **mig**.*
 he saw not me
 ‘He didn’t see me’
- (23) b. *An såg it **mig**.*
 he saw not me
 ‘He didn’t see me’
- (23) c. *??An såg **mig** inte.*¹⁵
 he saw not me
 Intended meaning: ‘He didn’t see me’
- (23) d. **An såg **mig** it.*
 he saw not me
 Intended meaning: ‘He didn’t see me’

2.4.4.3 *Inflectional morphemes on the noun for number and definiteness.* Traditional Övdalian masculine and feminine nouns lack separate inflectional morphemes that would distinguish plural indefinite from plural definite. It thus contrasts with other Scandinavian languages, which do display such distinctive marking. Övdalian masculine and feminine nouns have only one plural ending, see (24a,b). The neuter nouns do have a definiteness contrast in the plural, see (25c).¹⁶

¹⁵ The sentence in (23c) is only accepted as grammatical by one of twelve informants, whereas the remaining eleven mark it at best as questionable (Garbacz 2010: 200).

¹⁶ However, Classical Övdalian, as spoken in the villages of Åsen, Brunnsberg, Loka, Karlsarvet, and Västmyckeläng, displayed a difference between the indefinite and definite forms in the plural of masculine and feminine nouns: *kaller* ‘men.INDEF’ and *kallär* ‘men.DEF’. This difference is normally not present in the Traditional Övdalian investigated here, with the exception of some older speakers. On the other hand, neuter nouns have always had different forms for indefinite plural and definite plural: *daitje* ‘ditches.INDEF’ and *daitje* ‘ditches.DEF’, the ending being historically a plural ending. For the complete paradigm of Classical Övdalian, see Levander (1909b: 11–44).

- (24) a. *kall – kall**n** – kall**er** – kall**er***
 man – man.DEF – men – men.DEF
- (24) b. *bru – brun**e** – bruer – bruer*
 bridge – bridge.DEF – bridges – bridges.DEF
- (24) c. *buord – buorde**ð** – buord – buorde*
 table – table.DEF – tables – tables.DEF

2.4.4.4 *Subject doubling*. Traditional Övdalian is the only Scandinavian language that exhibits multiple subjects. As pointed to us by Henrik Rosenkvist (p.c.), double subjects are also attested in Swedish, their function and interpretation being however different, see also Engdahl (2003). Multiple subjects are normally double, but data presented in Levander (1909b: 109) suggest that even triple subjects were possible in Classical Övdalian. The first subject is always in clause-initial position and the doubled subject appears probably in the canonical subject position (Garbacz 2010: 106) and is preceded by an adverbial expressing the speaker's attitude (Rosenkvist 2007, see also Rosenkvist's paper in this volume). This phenomenon is illustrated in the Övdalian examples in (25).

- (25) a. ***Du** ir sakt **du** uvendes duktin dalska.*
 you are certainly you very good speak.Övdalian.INF
 'You are certainly very good at speaking Övdalian.'
- (25) b. ***Du** ir sakt uvendes duktin dalska.*
 you are certainly very good speak.Övdalian.INF
 'You are certainly very good at speaking Övdalian.'

2.4.4.5 *Negative concord.* Traditional Övdalian optionally exhibits so-called *negative concord* (NC), and this phenomenon occurs when the sentential negation, *inte* ‘not’ is accompanied by a quantifier introducing negation in particular syntactic configurations (as *indjin* ‘nobody’), see (26).

(26) a. *Ig ar **it** si'tt **inggan**.*

I have not seen nobody

‘I haven’t seen anybody.’

(26) b. *I går belld (**it**) **inggan** kumå að Mýora.*

yesterday could not nobody come to Mora

‘Yesterday, nobody could get to Mora.’

Two negative elements in a single clause normally result in an affirmative reading in the vast majority of Scandinavian varieties. The exceptions are few: in Kven-Norwegian (Sollid 2005), certain Danish dialects (Jespersen 1917: 72 ff.), and in some dialects of Fenno-Swedish (Wide & Lyngfelt 2009) two or more negative elements may yield a single negation reading.

2.4.4.6 *Summary.* We have seen that there are a small number of syntactic properties that are specific to Övdalian. Diachronically, all of them appear to be Övdalian innovations.

2.4.5 *A note on nominal phrase structure in Traditional Övdalian*

In this section, we present a number of basic characteristics of the nominal phrase in Traditional Övdalian.

2.4.5.1 *Expressions of definiteness.* Definiteness is expressed by a suffix on the head noun in Traditional Övdalian as in the other Scandinavian languages as shown in the example in (27).

- (27) *ferdę*
journey.DEF
‘The journey’

Indefiniteness is normally expressed in Övdalian by a free prenominal indefinite article in the singular, whereas in the plural, there is no indefinite article. This contrast is shown in (28). Unlike the other Scandinavian languages, there is no definiteness distinction on masculine and feminine nouns in the plural (cf. 2.4.4.3). The same pattern is found in all the other Scandinavian languages except Icelandic, which lacks indefinite articles both in the singular and plural.

- (28) *je buok – Øbyöker*
a book – books
‘A book – books’

2.4.5.2 *Expressions of possession.* Traditional Övdalian expresses possession in three ways: (a) the possessor is placed before the head noun, (29a); (b) the possessor is expressed by means of a preposition phrase with the preposition *ađ*, (29b); and (c) the possessor is placed after the head noun, (29c). Counterparts of the construction shown in (29a) are found in the other Scandinavian languages, whereas counterparts of (29b,c) are only found in some dialects.

- (29) a. *Lassees buord.*
Lasse’s table
‘Lasse’s table.’

(29) b. *Buordeð **að** Lasse.*

table.DEF to Lasse

‘Lasse’s table.’

(29) c. *Buordeð **Lasse**.*

table.DEF Lasse

‘Lasse’s table.’

Possessive pronouns may precede or follow the head noun in Traditional Övdalian. Typically, the pronoun follows the noun as shown in (30a), but can precede it when stressed as illustrated in the example given in (30b). The same pattern is found in Norwegian (Faarlund et al. 1997: 263 ff.) and in Icelandic (Sigurðsson 2006: 214 ff.), whereas standard Swedish normally only allows for a possessor that precedes the noun.

(30) a. *Buotjē **māi**.*

book.DEF mine

‘My book.’

(30) b. ***MÅI** buok*

mine book

‘My book.’

2.4.5.3 Position of attributive adjectives. Attributive adjectives precede the noun in Övdalian, as in (31a), just as they do in Insular and Mainland Scandinavian. In definite nominal phrases,

Övdalian normally incorporates adjectives into nouns, contrary to all the other Scandinavian languages. This is shown in (31b).¹⁷

- (31) a. *Ien **koldan** witter.*
a cold winter
‘A cold winter.’
- (31) b. *An-dar **kold**wittern.*
he-there cold-winter.DEF
‘The cold winter.’

2.4.5.4 *Extended use of the definite form.* Övdalian often uses the definite form in order to mark partitivity and also in contexts in which standard Swedish has no article (Delsing 2003: 15). As shown in (32), the use of the definite article in such cases is not obligatory. This phenomenon is known from a number of north Scandinavian non-standard varieties (Delsing 2003: 15 ff.), but it is not attested in the standard varieties of Insular and Mainland Scandinavian.

- (32) a. *Eð ir grannweð**reð** i dag.*
it is nice-weather.DEF today
‘It is nice weather today.’
- (32) b. *Eð ir grannweðer i dag.*
it is nice-weather today
‘It is nice weather today.’

¹⁷ However, incorporation of adjectives into nouns is common in some northern Swedish dialects (Sandström & Holmberg 2003), as well as, for example, *blåljus* ‘flashing lights’ and *stortorget* ‘main square’ in Swedish. It is also possible in the Norwegian dialects of Trøndelag (Vangsnes 1999).

2.5 Syntactic change in Övdalian

Our overview has shown that Traditional Övdalian, and to a lesser extent Classical Övdalian, share a number of syntactic properties with modern Swedish, but also that in some cases Traditional Övdalian pattern with Insular Scandinavian. Finally, some syntactic properties of Traditional Övdalian are not found in the other Scandinavian languages.

Holmberg & Platzack (1995) have proposed that a number of word order properties are expected to be attested in a language that, like Traditional Övdalian, has both rich subject-verb agreement and morphological case. These are the following: (i) embedded V^0 -to- I^0 movement, (ii) oblique subjects, (iii) Stylistic Fronting, (iv) null expletives, (v) transitive expletives, (vi) heavy subject postponing, (vii) indirect subject questions without a resumptive element, (viii) null generic subject pronoun, (ix) no VP-fronting, (x) no pseudopassives, (xi) full DP Object Shift, (xii) possibility of placing the direct object in front of the indirect object, (xiii) no free benefactives and (xiv) no dative alternation. The first nine properties are attributed to subject verb agreement, whereas the last four properties are attributed to the presence of morphological case. Only in five cases does Traditional Övdalian behave as predicted by Holmberg & Platzack (1995): three of these cases are believed to be an effect of subject-verb agreement: (i) embedded V^0 -to- I^0 movement, (ii) heavy subject postponing (that seems to be at least marginally possible in Övdalian) and (iii) no VP-fronting; and the remaining two are believed to be triggered by the presence of morphological case: (i) the lack of pseudopassives and (ii) the lack of free benefactives. In Table 13 below, we summarize the syntactic properties in this section. Notice that we have added a separate column for Classical Övdalian. This way, we can show what we know about Övdalian from Levander (1909b), but unfortunately there are some properties about presence of which in Classical Övdalian we do not know much.

Table 13: Properties of Traditional Övdalian and the Scandinavian languages

THE PHENOMENON	TRADITIONAL ÖVDALIAN	CLASSICAL ÖVDALIAN	INSULAR SCAND.	MAINLAND SCANDINAVIAN
1) VERB-SECOND (V2)	+	+	+	+
2) OBLIGATORY VO WORD ORDER	+	—	+	+
3) POSSESSIVE REFLEXIVES	+	+	+	+
4) PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVE AGREEMENT IN NUMBER	+	+	+	+
5) OBLIGATORY NON-REFERENTIAL SUBJECTS	+	—	—	+
6) DATIVE ALTERNATION	+	?	—	+
7) OBLIQUE SUBJECTS	—	?	+	—
8) STYLISTIC FRONTING	—	+	+	—
9) TRANSITIVE EXPLETIVES	—	+	+	—
10) COMPLEMENTIZER IN INDIRECT SUBJECT QUESTION	+	?	—	+
11) NULL GENERIC SUBJECT PRONOUN	—	?	+	—
12) THE POSSIBILITY OF PLACING DO BEFORE IO	—	?	+	—
13) VERB MOVEMENT IN INFINITIVALS	—	?	+	—
14) LONG DISTANCE REFLEXIVES	—	?	+	—
15) V ⁰ -TO-I ⁰ MOVEMENT	+	+	+	—
16) VP-FRONTING	—	?	—	+
17) PSEUDOPASSIVES	—	?	—	+
18) THE PRESENT PARTICIPLE CONSTRUCTION	+	?	+	—
19) REFERENTIAL NULL SUBJECTS	+	+	—	—
20) OBJECT SHIFT	—	—	+	+
21) SEPARATE INFLECTION FOR BOTH NUMBER AND DEFINITENESS	—	+	+	+
22) DOUBLE SUBJECTS	+	+	—	—
23) NEGATIVE CONCORD	+	+	—	—
24) RICH CASE MORPHOLOGY	—	+	+	—
25) RICH SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT	+	+	+	— ¹⁸

¹⁸ Subject doubling is attested in Swedish (Engdahl 2003), but it is not of the Övdalian type.

The table shows two major tendencies. On the one hand, some syntactic developments (loss of OV word order, emergence of obligatory non-referential subjects, loss of Stylistic Fronting and loss of transitive expletives) have caused Övdalian to become more alike Swedish. On the other hand, subject-verb agreement and the Övdalian innovations (referential null subjects, lack of Object Shift, subject doubling, and negative concord) have been retained.

In the next section, we look at some of the properties of Övdalian as represented in the Övdalian Speech Corpus. Our aim is to confront the corpus findings with the elicited data from Garbacz (2010) presented in section 2.4. However, due to the small size of the corpus, we were neither able to follow up all of the properties listed in section 2.4 nor account for every single property of Övdalian that might be interesting to the reader. Instead, we have chosen to focus on some main properties that also are searchable in the corpus.

3 Morphology and syntax of Övdalian anno 2009

One of the aims of this article is to show how Övdalian as seen in the Övdalian Speech Corpus today differs from Traditional Övdalian. Therefore, we have examined a few of the Övdalian characteristics mentioned in section 2.4 above.

When looking for morphological data in the Övdalian Speech Corpus, we have focused on those features that will be relatively easy to find using simple string-based search criteria, since the corpus is not yet grammatically tagged. In what follows, we will present numbers of hits from various searches. However, these numbers do show the general trend of the language in the corpus. A particular search will often give a vast array of hits, some of which are irrelevant. We have removed the most obvious of those hits, but some may still remain.

3.1 Morphology

In the Mainland Scandinavian languages, morphology has become heavily reduced since the Middle Ages. It concerns both case morphology and verbal morphology. Morphological changes in Övdalian seem to have been intense during the 20th century (Helgander 2005: 20 ff, Garbacz 2010: 39 ff.). In what follows, we present our main findings in the Övdalian morphology and compare the morphological system of Övdalian as found in the corpus to the one found in Traditional Övdalian and Classical Övdalian.

3.1.1 Verb agreement morphology

Övdalian traditionally has both person and number morphology on the verb (cf. section 2.3 above). The 1st person plural verb ending *-um* is the same in both present and preterite, and both weak and strong inflection. The same ending is found in Icelandic and in the medieval varieties of Scandinavian, whereas neither Faroese nor the modern Mainland Scandinavian languages have such a verbal ending. By searching the corpus, we aim to corroborate that the ending in question is present in today's Övdalian, as claimed by Steensland (2000a), Åkerberg (2000), (2004), Nyström & Sapir (2005a,b), Garbacz (2010: 46) and many others.

Searching the corpus, we find 379 occurrences of the plural verb suffix *-um* (after having removed some irrelevant hits such as the *um* occurring in *um* 'about' and *kringum* 'around'). Some verbs are given in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Some of the 379 occurrences of 1 pl *-um* verbs in the corpus.

ÖVDALIAN VERB	SWEDISH TRANSLATION	ENGLISH TRANSLATION	NO OF OCCURRENCES	TENSE
<i>addum</i>	hade	had	60	PRETERITE
<i>warum</i>	var	were	39	PRETERITE
<i>ulldum</i>	skulle	should	17	PRETERITE
<i>läktum</i>	lekte	played	15	PRETERITE
<i>kamum</i>	kom	came	4	PRETERITE
<i>djinggum</i>	gick	went	3	PRETERITE
<i>dalskeðum</i>	pratade.älvdalska	spoke.Övdalian	4	PRETERITE
<i>djifteðum</i>	gifte	married	1	PRETERITE
<i>tyttjum</i>	tycker	think	1	PRESENT
<i>kuogum</i>	tittar	look	1	PRESENT

We illustrate with an example uttered by an older female, see (33).¹⁹

(33) *Ja, då . finggum wið svenska.*

yes then had.to.1.PL we speak.Swedish

‘Yes, the we had to speak Swedish.’ (M, Blyberg, 65)

We do not find any instances of the verbal ending *-um* that is combined with a subject other than 1st person plural.

The ending *-ið* expresses 2nd person plural in Övdalian, according to the standard descriptions of the language. In the corpus, we only find five occurrences of this ending (having excluded the hits in which the ending is not a verbal ending). Out of these five occurrences two have an over subject *ið* (that is homophone with the ending, as the ending as a reanalyzed 2nd person plural pronoun, see Björklund 1956: 98–107), see (34).

(34) *Wen avið ið för bil då . ?*

what have.2.PL you.PL for car then

‘What car do you have then?’ (M, Skolan, 14)

¹⁹ Every example from the corpus refers to its informant by three pieces of information: 1) gender: F(female)/M(male), 2) place, and 3) age (in years).

As was the case with the ending *-um*, we do not find any instances of the ending *-ið* combined with a subject different than a 2nd person plural subject.

In order to investigate whether the endings *-um* and *-ið* can be attested with other subjects than 1st and 2nd person respectively, we have chosen the verbal suffix *-eð* (expressing preterite tense of weak verbs) and conducted a search of verbal forms ending on *-eð* and not followed by any suffix for additional person marking. There turns out to be 60 such occurrences. The contexts for the verbs ending on *-eð* show may be followed by singular subjects or the 3rd person plural subject, but not by a 1st or 2nd person plural subject. These findings suggest that the Övdalian verbal morphology is robust. Some examples of the verbs are shown below.

Table 15. Some of the 60 occurrences of the verbal ending *-eð* in the corpus.

ÖVDALIAN VERB	SWEDISH TRANSLATION	ENGLISH TRANSLATION	NO OF OCCURRENCES	PERSON, NUMBER, TENSE (OF AT LEAST ONE OCCURRENCE)
<i>flytteð</i>	flyttade	moved	8	1SG PRET
<i>dalskeð</i>	pratade.älvdalska	spoke.Övdalian	4	3PL PRET
<i>prateð</i>	pratade	talked	4	1SG PRET
<i>jobbeð</i>	jobbade	worked	3	3PL PRET
<i>elskeð</i>	älskade	loved	1	1SG PRET
<i>djifteð</i>	gifte	married	2	3PL PRET
<i>brukeð</i>	brukade	used	2	3SG PRET
<i>skrieveð</i>	skrev	wrote	1	1SG PRET
<i>servireð</i>	serverade	served	1	1 SG PRET

Below, we give two examples of the ending *-eð* with a singular subject, se (35), and with the 3rd person plural subject, se (36).

(35) *Og lejoneð wråleð dan autför.*

and lion.DEF roared there outside

‘And the lion roared outside.’ (F, Klitten, 47)

(36) *Oller språkeð ju övdalska.*

everybody spoke.3.PL of.course Övdalian

‘Obviously, everybody spoke Övdalian.’ (M, Vasa, 59)

It seems fair to conclude that the verb morphology of Övdalian distinguishes person and number.

Our conclusion is different from that of Angantýsson (2008: 9) who claims the following:

Among the adolescents, the verbal paradigm completely collapses in three cases of nine and no ending is [a] common choice in 2pl. and 3pl. Among the adults the *–um* ending has a robust status and so does the *–a(s)* ending in 3pl., but the ending for 2pl. seems to be rather unstable (although this can be affected by the choice of verb or even orthography). (Angantýsson 2008: 9)

Having investigated the corpus, we cannot however find data that could justify this view. On the contrary, the corpus data seem to indicate that verbal morphology in Övdalian is robust. A conclusion similar to our is also drawn in Helgander (2005: 20 ff.).

3.1.2 Case morphology in nouns

While Classical Övdalian had four cases (nominative, genitive, dative and accusative) and, in some instances vocative (Levander 1909b: 24, 36; Steensland 2009), Traditional Övdalian is considered to have basically three cases on nouns (nominative, genitive and dative), cf. section 2.3 above. Thus, there has been a decline in the case system. Having investigated the language of three Övdalian consultants born 1914, 1937 and 1984, Helgander (2005: 20 ff.) has shown that not only accusative forms, but also dative forms of nouns are absent in Övdalian spoken by the consultant born in 1937 and the one born in 1984.

Given Helgander's (2005) results, we have chosen to investigate the dative ending on nouns, both the dative plural ending *-um* (that is found on all nouns) and all endings of the definite dative masculine singular: *-em*, *-im*, *-am*, *-åm* and *-mm* (Nyström & Sapir 2005b: 2–6). Since the endings are often homographic with other endings and sometimes also stems, the results were sieved. Altogether, we have found 19 different nouns inflected for dative. The ending *-åm* that was not attested at all. The hits are presented in Table 16 below.

@@ Insert Table 16 here

Table 16. The 19 different words with dative case suffixes in the corpus.

ÖVDALIAN NOUN	SWEDISH TRANSLATION	ENGLISH TRANSLATION	NO OF OCCURRENCES	CASE, NUMBER, DEFINITENESS
<i>Åsum</i>	Åsen	(place name)	4	DAT PL DEF
<i>kraftwerkum</i>	kraftverken	power.stations	1	DAT PL DEF
<i>buðum</i>	fäbodarna	sheds	2	DAT PL DEF
<i>gardum</i>	gårdarna	farms	1	DAT PL DEF
<i>fuotum</i>	benen	legs	1	DAT PL DEF
<i>krytyrem</i>	boskapet	cattle	1	DAT PL? DEF
<i>bettjem</i>	bäcken	stream	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>wittrem</i>	vintern	winter	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>fabritjem</i>	fabriken	factory	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>Klittem</i>	Klitten	(place name)	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>werkstaðim</i>	verkstaden	workshop	1	DAT DEF SG
<i>Övdalim</i>	Älvdalen	(place name)	3	DAT DEF SG
<i>skaulam</i>	skolan	school	3	DAT SG DEF
<i>folkskaulam</i>	folkskolan	elementary.school	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>småskaulam</i>	småskolan	junior.level.at.school	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>millumskaulam</i>	mellanskolan	intermediate.level.at.school	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>byrånendam</i>	början	beginning	1	DAT SG DEF
<i>Åsbymm</i>	Åsens.by	(place name)	3	DAT SG DEF
<i>bymm</i>	byn	village	4	DAT SG DEF

The two examples below illustrate the use of dative plural (37a) and dative singular (37b).

(37) a. *Jär og i buðum.*

here and in sheds.DAT.DEF

‘Here and in the sheds.’ (M, Brunnsberg, 67)

(37) b. *Ja, eð war i skaul**am** jär i Å ,sby**mm**.*

yes it was in school.DAT.DEF here in Åsen-village.DAT.DEF

‘Yes, it was in the school, here in the village of Åsen.’ (F, Åsen, 68)

The low number of dative occurrences in the corpus is striking and the majority of these seem to be examples of fossilized forms. This is probably the case of the noun *buðer* ‘sheds’ inflected here *buðum* ‘sheds.dat’ and of the noun *byrånend* ‘beginning’, as these nouns most often appear in phrases like *i buðum* ‘in (the) sheds.dat’ and *i byrånendam* ‘in the beginning.dat’. Out of the dative occurrences that do not seem to be fossilized forms, we would like to highlight two: *krytyrem* ‘cattle.dat’ that is declined with an ending that is normally unattested in dative plural (the expected form here would be *krytyrum* ‘cattle.pl.dat’) and *kraftwerkum* ‘power-stations.dat’ that is not expected to occur in dative form, as it is governed by the preposition, *ringgum* ‘around’, which normally takes accusative, see (38).

(38) *So an ar ferið **ringgum** kraftwerkum og.*

so he has gone around power.plants.DAT too

‘So he has also visited power stations.’ (M, Västäng, 54)

The results indicate that the dative case is on the decline in the Övdalian. The conclusion is corroborated by a look at contexts in which dative should be found, but in which it is absent. To make the search easy to carry out, we did a search for the prepositions *i* ‘in’, *frå* ‘from’ and *að* ‘to’ followed by a noun and found a number of contexts where, contrary to expectation, the dative case is not found, often irrespectively of the age of the consultants. Interestingly, one and the same informant may use both the dative form and the nominative-accusative form in the same context.²⁰ A number of examples follow: *i skaulan* alternatively *i skaul**am*** ‘in the school’

²⁰ The contexts in which the preposition *i* ‘in’ could govern accusative, for example with the verbs of movement, were left out in our search.

(expected *i skaulam*), *i bynn* alt. *i bymm* ‘in the village’ (expected *i bymm*), *i lärebustað'n* ‘in the teacher’s residence’ (expected *i lärebustaðim*), *frå bystugu* ‘from the village house’ (expected *frå bystugun*), *að iss-jär kripper* ‘to these children,’ *að dier-dar kripper* ‘to these children’ (expected *að is(um)-jär krippum* respectively *að diem-dar krippum*), *að gardar* ‘to the farms’ (expected *að gardum*) etc. Interestingly, the same consultant may use both forms, a fact that indicates an individual variation, thus not only a variation present in the whole group of the consulted Övdalian speakers, see (39).

(39) a. *Eð war ruoli oltiett i skaulam.*

it was funny always in school.DAT.DEF

‘It was always funny to be in the school.’ (F, Åsen, 68)

(39) b. *Ig tyttjer ig ar lärt mig mitjið i skaulan so ig ar aft nytta åv.*

I think I have learn me much in school.ACC.DEF that I have had use of

‘I think that I have learn a lot in the school and that I have had use for it.’

(F, Åsen, 68)

None of the young informants showed any use of dative. Given that there is also a fair amount of words not inflected with dative among older users as well, it is probably right to conclude that dative inflection (and, consequently, case inflection in general, as accusative and nominative have already merged in Traditional Övdalian, see Steensland 2000a: 368, Garbacz 2010: 39 ff.) is declining in Övdalian nouns. On the basis of uou search in the corpus, the inflection of nouns can be presented as in Table 17 below. Forms that are different from the Traditional Övdalian, as presented in section 2.3 above, ones have been shaded.

Table 17. Inflection of masculine nouns in Övdalian Speech Corpus

	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	INDEFINITE	DEFINITE	INDEFINITE	DEFINITE
NOMINATIVE	no ending (<i>kripp</i>)	-n/-an (<i>skauln/skaulan</i>)	-er (<i>skauler</i>)	-er (<i>tjyner</i>)
GENITIVE	not attested	-es (<i>faðeres</i>)	not attested	-eres (<i>Å seres</i>)
DATIVE	no ending (<i>blybjärskall</i>)	-n/-am /-an (<i>skauln/ skaulam/ skaulan</i>)	-er/-um (<i>raster /kraftwerkum</i>)	-er/-um (<i>Å ser / Å sum</i>)
ACCUSATIVE	no ending (<i>bil</i>)	-n/-an (<i>skaulan/skauln</i>)	-er (<i>kwelder</i>)	-er (<i>Å ser</i>)

We would like to underline that the small size of the corpus does not allow us to make big generalization, but the tendency is clear: case morphology in nouns is in the process of loss in Övdalian. The conclusion is similar to the picture presented in Helgander (2005: 20 ff.).

3.1.3 Case morphology in pronouns

As has been shown in the previous section, case on nouns is on the decline. The pronouns are however also reported to loose case differences (for example the pronoun *dier* ‘they’ is sometimes replaced by the form *diem* ‘them’ (Helgander 2005: 23). The contemporary Övdalian grammars based on Levander (1909b), as Åkerberg (2000), (2004) and Nyström and Sapir (2005a,b) present the situation in which there are still three cases in pronominal inflection; nominative, dative and accusative. According to these works, there is a dative-accusative distinction in the pronominal paradigm only in the 3rd sg pronouns. So, for the 3rd person feminine singular pronoun, *å*, the dative form is reported to be *enner/en*, whilst the accusative form is *ån(a)*. For the 3rd person masculine singular *an*, the accusative form is *an*, the dative form is *ånum/åm* and for the neutral pronoun of the same person and number, *eð*, the forms are *dyö* (dative) and *eð* (accusative), see also Table 6 above. We have conducted a search in order to find

out whether the distinctions are retained in the variants of Övdalian represented in the corpus. The results are shown in Table 18. Forms being different from the Traditional Övdalian forms (as presented in section 2.3 above) have been shaded.²¹

Table 18. Inflection of personal pronouns as found in the corpus. The number of occurrences is given in the brackets.

NUMBER	SINGULAR					PLURAL		
PERSON	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD			1 ST	2 ND	3 RD
GENDER & CASE	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.	MASC. FEM. NEUT.
NOMINATIVE	<i>ig</i> (623)	<i>du</i> (64)	<i>an</i> (114)	<i>å</i> (44)	<i>eð</i> (641)	<i>wið</i> (154)	<i>ið</i> (1)	<i>dier</i> (110) / <i>diem</i> (23)
GENITIVE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DATIVE	<i>mig</i> (35)	<i>dig</i> (9)	<i>an</i> (3) / <i>onum</i> (1)	<i>enner</i> (3) / <i>en</i> (1)	<i>eð</i> (15) / <i>dyö</i> (2)	<i>uoss</i> (24)	not attested	<i>diem</i> (34) / <i>dier</i> (3)
ACCUSATIVE			<i>an</i> (4) / <i>honum</i> (1)	<i>åna</i> (1) / <i>å</i> (1) / <i>enner</i> (1)	<i>eð</i> (69)			

We see from the table that there is a distinction between nominative pronouns and oblique for first and second person pronouns. For example, there are 623 occurrences of *ig* against 35 occurrences of *mig*. The 35 occurrences of *mig* (‘me’) are found in contexts where we traditionally would expect dative and accusative.²² For this pronoun it is fair to conclude that there is only one form apart from the nominative: the oblique form. Third person masculine and neuter seem to move into a system in which only one form is used. In 3rd person masculine, the

²¹ The form *dier* in dative and accusative contexts is only found when followed by a relative clause, for example “...*min dier so saggd an ar dæeð*” (lit. WITH THEY THAT SAID HE HAS DIED) or when topicalized: “*dier war eð faktiskt synd um*” (lit. THEY WAS IT ACTUALLY PITY ABOUT).

²² I.e. in e.g. Old Swedish or in Modern Icelandic.

form *an* ‘he’ is found more often in dative contexts than the forms *onum/ånum* ‘him.dat’ see (40a). In 3rd person neuter singular, the opposition between *eð* ‘it.acc’ and *dyö* ‘it.dat’ seems to be on its way to disappear: only two instances out of 17 dative contexts have the form *dyö* ‘it.dat’ (12%), see (40b).

- (40) a. *Dar ulld ig fãrã min **an**.*

there should I go with he.NOM/ACC

‘I was to go there with him.’ (M, Blyberg, 65)

- (40) b. *Ja, ettersos ig jobber min **eð** so ig ir intressireð åv ...*

yes since I work with it.NOM/ACC that I am interested of

‘Yes, since I work with that what I find interesting.’ (F, Evertsberg, 59)

In 3rd person feminine, the old accusative form *åna* ‘her.ACC’ is only found in one case. Instead, the forms *å* (originally nominative) and *enner* (originally dative) are used in accusative contexts, as shown in (41).

- (41) a. *Eð war fel mienindjẽ at ig ulld åvå **enner** mjãst åv ...*

it was probably meaning.DEF that I should have her.DAT most of

‘It was probably ment that I should have her [the teacher] most of the time...’ (M, Blyberg, 58)

- (41) b. *...men **å** fygd ig mes ig war fem og sjãks år.*

but she.NOM followed I when I was five and six years

‘... but her I followed when I was five and six years old.’ (M, Brunnsberg, 67)

This transition from distinctive dative and accusative form to one oblique form reminds of the development observed in many variants of Scandinavian, where the oppositions he.NOM –

he.OBL and she.NOM – she.OBL seem to be replaced by the forms he.NOM and she.NOM respectively (Johannessen 2008: 179-180). Also the development of the Övdalian forms in 3rd person plural reminds on the development observed in Swedish (and Mainland Scandinavian), as the originally oblique form *diem* ‘them’ is used nowadays in nominative contexts, see (42).

(42) *Ig wisst it at **diem** fikk so liteð informasjuon.*

I knew not that they got so little information

‘I didn’t know that they had got so little information.’ (F, Väsä, 75)

The general impression one gets from the limited corpus data is the following: while there is a contrast between nominative and oblique pronouns, there is little support for claiming that there is a good and sharp distinction between accusative and dative pronouns. The forms seem to be mixed up and a system with two forms (or even with only one form) for the three contexts: nominative, dative and accusative, seems to be on its way to emerge.

3.1.4 *Summing up the morphology*

The results of our investigation of the Övdalian morphology found in the corpus are summarized in Table 19.

Table 19. Main morphological findings in the corpus compared to Traditional Övdalian, Classical Övdalian and Standard Swedish.

	IN THE ÖVDALIAN CORPUS	IN TRADITIONAL ÖVDALIAN	IN CLASSICAL ÖVDALIAN	IN STANDARD SWEDISH
VERB AGREEMENT	in person and number	in person and number	in person and number	absent
CASE DISTINCTIONS ON NOUNS	only remnants	partially present	present	absent
CASE DISTINCTIONS ON PRONOUNS	the opposition NOM – DAT – ACC in the process of disbandment; the opposition NOM – OBL found in 1 st and 2 nd sg and pl	the opposition NOM – DAT – ACC present in 3 rd person sg; the opposition NOM – OBL found in 1 st and 2 nd sg and pl	the opposition NOM – DAT – ACC present in 3 rd person sg; the opposition NOM – OBL found in 1 st and 2 nd sg and pl	the opposition NOM – OBL found in 1 st and 2 nd sg and pl, as well as in 3 rd sg masc and fem

The results can be summarized as follows: whereas verb agreement has been retained, case morphology on both nouns and pronouns has been in the process of loss since Classical Övdalian. In this respect, Övdalian has become more alike standard Swedish and the other standard Mainland Scandinavian languages, Norwegian and Danish. Of course, the data gathered in the investigated corpus are quite limited, but we still believe that they may indicate in which direction the Övdalian language is currently developing.

3.2 Syntax

As already mentioned, the syntax of Övdalian differs in many respects not only from the syntax of its closest relative, Swedish, but also from the syntax of the other Scandinavian languages. Here, we will look at some of the syntactic properties of Övdalian that we have found in the

Övdalian corpus and that according to Holmberg & Platzack (1995) depend on subject-verb agreement, that is V^0 -to- I^0 movement and Stylistic Fronting, or morphological case, that is Object Shift. Further, we examine the possibility of having referential null subjects, subject doubling and negative concord in the variants of Övdalian represented in the corpus. Finally, we also deal with the structure of the noun phrase, especially the extended use of the definite form, the three gender-system, incorporation of adjectives into nouns, the form of demonstratives and the position of the possessors. Due to the small size of the corpus, we have not been able to examine all the constructions that have been discussed in section 2.4 above. Thus, properties as oblique subjects, null expletives, transitive expletives, heavy subject postponing, indirect subject questions without a resumptive element, null generic subject pronouns, VP-fronting, pseudopassives, possibility of placing the direct object in front of the indirect object, free benefactives and dative alternation have been left out from our investigation.

The fact that a particular construction is not found in the corpus, does not necessarily mean that it is not present in the language. Again, it is important to bear in mind that the limited size of the corpus may have influenced its reliability to a certain degree.

3.2.1 Stylistic Fronting

As stated in section 2.4 above, Stylistic Fronting is found in Classical Övdalian (Levander 1909b: 122), but it is no longer present in Traditional Övdalian independently of the age of the speakers (Rosenkvist 1994, Garbacz 2010: 143–164). In order to test these statements, we have looked for short relative clauses (*so*-clauses) with the verb *wårå* ('be') and a predicative. In such contexts, SF was found in Classical Övdalian. Among the eight clauses that could have displayed SF in the corpus, none does. One such possible SF context is given below in (43).

(43) *Wið addum íe ny stugu so war byggd fy- fyrtiátta.*

we had.1.PL a new house that was built fo- fortyeight

‘We had a new house that was built 1948.’ (F, Evertsberg, 59)

We do not find any evidence that SF is possible and our results support in this way the conclusion presented in Rosenkvist (1994) and Garbacz (2010).

3.2.2 V^0 -to- I^0 movement

V^0 -to- I^0 movement in Traditional Övdalian subordinate clauses is optional, i.e. clauses with the verb in situ are also grammatical in the language, as mentioned in section 2.4.3.1 above and shown in Rosenkvist (1994), Garbacz (2006) and Garbacz (2010: 111–142). In the corpus, there is, however, no instance of any visible verb movement to I^0 . We have examined some possible contexts for verb movement to I^0 , namely embedded clauses that do not allow embedded verb second word order (V2) and found that there are no instances of V^0 -to- I^0 movement.

Out of the five relative *so*-clauses that could have displayed V^0 -to- I^0 (the total number of *so*-clauses in the corpus is 94), two have a high, pre-subject negation (giving consequently no clue to whether the verb has moved or not), one has the verb in situ and in the remaining two, the sentential adverb *bara* ‘only’ precedes the finite verb, whereby the subject is relativized. Since Övdalian allows adverbs in a pre-subject position (Garbacz 2010: 100–103), it is impossible to know whether verb movement has taken place or not when the subject is relativized (independently of whether the verb has moved to I^0 or stayed in situ, it follows the adverb).

Further, out of the total number of 32 adverbial *um*-clauses, two are a possible context for V^0 -to- I^0 . In one of them the negation precedes the subject (no possibility of tracing verb movement), whereas in the other the verb stays in situ.

In the third group of embedded clauses containing four instances of the adverbial *ettersos-* clauses, we find only one that could have been a possible context for V^0 -to- I^0 , but the verb stays in situ here, being preceded by the adverb *ny'tt* ‘recently’.

Finally, among the non-relative that-clauses introduced by the complementizer *at* (108 instances total), we find seven displaying evident embedded V2 (with a fronting of an adverb or an object). We have found nine embedded clauses that do display the order subject – finite verb – adverbial. However, as these clauses are subordinated to matrix predicates allowing for embedded V2, it is difficult to determine whether this word order is an effect of embedded V2 or an effect of a general embedded V^0 -to- I^0 movement that we have been searching for here. We have also found one clause that displays verb in situ (after a matrix predicate that does not allow for embedded V2), namely *eð ir synd at...* ‘it is a pity that...’, cf. (44):

(44) *Eð ir synd at main kripper **int** får upplivå eð-dar å wårå i buðer.*

it is pity that my children not get experience it-there to be in sheds

‘It is a pity that my children will not experience how it is to be in the summer farmsteads.’ (F, Väsa, 59)

The picture that we get after having searched for the structure of embedded clauses is that the following two embedded word orders with respect to the position of the finite verb and sentential adverbials are preferred in today’s Övdalian. Negation (and/or sentential adverbials) either precedes the subject and the finite verb or it follows the subject, but precedes the finite verb. Our findings are in line with the findings presented in Garbacz (2010: 124–128) concerning Traditional Övdalian, with the exception that no instances of visible V^0 -to- I^0 are found. Moreover, we have been able to show that Övdalian also displays embedded V2 after certain predicates, in line with its Scandinavian counterparts. As for V^0 -to- I^0 movement, it can be stated that our results indicate that this pattern is being lost in Övdalian.

3.2.3 Referential null subjects

As stated in section 2.4.4.1 above, Traditional Övdalian allows for referential null subjects in 1st and 2nd person plural (Rosenkvist 2008, Garbacz 2010: 78 ff.). This was also the case of Classical Övdalian (Levander 1909b: 109). The subjects of 1st and 2nd person plural may be omitted. The generalisation is that the 1st person plural pronoun, *wið* ‘we’, may be omitted from the initial position in a main clause and from the initial position in a subordinate clause, but not from an inverted position, i.e. where the subject follows the finite verb (Rosenkvist 2008). The corpus confirms these generalizations, see (45) for an example of referential subject omission from the initial position in a main clause, (46) for omission from the initial position in a subordinate clause and (47) for no omission in case of subject inversion.

(45) *Ja, **addum** ien kuokspis.*

yes had.1.PL a stove

‘Yes, we had a stove.’ (F, Åsen, 73)

(46) *Eð war ju so ien dag mes **warum** aute.*

it was certainly so one day while were.1.PL outside

‘It certainly happened one day when we were outside.’ (F, Klitten, 47)

(47) *Sę **fikkum** wið ien lærer frå , Göteborg.*

then got.1.PL we a teacher from Gothenburg

‘Then we got a teacher from Gothenburg.’ (M, Brunnsberg, 67)

The subject for the 2nd person plural, *ið* ‘you.pl’ may, on the other hand, be omitted from all positions, that is from the initial position and also when inverted.

We conducted our search mainly on the 1st person plural, as the 2nd person plural occurs only five times in the whole corpus. The percentage of overt *wið* ‘we’ in preverbal position, i.e. in the position from which it may be omitted, is slightly less than 16% (39 out of 250). A

comparison with another null subject language, Polish, shows that the overt subject appears more seldom in Polish: 5,7% (96 000 out of 1 653 500).²³ The difference in percentage between Övdalian and Polish may depend on the fact that the Polish ‘corpus’ is much bigger, but it can also depend on the fact that referential subjects are more often left out in Polish compared to Övdalian.

An example of an overt subject in a context where it could have been omitted (as it is not contrastive) is shown below in (48), in contrast to (49), where the subject is covert in a very similar, also a non-contrastive context.

(48) *Ja, **wið** **warum** ju fem kripper.*

yes we were.1.PL thus five children

‘Yes, we were five children.’ (F, Evertsberg, 59)

(49) *Ja, **warum** sjäks då , min fuoreldrer.*

yes were.1.PL six then with parents

‘Yes, we were six together with my parents.’ (M, Blyberg, 65)

3.2.4 Multiple subjects

Doubling of subjects (but not longer tripling, in contrast to Classical Övdalian (Levander 1909b: 109)) is a property of Övdalian that is seldom attested in any other Scandinavian language (see section 2.4.4.4 above, Rosenkvist 2007, Garbacz 2010: 80 ff. and Rosenkvist’s paper in this volume). A subject can be doubled under certain requirements, one of which is that the subject that is doubled must be placed initially in the clause and the second one being the presence of a sentential adverb expressing speaker’s attitude (for example *sakta* ‘actually’, *fel* ‘of

²³ Although the search was conducted on Google, we still believe it is representative.

course/probably’ or *kanenda* ‘certainly’) (Rosenkvist 2007). In the corpus, only one example of a doubled subject is found, in an embedded V2 clause:

(50) *Ienda ir at **ig** ar fel **ig** byggt i raisę.*

the.only is that I have of.course I lived in forest.DEF.DAT

‘The only thing is that I have lived in the forest.’ (M, Brunnsberg, 67)

3.2.5 Negative concord and the form of negation

As stated in section 2.4.4.5 above, Övdalian exhibits optional negative concord (Garbacz 2006, 2008b, 2010: 85–89). In the corpus, we have searched for three negative indefinites (as *inggan* ‘nobody’, *int-noð* ‘nothing’ and *ingger* ‘no.masc/fem.pl’) accompanied by the negative marker (*int* or *it*). Out of the 15 negative indefinites found, three are accompanied by the negative marker thus yielding negative concord, see below:

(51) *Ja, sę amm wıð **int ingger** krytyr nu **itjä**.*

yes then have.1.PL we not no animals now not

‘Yes, we do not have any any herd now.’ (M, Västäng, 57)

Moreover, we have searched for the adverb *aldri* ‘never’ and we have found that the adverb is once (out of fourteen times) accompanied by the negative marker *it*, see (52).

(52) *Ig ar **it aldri** aft so uont.*

I have not never had such pain

‘I have never ever had such a pain.’ (F, Åsen, 73)

The presented examples could indicate that double negation may have a strengthened reading, a fact indicating that double negation sometimes may be an instance of emphatic negation, not pure negative concord. This is not surprising; in any language, if a phenomenon is structurally optional, the variation is usually accompanied by some semantic or pragmatic effect.

An earlier generalization about the distribution of negation forms *it* and *inte* has been proposed in Garbacz (2010: 103 ff.). It says that there is a tendency in the choice of negation form in Övdalian, in such a way that the form *it* is used immediately after the finite verb, whereas the form *inte* is used in other cases. However, when negation precedes a constituent giving it local scope, the form of negation may be *inte*; this can also be the case when it immediately follows the finite verb (Garbacz 2010: 103 ff.). This seems to be supported by the corpus. We find both instances of an *it* ‘not’ following the verb, cf (53) as well as instances of the negative marker *int* after the finite verb, most probably due to emphasis, see (54).

(53) *Dier willd it åvå uoss, truor ig.*

they wanted.to not have us believe I

‘They didn’t want to have us, I think.’ (M, Klitten, 64)

(54) *Näj, men eð war int launggt ifrå , möjligen undra mieter...*

no but it was not far from maybe hundred meters

‘No, but it wasn’t far from there, maybe one hundred meters.’ (M, Klitten, 64)

These data suggest, in line with Garbacz (2010), that the form of negation is secondary to its position and can vary with respect to emphasis or other factors.

3.2.6 *The lack of Object Shift*

Neither Classical nor Traditional Övdalian allow Object Shift, independently of whether the object is a DP-objects or a pronominal object (see section 2.4.4. above, Levander 1909b: 124 and Garbacz 2010: 73 ff., 79). The corpus data indicate that this picture is correct. We searched the corpus for two strings: 1) negation – *eð* ‘it’, negation – *mig* ‘me’, negation – *sig* ‘refl.’ and 2) *eð* ‘it’ – negation, *mig* ‘me’ – negation, *sig* ‘refl.’ – negation. Presence of the second type of strings would indicate that Object Shift is attested in the corpus. However, this type is not attested, as all the 17 objects that we have found in clauses with negation are unshifted, see (55).

(55) *Ig wet it eð.*

I know not it

‘I don’t know it.’ (F, Skolan, 15)

3.3 *The structure of the noun phrase in the Övdalian Speech Corpus*

The structure of Övdalian noun phrase is briefly discussed in section 2.4.5 above and in Garbacz (2010: 82–85). Below, we focus on some aspects of it, namely the special use of definite forms, three gender-system, incorporation of adjectives into nouns, the form of demonstratives and the position of possessors.

3.3.1 *Special use of morphological definiteness*

Like some North-Swedish vernaculars, Övdalian often uses a morphologically definite form of a noun in contexts where the noun is semantically indefinite (Delsing 2003). This phenomenon seems to be alive in Övdalian today. In the corpus, we find at least 27 cases of morphological

definiteness in absence of semantic definiteness. Two of the clearest examples are (56) and (57) below.

(56) *Men að krytyrem byövd dier ju åvå wattneð.*

but for animals needed they of.course have water.DEF

‘But they needed of course to have water for the herd.’ (F, Åsen, 68)

(57) *Eð wart smyöreð åv mjojtje.*

it became butter.DEF of milk.DEF

‘Milk turned out to butter.’ (F, Västäng, 75)

3.3.2 Three gender-system

Övdalian has a three-gender system, like the one found in older Sweedish or Modern Icelandic, that is a system in which inanimate nouns display grammatical gender and are referred to by means of personal pronouns. Thus, there are no additional pronouns for inanimate objects. This is illustrated in (58).

(58) *So addum wið folkskauln jän fast an wart rivin se.*

so had.1.PL we elementary.school.DEF here but he became torn.down later

‘Then we had the elementary school here, but it was torn down since.’ (M, Blyberg, 65)

3.3.3 Incorporation of adjectives in nouns

As previously stated in section 2.4.5.3 above, the attributive adjective is normally incorporated in the noun in Övdalian. This is also found in the corpus side by side with cases where the adjective

is not incorporated and the incorporation is mostly found with the adjectives *litn* ‘little’ (*lisl-* / *liss-*), *gåmål* ‘old’ (*gamt-*) and *swensk* ‘Swedish’. Two examples from the corpus are given below.

(59) ... *kuogeðum wið å , gamtkuorteð og ...*

looked.1.PL we on old-picture.DEF and

‘We were looking at the old picture and ...’ (F, Åsen, 68)

(60) ... *ien av dier sienester so fikk go i an-dar gambelskaulan.*

one of they latest that got go in he-there old-school.DEF

‘... one of the last [pupils] that went to the old school.’ (M, Blyberg, 65)

3.3.4 Demonstrative form

The Övdalian demonstrative determiners are constructed from the personal pronouns expanded with the word *dar* ‘there’: *an-dar*, *å , -dar*, *eð-dar* (lit. ‘he-there’, ‘she-there’, ‘it-there’). The usage of those demonstratives is independent of the animacy of the noun, i.e. inanimate nouns could also be expanded with the determiner in question. It is exemplified in the corpus as shown in (61).

(61) *Sę warum wið daitað an-dar skauln...*

then were.1.PL we there.to he-there school.DEF

‘Then, we went there to the school.’ (F, Klitten, 47)

3.3.5 Position of possessors

Possessors can be placed both after the noun and before the noun in Classical and Traditional Övdalian, whereby the former placement is the neutral and the latter one indicates stress on the possessor. We find that there are 34 instances of a noun with a possessor in the corpus. In six cases (18%), the possessor is found following the noun and in the rest of cases (28, i.e. 82%) it precedes the noun, as shown in the examples (62) and (63) below. It indicates that the possessor typically precedes the noun in today's Övdalian, unlike Classical and Traditional Övdalian, but similar to standard Swedish.

(62) *Men **mumun mqi** saggd åv för mig at ...*

but grandmother mine said of for me that

‘But my grandmother told me that...’ (F, Västäng, 49)

(63) *Og **mqi mamma** war ju frå , **Elsinggland**.*

and my mother was then from Hälsingland

‘And my mother was from Hälsingland [a province in Sweden].’ (F, Klitten, 47)

3.4 Summing up the syntax

The main syntactic findings of the corpus are presented in Table 20. These are compared to the older variants of Övdalian, and to Insular Scandinavian and Mainland Scandinavian.

Table 20. Main syntactic findings.

Syntactic property	Found in the corpus	Found in Traditional Övdalian	Found in Classical Övdalian	Found in Insular Scandinavian	Found in Mainland Scandinavian
STYLISTIC FRONTING	—	—	+	+	—
V°-TO-I° MOVEMENT	—	+	+	+	— ²⁴
NULL REFERENTIAL SUBJECTS	+	+	+	—	—
MULTIPLE SUBJECTS	+	+	+	—	—
NEGATIVE CONCORD	+	+	+	—	—
OBJECT SHIFT	—	—	—	+	+
SPECIAL USE OF MORPHOLOGICAL DEFINITENESS	+	+	+	—	— ²⁵
THREE-GENDER SYSTEM	+	+	+	+	+/ ²⁶
INCORPORATION OF ADJECTIVES IN NOUNS	+	+	+	—	— ²⁷
DEMONSTRATIVES CONSTRUCTED ON PERSONAL PRONOUNS	+	+	+	—	—
POSSESSORS AFTER THE HEAD NOUN	+	+	+	+	+/ ²⁸

The corpus investigation has shown that many of the syntactic characteristics of Traditional and also of Classical Övdalian are in fact attested in the corpus. Among them, we find the Övdalian innovations, such as referential null subjects, no object shift, subject doubling, negative concord and morphological definiteness in semantically indefinite contexts. We also find phenomena that are most probably inherited from the Dalecarlian variant of Old Scandinavian, such as the three-gender system and the possessor following the noun in a noun phrase. However, two syntactic

²⁴ To some extent it is attested in some northern Norwegian dialects and in the Swedish dialect of Österbotten in Finland (see Bentzen 2007 for both).

²⁵ Attested in a number of Mainland Scandinavian non-standard varieties.

²⁶ Attested in Norwegian and in some Swedish non-standard varieties.

²⁷ Attested in some Mainland Scandinavian non-standard varieties.

²⁸ Attested in Norwegian and in a number of Mainland Scandinavian non-standard varieties.

properties of Classical Övdalian, i.e. verb movement to I^0 (also found in Traditional Övdalian) and Stylistic Fronting (not found in Traditional Övdalian) are not found in the corpus. We should also mention that we have looked in vain for long distance reflexives, adjectival usage of present participle, V2 exclamatives and the Övdalian causative – all mentioned by Levander (1909b). The reason for these properties missing in the corpus could be the limited size of the corpus and/or the fact that the material contains few kinds of speech situations, since these features are attested in Traditional Övdalian (cf. section 3.4 above).

4 Conclusions

In this paper we have given a presentation of the linguistic core properties of Övdalian, as it is spoken today. The majority of the literature so far has been based on Levander (1909b), which is, given its age, not an authoritative source of knowledge of today's Övdalian. We have partly based the paper on the data presented in Garbacz (2010) and partly used the Övdalian Speech Corpus. These two sources have allowed us to check to what extent the picture of Övdalian morphology and syntax, as it is presented in some recent work, e.g. in Nyström & Sapir (2005a,b) or Åkerberg (2004), correspond to the Övdalian spoken in Älvdalen in the beginning of the 21st century. We have also compared our findings to other recent literature, such as some that focus on linguistic development, e.g. Helgander (1996), Helgander (2000), Steensland (2000), and a number of papers by Rosenkvist and Garbacz.

Our findings show that Övdalian in the beginning the 21st century is different from the Övdalian as described one hundred years ago by Levander, but that many of the properties are also present in the modern language. We see for example that the verbal morphology is robust,

whereas case morphology is losing ground, especially amongst younger Övdalians. Some syntactic patterns, such as referential null subjects and negative concord, are alive, whereas others, like Stylistic Fronting or V^0 -to- I^0 movement, are virtually absent. Concluding from our findings, we can state that many of the morphological and syntactic features that Övdalian shares with the older stages of Scandinavian languages, e.g. with Old Swedish, are by now mostly lost. On the other hand, the phenomena that are considered to be innovations in Övdalian are mostly preserved. It has previously been observed that Övdalian is becoming more like Swedish (e.g. Sapir 2005a: 3), and this tendency is also visible in the syntactic change of the language attested between the Classical and the Traditional period. Nevertheless, it is an interesting fact that the Övdalian innovations in syntax seem to be more resistant to this development.

We would like to point out that Övdalian is a language that is still to a great extent unexplored, and this applies especially to its morphology and syntax. Therefore, further research on this variety is both desirable and important, not least because Övdalian differs on so many points from the other Scandinavian languages. At the same time, the research on Övdalian can shed new light on our knowledge of Scandinavian and Germanic languages. With this paper we hope to have pointed out some of the areas that can be of interest for future research.

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The Övdalian Speech Corpus

URL: Part of the Nordic Dialect Corpus: <http://www.tekstlab.uio.no/nota/scandiasyn/>

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