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Barbara Sonnenhauser

Slovene *naj*: An (emerging) clausal complementiser?

Abstract: Slovene *naj* (coarsely: ‘let; should’) is a highly multifaceted modal element. In the contemporary standard language, it occurs as a modal marker and figures in the formation of periphrastic predicates and complex clauses. With regard to the latter, *naj* has also been analysed as a clausal complementiser. In order to get a clearer understanding of its potential to contribute to complex clause formation, the present paper traces the development of *naj* from the earliest sources of the 16th century onwards. Carving out the semantic and syntactic changes underlying the emergence of its remarkable polyfunctionality, the features of ‘non-assertion’ and ‘speaker-attitude’ turn out as central semantic components. Both relate to the original imperative function of *naj*, which got lost in the course of its development. This semantic bleaching was accompanied by a functional expansion and an accumulation of structural options for *naj*. Whether these options include the function as a clausal complementiser emerges as an empirical question that needs to be discussed against the more general background of linguistic categorisation.

Keywords: assertion, cyclic development, deonticity, force, mood, quotative, speaker attitude, volition

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1 Introducing *naj*

Slovene *naj* (coarsely: ‘let; should’) is a highly multifaceted modal element. In contemporary Slovene, it takes finite complements and figures in the formation of periphrastic predicates, see (1), and complex clauses, as in (2).¹

- (1) a. *vsak naj ostane kar je in naj pokuša*
 each naj remain.PFV.PRS.3SG what is and naj try.PRS.3SG
naj bolje uspeti.
 the most succeed.PFV.INF
 ‘Let each remain what s/he is and (let each) try her/his best to succeed.’
 (Topolińska 2003: 319)
- b. *naj vaša soseda jutri pride*
 naj your neighbour tomorrow come. PFV.PRS.3SG
 ‘Your neighbor shall / let your neighbor come tomorrow!’
 (Uhlik & Žele 2017: 95)
- (2) a. *Rekel je, naj mu oprostí . . .*
 he said naj him forgive. PFV.PRS.3SG
 ‘He said that he ought to be forgiven. . .’ (Topolińska 2003: 313)
- b. *Končno sem mu ukazala, naj gre v posteljo*
 finally I told him naj go.(I)PFV.PRS.3SG to bed
 ‘Finally, I ordered him to to to bed [lit: that he should got to bed]’
 (Gigafida; DZS 2000)

The fact that in the complex structure in (2), the syntactic argument status and the modal characteristics of the embedded clause are signalled exclusively by *naj* is taken to indicate that it has acquired complementiser functions (Topolińska 2003: 313) and has been grammaticalised as a clausal complementiser (Uhlik 2018: 403). Thereby, *naj* emerges as a ‘remarkable feature of Slovene’ (Topolińska 2003), since this option is not available for cognate and semantically comparable

¹ In the literature, *naj* is referred to in different ways, e.g. as optative/hortative marker or as periphrastic imperative (summarised, e.g., in Roeder & Hansen 2006), as subjunctive (Stegovec 2019), as conjunction (e.g. Uhlik 2017) to mention just a few. Each of these denominations is based on a specific focus of analysis and specific theoretical assumptions which makes them hardly comparable or generalisable. In order to avoid invoking particular morphological, syntactic and/or functional associations and remain as agnostic as possible concerning the concomitant categorisations, the present paper will simply speak of ‘*naj*-structure’, referring to *naj* and the element it attaches to.

elements in other Slavonic languages, such as BCS *neka*, Czech *at'* or Russian *pust'* (for a comparison of *naj* and *pust'* see Uhlik 2018).

The semantic contribution displayed by *naj* in these different uses has been described in terms of deonticity and as an interpretative device based on deontic use (Holvoet & Konickaja 2011), weak necessity (Roeder & Hansen 2006) or non-factivity (Topolińska 2003; note that Topolińska understands non-factivity in a broader sense, i.e. as encompassing non-factuality in the sense as defined by Wiemer, this volume), the syntactic manifestations in terms of 'independent' vs. 'dependent' uses (Topolińska 2003; Uhlik 2018; Uhlik & Žele 2017). This places *naj* within the domain of modality on the one hand, and within the system of clausal connection on the other. A possible link between these two functions consists in the assumption that modally marked structures tend to exhibit restricted assertiveness and hence a lesser degree of semantic independence, which in turn may provide a starting point for reanalysis in terms of a syntactic integration of two structures. The latter involves a scope extension of the element in question from event description to the description of a situation and its being semantically and/or syntactically headed by a structurally higher predicate.

Drawing on these intuitions, the present paper aims at elaborating the semantic and syntactic polyfunctionality of *naj* and sketching its development from a verb oriented modal element to an element serving as clausal connector, i.e. from a predicate related marker within one clausal structure to a marker connecting two predicates across clauses. In a further perspective, this will contribute to uncovering in more detail the variety of strategies of clausal complementation encountered in the South Slavic languages and the diversity in the underlying diachronic processes.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the main types of *naj* established in the previous literature. On this basis, the features of non-assertion and speaker-attitude will be suggested as the two central semantic contributions introduced by *naj* (Section 3). Section 4 provides a diachronic sketch illustrating the functional extension of *naj* that might have led to its contemporary polyfunctionality. The question as to whether *naj* qualifies as a clausal complementiser will be addressed in the concluding Section 5, putting this question into the broader perspective of linguistic categorisation.

2 Polyfunctional *naj*

Due to its polyfunctionality in contemporary Slovene, a semantic characterization of *naj* is hard to obtain. Roeder & Hansen (2006: 165) regard it as "a word with diffuse semantics", Topolińska (2003) characterises it as expressing 'non-factivity'. Roughly speaking, four main types of *naj* have been distinguished in

previous work (see, in particular, Roeder & Hansen 2006, Holvoet & Konickaja 2011, Messner 1980, Gradišnik 1981, Topolińska 2003, Uhlik 2018, Uhlik & Žele 2017):² mood marker, modal particle, adverbial conjunction and clausal complementiser. The former two are also summarised as independent, the latter as dependent uses (Topolińska 2003, Uhlik & Žele 2017). While these types are, of course, not clear-cut categories, elaborating their functional characteristics will serve as a first step towards determining the functional range of *naj*.

2.1 Mood marker

As a mood marker, *naj* is regarded to be part of a periphrastic permissive verbal paradigm, a function which is described already in the early grammars of Slovene (e.g. Kopitar 1808). Complementing the morphological imperative in the first and third persons, see (3) and (4), it is ascribed hortative and optative meanings, i.e. as expressing a speaker's wish with an appeal to carry out this wish addressed to the 1st and 3rd person and a speaker's wish addressed to all persons (on these conceptions of hortative and optative meanings see, e.g., Ammann & van der Auwera 2004: 343–344).

- (3) *Ampak nihče mi ni rekel, naj neham delati*
 but nobody me NEG tell.PST.3SG naj stop.PRS.1SG work.INF
 'But nobody has told me, that I should stop working' (Gigafida; Delo Revije 2008)

- (4) a. *Tisti [. . .] pa naj ne hodijo na Grmado ampak*
 those but naj NEG go.PRS.3PL on Gramada but
naj ostanejo v planinski koči.
 naj stay.PFV.PRS.3PL in mountain shelter
 'Those should not climb the Gramada, but should stay in the mountain shelter.' (Gigafida; Novi tednik NT&RC 1998)

² Roeder & Hansen (2006) regard *naj* as an exponent of weak obligation, comparing it to Polish *mieć*; Holvoet & Konickaja (2011) propose an analysis in terms of 'interpretive deontics', comparable to Latvian *lai*. Messner (1980) and Gradišnik (1981) focus on *naj* as marker of hearsay or conjecture, discussing in particular the question whether these functions have arisen due to language contact with German. Topolińska (2003) is concerned with *naj* as a non-finite mood marker and as a means to accommodate finite clauses. Uhlik & Žele (2017) investigate its uses with the introduction of complements to desiderative and manipulative verbs, comparing it to the complementiser *da*; Uhlik (2018) compares *naj* to Russian *pust'*. Regarding *naj*-structures as an instance of embedded directives, Stegovec (2019) proposes an analysis in terms of 'perspectival control'.

- b. *Zavarovalna vsota naj ponuja finančno brezskrbnost* [. . .]
 insurance sum naj offer.IPFV.PRS.3SG financial carefreeness
 ‘The insurance sum shall offer financial carefreeness.’ (Gigafida; Delo
 FT 2007)

However, *naj* and the morphological imperative are not as neatly distributed as these descriptions suggest. On the one hand, the morphological imperative appears with inclusive first person dual and plural as well (as pointed out also by Stegovec 2019), see (5).

- (5) *delajva dalje*
 work.IPFV.IMP.DU further
 ‘let us two work on’ (Gigafida; Dnevnik 1997)

On the other hand, *naj* may appear – albeit rarely, and, according to a native speaker’s judgement, somewhat markedly – in combination with morphological imperatives, (6).³ Instances of *naj*+imperative can also be found in 16th century texts, see Trubar’s translation of Mt 27,49 in (7).⁴

- (6) *Vendar naj povej da*
 but naj tell.PFV.IMP.2SG that
 ‘But you should say that’ (Gigafida; Dolenjski list, 1997)

- (7) *Puhti, nai gledaimo, aku Elias pride* (TRB)
 let.IPFV.IMP.2SG naj see.IPFV.IMP.2PL whether Elijah come.PRS.3SG
 ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.’ (Mt 27,49)⁵

In addition, *naj* is also attested with 2nd person indicative (noted also in Roeder & Hansen 2006), see (8). As with *naj*+imperative, this combination is judged odd by a native speaker informant. It is only rarely attested – but still, it can be found.⁶

³ A corpus search in Gigafida (carried out 9 Sept 2017) yielded 660 hits for ‘*naj*+verb.IMP’, distance 2.

⁴ The contemporary version has the 1st plural imperative *poglejmo*.

⁵ All Slovene bible passages are taken from www.biblija.net, the English translations correspond to the English Standard Version as retrieved from <https://biblia.com> (note that not in all cases do they reflect the structure and semantics of the Slovene constructions).

⁶ A search for *naj+greš* in Gigafida on April 05, 2019 yielded 16 hints.

- (8) *da raje naj greš čistit*
 that better *naj* go.(I)PFV.PRS.2SG clean.SUP
 ‘that you better go cleaning’ (Gigafida; 24ur.com 2010)

In its function as a mood marker, *naj* also appears in questions, be they rhetorical or direct (Topolińska 2003: 319), see (9a) and (9b). This is another distinguishing feature of *naj*, since this usage is not possible for functionally comparable markers in other Slavic languages, such as Russian *pust’* (Uhlik 2018: 409).

- (9) a. *Kaj naj napišem v zapisnik?*
 what *naj* write.PFV.PRS.1SG in record
 ‘What ought I to write in the record?’ (Topolińska 2003: 319)
 b. *Naj pokličem zdravnika?*
naj call.PFV.PRS.1SG doctor
 ‘Shall I call the doctor?’ (Topolińska 2003: 319)

Obviously, thus *naj* differs from the imperative, but does not simply complement the morphological imperative paradigm. This suggests that its function needs to be elaborated in more detail.

As a mood marker, *naj* takes scope over the finite verb and is thus event related. While this also holds for the questions illustrated in (9), in questions of the type illustrated in (10a) it behaves differently. Here, *naj* appears after the finite verb and at least in this specific case seems to be correlated with different scope: It does not relate to the verb and the event it describes, as in (10b), but has larger scope over the proposition. These uses of *naj* come close to the functional type to be discussed in Section 2.2.

- (10) a. *Obvladam naj se?*
 control.IPFV.PRS.1SG *naj* REFL
 ‘Control myself?’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)⁷
 [I should control myself?]
 b. *Kako naj se obvladam?*
 how *naj* REFL control.IPFV.PRS.1SG
 ‘How should I control myself?’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

⁷ Unless indicated otherwise, translations to examples from opus.nlpl.eu correspond to the parallel English texts in that corpus. In case they are too loose to substantiate the point to be made, they will be supplemented by more literal translations in square brackets.

2.2 Modal particle

As a modal particle, *naj* is ascribed meanings of doubt, (11), conjecture (12), and hearsay (13).

- (11) *To naj bi mi zadostovalo za ves mesec!*
 this naj SUBJ me suffice.IPFV.SUBJ for whole month
 ‘This is meant to suffice for me for the whole month!’ [‘this shall suffice for me’]
 (Gradišnik 1981: 24)
- (12) *In zdaj naj bi bil Jeremy na zabavi?*
 and now naj SUBJ be.SUBJ Jeremy at parti
 ‘And now Jeremy’s supposedly at the party?’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)
- (13) *Ruth, po podatkih naj bi se pregon začel v okolici La Brea*
 Ruth according data naj SUBJ REFL pursuit begin.SUBJ in vicinity La Brea
 [‘According to the data the pursuit began’]
 ‘Ruth, we’re hearing reports that the pursuit began near the La Brea area’
 (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

This usage is discussed as being borrowed from German (see Messner 1980, Gradišnik 1981). With its uses as a iussive marker and an epistemic/evidential modal, German *sollen* ‘shall, should’ serves functions similar to *naj*. And similar to *sollen*, *naj* obviously extended its applicability from root-modal to epistemic/evidential contexts (see Zeman 2013 for a diachronic description of the emergence of reportive and quotative functions for German *sollen*), as in (14).⁸ Following Boye, van Lier & Theilgaard Brink (2015: 3), these latter interpretations can be subsumed under the concept of ‘justificatory support’.

- (14) *Naj bi bila očarljivo* [dekle; BS]
 naj SUBJ be.SUBJ charming [girl]
- (14’) *Es soll sehr hübsch sein.*
 it supposed.to very beautiful be.INF
 ‘It [the girl, BS] is supposed to be charming.’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

⁸ Whether or not the marking of hearsay or doubt is borrowed from German (the path from deonticity to meanings expressing justificatory support is quite frequently attested, see, e.g., Holvoet 2012 for Polish *mieć*), the main difference to the German constructions consists in the morphological makeup: While German has a finite modal verb plus infinitive, Slovene has a non-inflected marker plus finite verb. This is similar in structure to the possibility modal marker *lahko*, which likewise appears with a nominative subject and a finite verbal complement.

At the same time, *naj* covers uses of German *lassen* ‘let’. In this function, *naj* is frequently preceded by an imperative form of *pustiti* ‘let’, (15), and appears also in older data, (15b), where the hearsay-function does not seem to be attested (see Section 4).

- (15) a. *Pusti ga, naj gre*
 let.PFV.IMP.2SG him naj go.(I)PFV.PRS.3SG
 ‘Just let him go.’ (<http://opus.npl.eu/>)
 [lit: ‘Let him, he shall go.’]
- b. *Pufti naj nyh Misa bo k'enimu fhtriku* (DAL)
 let.PFV.IMP.2SG naj their table be.FUT.3SG to them snare
- b'. *Njihova miza naj postane zanka.* (SSP3)
 their table naj become.PFV.PRS.3SG snare
 ‘Let their table become a snare’ (Rom 11,9)

Differently from the uses as mood marker discussed in Section 2.1, *naj* as a modal particle has scope over the proposition and assesses it with respect to its justificatory support. Importantly, the particular meanings ascribed to this usage of *naj* are not contributed by *naj* alone but are rather contingent on the subjunctive ‘*bi+l*-participle’ (see also Hansen & Roeder 2006: 167; Uhlik 2018: 410–411). Again, thus, a closer look on the contribution of *naj* seems necessary.

2.3 Adverbial conjunction

In its ‘dependent’ uses, *naj* is restricted to clause-initial position (Uhlik 2018: 412). Semantically and/or syntactically it relates to the preceding predicate, which thereby functions as its head. Topolińska (2003) distinguishes two dependent functions for *naj*: adverbial conjunction and complementiser.

For *naj* as an adverbial conjunction, the semantic link to a preceding predicate is established by a feature of goal, concession or condition encoded in this predicate (Topolińska 2003: 314; see also Roeder & Hansen 2006). Examples of *naj* introducing concessive and conditional clauses are given in (16) and (17).

- (16) *Naj jo tudi imajo, ampak ne na mojem dvorišču.*
 naj her also have.IPFV.PRS.3PL but not in my backyard
 ‘Let them have her as well, but not in my backyard.’ (Gigafida: rtslo.si 2010)
- (17) *Naj te kdo sliši, pa bo zamera*
 naj you somebody hear.(I)PFV.PRS.3SG EMPH be.FUT.3SG bad_mood
 ‘Should somebody hear you, bad mood will arise.’ (SSKJ)

In these cases, however, the overall construction seems to add a decisive contribution to the interpretation,⁹ while *naj* itself functions as a verbal modifier. It is thus questionable, whether these should be regarded as instances of ‘dependent’ *naj*, the more so as in both cases the *naj* clause could stand on its own, but with a jussive interpretation.

This is different in (18), where *daj* ‘give’ implies ‘goal’ (supported by the imperative form) and *naj* can be interpreted as spelling out to this feature.

- (18) *Daj mu denar, naj vozi celo noč.*
 give him money naj drive.IPFV.PRS.3SG whole night
 ‘Give him money, he shall drive / such that he drives the whole night through.’¹⁰
 (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

The structure in (18) consists of two clauses that are loosely connected; instead of being connected by a final relation (interpretation: ‘such that he drives’), both may equally well stand on their own (interpretation: ‘he shall drive’), in which case *naj* functions as independent marker (noted also by Topolińska 2003: 315). That is, the relation between the triggering predicate and *naj* arises from a discourse inference and is not syntactically determined; the presumed status of *naj* as adverbial conjunction is based on a discourse relation, less on syntactic grounds.¹¹

The availability of these two options – discourse mediated biclausal structure and two separate clauses – also becomes apparent in (19), where there does not seem to be a goal-triggering predicate in the main clause. Here, *naj* may be interpreted (i) as final conjunction triggered by the directive component implied in the goal-oriented *na sodisce* ‘to court’, or (ii) as an independent mood marker relating to the verb *se izkaže* ‘turn out’.

⁹ The conditional connection resembles the Russian ‘conditional imperative construction’, which is not restricted to 2nd person imperatives, but may as well contain wishes directed to 1st and 3rd persons (Fortuin & Boogart 2009: 647–648).

¹⁰ Translation BS; no English translation available in opus.nlpl.eu (German: ‘Da, der Fahrer soll die Nacht durchfahren’).

¹¹ Note that here, the clause introduced by *naj* has to follow *dati*. This adds to the assumption of a less subordinate and more independent status of the *naj* structure (e.g. Weiss 1989 on the possibility of switching clauses as one indicator of the paratactic/hypotactic status of a complex clausal structure) and the involvement of a discourse relation.

- (19) *Tako je prav, Janšo na sodišče, naj se izkaže*
 that is right Janša to court naj REFL turn_out.PFV.PRS.3SG
ali je kriv ali ne.
 whether is guilty or not
 ‘That’s the right way, [bring] Janša to court, (i) *such that* it will *turn out* /
 (ii) It shall turn out whether he is guilty or not.’ (Gigafida; 24ur.com 2010)

In sum, the difference between *naj* as an adverbial conjunction and as an independent mood marker is not clear cut. In the type of dependent usage discussed in this section, *naj* applies to a finite predicate and the event described by it. At the same time the inference of a semantic link to a predicate in a previous clause may arise, which then may be interpreted to function as a semantic, possibly also syntactic, head. Again, thus, the interpretations ascribed to *naj* do not seem to be triggered by this marker alone.

2.4 Complementiser

The second type of dependent usage mentioned by Topolińska (2003) is that of a ‘non-factive’ – that is, non-factual (see section 1) – complementiser. She takes the main difference to the adverbial conjunction function as consisting in 1) the syntactically relevant status of the structure introduced by *naj*, which fills in a valency slot opened by a head predicate, and 2) the triggering of a directive interpretation for the head predicate by *naj*. Both is the case in (20) and (21).

- (20) *Rekel si naj bo luč in bila je.*
 you said naj be.FUT.3SG light and it was
 ‘You ordered there to be light and there was light.’ (Gigafida; Dnevnik 2000)
- (21) *Daniel Starman je predlagal naj*
 Daniel Starman suggested naj
Spomenka raje sama odstopi
 Spomenka better resign.PFV.PRS.3SG by herself
 ‘Daniel Starman suggested Spomenka to better resign by herself.’
 (Gigafida; Mladina 1992)

According to Topolińska (2003: 313), *naj* here functions as a signal “that there is a volitive component in the lexical meaning of the dominating predicate”. This is comparable to the Balkan Slavic complementiser *da* (2003: 313), as illustrated

in (22) for Macedonian (see Uhlik 2018 for *da* vs. *naj* as introducing complements to desiderative and manipulative verbs; Tomić 2012: 342–343 on the differences between statement and desire/intention induced by *deka*- vs. *da*-headed complements to *verba dicendi* in Macedonian):¹²

- (22) a. *toj reče deka*
 he say.AOR.3SG that
 ‘he said that’
 b. *toj reče da*
 he say.AOR.3SG that
 ‘he ordered that / to’

If *naj* serves both functions – the filling in a valency slot and the triggering of a non-factual (‘non-factive’ in Topolińska’s terms) interpretation for the head predicate – on its own, i.e. without the general complementiser *da*, Topolińska (2003: 314) regards it as a complementiser.

What needs to be accounted for then are combinations of *da* and *naj*, as in (23). Here, *naj* functions as a mood marker relating to the predicate, whereas *da* as a complementiser has scope over the structure headed by *naj*.

- (23) a. *Rekel mi je, da naj vas pričakam*
 he told me that naj you pick_up.PFV.PRS.1SG
 ‘He told me to pick you up.’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)
 b. *preden jim je reko da naj hitro pridejo*
 befor I told them that naj quickly come.PFV.PRS.3PL
 ‘before I told them *that they should come* quickly’ (GOS)

12 Elements such as Balkan Slavic *da* or Albanian *të*, too, may appear as part of a modally marked verbal form (the subjunctive), function in independent clauses and serve the formation of complex phrasal structures (see Widmer & Sonnenhauser 2020 for a comparison of Macedonian *da* and Albanian *të*). Differently from Balkan Slavic and Albanian, *naj* is less strictly tied to the verb and is used for complex predicate formation only in the cases discussed in this paper. Concerning the diachrony of Balkan Slavic *da*, one possible scenario starts from a verbal form, i.e. the imperative of *dati* ‘give’ (see Wiemer 2017: 325–326 for a brief overview of hypotheses), see (i)–(iv). Upon this scenario, the development of *da* and *naj* seems largely comparable.

- (i) Imperative of *dati* ‘give’
- (ii) Particle with volitional semantics
- (iii) Usage after volitional and directive verbs > complementiser
- (iv) Introduction of final and consecutive sentences > conjunction

The same holds for combinations of *da* and *naj*+subjunctive, see (24). Here, *naj*+subjunctive is in the scope of *da*, such that specific interpretation triggered by this combination, here: hearsay, is part of the clausal complement introduced by *da*. The overall structure is thus close to (13), with the source of information provided by a syntactically external predicate (*govori se* ‘it is said’).

- (24) *Govori se, da naj bi se letos*
 say.PRS.3SG REFL that naj SUBJ REFL this_year
udeležili conference.
 attend.PFV.SUBJ conference
 ‘Word is they’re planning to attend the conference.’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu/>)

Examples such as (25) provide additional support for the assumption that with the combination of *da* and *naj*, the attachment to the head predicate is achieved by *da*. A non-negated factive predicate like *vedeti* ‘know’¹³ should not allow for a clausal complement that is reduced in assertiveness. Hence, it is *da* that adds declarative force, while *naj* is in its scope and functions as modal particle applying to the subjunctive *bi poznali*.¹⁴

- (25) *Vem, da naj bi poznali pot do Zemlje.*
 know.PRS.1SG that naj SUBJ know.IPFV.SUBJ way to Earth
 ‘I know they’re supposed to know the way to Earth.’ (http://opus.nlpl.eu)

Uhlik & Žele (2017: 106) list examples of *da naj* in which *da* seems to be optional, (26), and interpret *da naj* as a complex conjunction (“sočetanje v sozuznoj funkciji”). In these cases, they regard the ‘cluster’ *da naj* as semantically equivalent to *naj* (Uhlik & Žele 2017: 106, fn 42).

- (26) *Zahtevam, (da) naj bo soba pospravljena.*
 demand.IPFV.PRS.1SG (that) naj be.FUT.3SG room tidied_up
 ‘I demand the room to be tidied up’ [‘that the room be tidied up’]
 (Uhlik & Žele 2017: 106)¹⁵

¹³ Factive or propositional knowledge in Slovene is expressed by *vedeti*, while ability-related knowledge is expressed by *znati* (see Sonnenhauser 2017).

¹⁴ That is, we are dealing here with two propositional scopes being inserted into each other, which makes this example even more interesting. I thank Björn Wiemer for pointing this out to me.

¹⁵ In Russian, *čtoby*+subjunctive would be used: *Ja trebuju, čtoby komnata byla ubrana* (Uhlik & Žele 2017: 106).

The optionality of *da* under certain circumstances suggests that *naj* may indeed serve the complementising function on its own. As (27) shows, in the absence of *da* serving as complementiser, *naj* may assume a double function. Similar to (25), (27) has *naj* and a subjunctive predicate. Differently from (25), however, *naj* not only adds an attitude holder to the subjunctive *bi sukala* ‘moves around’, but also attaches this predicate and the overall clausal structure into the complement slot of *izvedeli* ‘find out’. The attitude holder is provided by the matrix clause subject.

- (27) *Neuradno smo izvedeli, naj bi se vsota sukala*
 unofficially we found out naj be.SUBJ REFL sum move.SUBJ
okrog 100.000 nemških mark.
 around 100.000 German mark
 ‘We found out from unofficial sources that the sum (allegedly) moves
 around 100.000 D-Marks.’ (Gigafida; Dnevnik 1997)

The data presented here show that *naj* ranges between independent and dependent uses. Both types may be activated in particular usage contexts. This oscillation provides first hints concerning the potential starting point for the diachronic functional extension of *naj*.

2.5 Summing up

In contemporary Slovene, *naj* requires a finite complement. The only restriction applying is ‘non past’, which fits the directive force of *naj*. In specific cases, *naj* contributes to complex structure building across predicates beyond the clausal level. This complex structure may be based on and inferred by a discourse relation (in particular in case of a preceding predicate carrying ‘goal’ as semantic feature) or syntactically required (if the preceding predicate opens up a valency slot).

The data presented in this section illustrate the difficulty involved in distinguishing *naj* as establishing an intra-predicate or an inter-predicate relation, i.e. *naj* as predicate-oriented marker vs. clausal marker, and – within the latter – conjunction and complementiser. This second question pertains to the nature of the relation between a head predicate and a predicative complement and the linguistic analysis of this relation. Since this, in turn, invites conceptual problems on a more theory-dependent level exceeding the issue of the status of *naj*, it is more constructive to focus on *naj* and its potential to contribute to complex clause formation. Even though this might not provide an answer to the question of how to distinguish complement clauses from adverbial clauses (and other types of complex clauses), it contributes to carving out those features of

naj that permit it to serve a clause connecting function. These features will be illustrated in the following section.

3 Semantics

Both the syntactic versatility and the semantic polyfunctionality of *naj* require a closer look on its specific semantic contribution in the various syntactic contexts it appears in. This is also necessary to position *naj* within the modal system of Slovene and its system of clausal connectors. Two features turn out relevant in this respect: the specification of an attitude holder and the indication of a non-assertive context.

3.1 Attitude holder

One of the distinctive features of *naj* consists in the introduction of an attitude holder. This attitude holder may be introduced within the structure containing the *naj*-construction ('dependent' uses of *naj*) or provided by a predicate external to it ('independent' uses of *naj*).

3.1.1 Independent uses

As a mood marker, *naj* is functionally close to the imperative. Differently from the imperative, however, volition and permission expressed by *naj* may be imposed to and from attitude holders dissociated from the actual communicative situation and its speech act participants. In (28), with the imperative, addresser and addressees are part of the communicative situation, while in (29), with a *naj* structure, the source of volition is outside the situation.¹⁶ The volitive attitude is directed towards the event denoted by the finite verb.

¹⁶ Comparing (in)dependent *naj* with (in)dependent *da* to express imperative meanings, Uhlík & Žele (2017: 95, 111) regard the manifestation of the addressee as main difference between the two: it is 'indirect' with *naj* but 'direct' with *da*, i.e. outside the communicative situation or part of it, respectively. They do not consider the addresser, i.e. the source of volition. According to the analysis proposed here, the addresser/source of volition plays a crucial role for the semantic contribution of *naj* as well. In a recent paper, Stegovac (2019) takes the "ban on coreference between the attitude holder and the subject" (2019: 48) as characteristic features of dependent *naj*-structures and proposes an analysis in terms of 'perspectival control' for their specific relation to the matrix clause.

- (28) *Delajmo skupaj, delajmo razumno.*
 act.IPFV.IMP.1PL jointly act.IPFV.IMP.1PL reasonably
 ‘Let’s act jointly, let’s work intelligently.’ (Gigafida; 24ur.com 2010)
- (29) *Mi, kmetje pa naj bomo lepo tiho in naj delamo*
 we, farmers EXPR naj be.FUT.1PL nicely calm and naj work.IPFV.PRS.1PL
 ‘We, farmers, *should be quiet* and *should work*.’ (Gigafida; Kmečki glas 2009)

The interpretations of hearsay, conjecture, doubt (i.e. justificatory support, see Section 2.2) are tied to the combination of *naj* with a subjunctive predicate. These interpretations are not typical of either element on their own.¹⁷ Examples such as (30) and (31) suggest that here, too, *naj* introduces an attitude holder which is not necessarily identical with the actual narrator and may also be implicit, see (32).

- (30) *Po njihovih ocenah naj bi se trg že letos*
 according their assessments naj SUBJ REFL market already this year
nekoliko umiril,
 somewhat calm_down.PFV.SUBJ
 ‘According to their assessment, the market is *supposed* to [lit. *should*]
calm down somewhat already this year.’ (Gigafida)
- (31) *Po tvojem naj bi bil edini*
 according you naj SUBJ be.SUBJ only.one
 ‘You made it seem like I was the only one.’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)
- (32) *Ubil naj bi tisto žensko iz poročil,*
 kill.PFV.SUBJ naj SUBJ that woman from news
 ‘They’re saying he killed that woman on the news’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

Serving as anchor of the non-actuality contributed by the subjunctive predicate, the attitude holder emerges as the source of justificatory support. Here, the attitude has situational scope, i.e. it relates to the proposition expressed by the clause headed by *naj*.

¹⁷ This seems comparable to *lahko*, the other modal particle of Slovene combining with finite verbs. Its application to the subjunctive yields an epistemic interpretation, specifically, that of epistemic possibility (*naj*+subjunctive: epistemic necessity). The obvious assumption that *lahko*+SUBJ and *naj*+SUBJ complement each other as epistemic possibility / epistemic necessity constructions is still in need of empirical verification.

3.1.2 Dependent uses

In the dependent uses of *naj*, the attitude holder is introduced by a predicate outside the immediate clause structure containing the *naj*-construction, i.e. a predicate that serves as semantic and/or syntactic head. In (33), the matrix verb *povedati* ‘tell’ heads the structures introduced by *da* and, as can be seen from the coordination *in* ‘and’, *da+naj* in a parallel way. This suggests that here, *naj* still relates to the verb and that this complex appears in the scope of *da*. That is, *da* introduces a clause containing a complex predicate headed by *naj*, while *naj* introduces an attitude expressed by one of the speech act participants of the matrix clause. This attitude modifies the event description and thereby contributes to marking the illocutionary force of the complement to *povedati*.

- (33) *Povedal nam je, da Morrok ne obstaja in da naj*
 he told us that Morrok not exist.IPFV.PRS.3SG and that naj
se ne bojimo.
 not be_afraid.IPFV.PRS.1PL
 ‘He told us there was no morrok and that we shouldn’t be afraid.’
 (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

In (34), *naj* allows for various interpretations: in parallel with *da* as introducing a syntactic complement to *reče*, i.e. as having scope over the proposition relating to an attitude holder specified by an external predicate, or as being within the scope of *da*, i.e. as event-related mood marker.

- (34) *Pa mi reče, da sem res neumen in naj*
 and s/he told me that I am indeed stupid and naj
si izberem pomočnikov
 me select.PFV.PRS.1SG assistants
 ‘And s/he told me, that I am really stupid and (that) I should select me assistants.’ (Gigafida; Delo 2008)

In the absence of *da* in (35), the complement to *reči* seems to be attached by *naj* alone, i.e. it introduces indirect speech.

- (35) *Mama me pošilja. Je rekla naj pogledam, če*
 Mum me sending she told naj look.PFV.PRS.1SG whether
imate morda svinjsko glavo
 have.IPFV.PRS.2PL maybe pig head
 ‘Mum is sending me. She asked me to look whether you maybe have a pig’s head.’ (Gigafida; Celjan 2002)

What is decisive again is the ability of *naj* to introduce an attitude holder potentially expressing an attitude different from or in addition to that of the narrator. That is, not only the addressee or target of volition / permission is ‘indirect’ (see Uhlik & Žele 2017), but also the addresser or source, i.e. the attitude holder. This attitude holder is provided by a predicate outside the clause containing the *naj*-structure, the attitude relates to the event described by the finite verb (conjunction) or the state of affairs (complementiser) in the scope of *naj*. By relating to an attitude holder in another clause, *naj* establishes an anchoring beyond the level of the clause it appears in and hence a relation to the discourse. Establishing a relation to the discourse is typical of elements at the left periphery of clauses, i.e. elements that qualify as conjunctions and complementisers.

Summing up so far, the interpretations available for *naj* mainly depend on and differ in the target of attitude – event or state of affairs – and the way in which an attitude holder is manifested (contributed by clause external predicate or not). The next question is, what kind of attitude this might be and in how far it contributes to the modal meanings indicated by *naj*.

3.2 Non-assertion

By the introduction of an attitude holder providing the source of volition/permission or the source of justificatory support, the event or situation in the scope of *naj* is assessed with respect to the ‘actual world’, which makes *naj* a modal element. Thereby, *naj*-structures are regarded as being close to the imperative (as a permissive marker; e.g. Toporišič 2004) and the subjunctive (by the feature of ‘non-factivity’; e.g. Topolińska 2003), see above. However, as has been shown, *naj* does not simply supplement the imperative paradigm, since for most persons, both options are attested, including *naj*+morphological imperative, and it is not just another exponent of non-factivity alongside the subjunctive, since both may co-occur and only in combination yield the characteristic interpretations of hearsay, doubt.

What *naj*, the imperative and the subjunctive indeed do share is the feature of ‘non-assertion’ (in the sense of Palmer 2001). Manifested as counterfactual/hypo-

thetical non-assertion, this feature covers the functions of the subjunctive, manifested as deontic non-assertion the functions of permission (*naj*) and volition (morphological imperative; *naj*). For deontic modality, an independently given source figures as modal background; in the case of *naj*, this source is provided by the attitude holder.

Differently from the imperative and subjunctive, *naj* does not code a particular manifestation of non-assertion as a stable meaning component, but simply contributes to its specification. Thereby, *naj* comes close to what Portner (1997) describes as ‘mood-indicating modals’, such as *may* in (36).

- (36) a. *May you have a pleasant journey!*
 b. *Jack wishes that you may be happy.*

In (36), *may* is not necessary from a syntactic or semantic point of view, since the modal information – volition, judgement – is provided by other lexical and/or structural means, i.e. the optative construction *have pleasant journey* in (36a) and the verb form *wishes* in (36b). Nonetheless, its usage is not redundant (that is, 36a does not mean that the speaker wishes the wish to have a pleasant journey, and 36b does not mean that Jack wishes the wish for the addressee to be happy). Portner (1997: 190) takes this to suggest that in these cases, *may* “does not carry modal force of its own”, i.e. does not double information, “but simply indicates that its clause has a particular conversational use or is in a certain kind of semantic context”. As instances of ‘notional mood’ such mood-indicating elements concern “aspects of meaning [...] which contribute to the conversational force of a clause or which constrain the attitude someone has toward what it expresses” (Portner 1997: 182).

Naj behaves very much alike: It indicates that its context is non-assertive and marks its complement as being modified by an attitude holder. Its mood-indicating potential allows for the activation of various kinds of non-assertion, depending on the scope of *naj* (event, state of affairs), the morphological characteristics of its complement (indicative, subjunctive) and the presence of a semantic or syntactic head.

Putting the pieces together, the various functions of *naj* are based on the introduction of an attitude holder (from its original lexical meaning ‘let’), the indication of non-assertion (from its original morphological imperative form) and the potential of introducing different scope relations (relating to the loss of its original part-of-speech, i.e. verbal, characteristics). The next question to be addressed is, whether the functional versatility can be related to a diachronic functional extension.

4 Diachronic sketch

As the discussion in Sections 2 and 3 has shown, the structural and semantic types extracted for the uses of *naj* cannot be understood as clear-cut categories. They rather form a continuum with oscillation between interpretations, in particular for *naj* as a verbal marker vs. *naj* as clausal connector. This might reflect a diachronic development in terms of functional expansion in parallel with changes in positions it may occupy in the syntactic structure. In the absence of quantitatively and qualitatively sufficient data, the following remarks only provide an approximation. This approximation is based on Pleteršnik's Slovene-German dictionary from the end of the 19th c. and on a comparison of various translations of the New Testament: Trubar's and Dalmatin's translations (TRB 1555-1577 and DAL 1584) as the oldest written sources of Slovene, Jernej Japel's (JAP 1784-1802) translation as reflecting an immediate pre-standard state,¹⁸ and the contemporary version from 2003 (Osnovna izdaja; SSP3).

4.1 Origin

The entries in the dictionary of contemporary Slovene (SSKJ 2006) and Pleteršnik's Slovene-German dictionary from the late 19th c. (Pleteršnik 1894) provide a first indication of the diachronic development of *naj*. In both, *naj* appears as an element compatible with various syntactic contexts. Remarkably, only Pleteršnik but not SSKJ lists *naj* as an inflected verbal form, i.e. an imperative. As inflected verb, it attaches to various types of structures and may cover two different meanings: 'let', (37), and 'stop', (38). In the former meaning, *naj* may take infinitives as well as finite complements with and without *da* as a linking element,¹⁹ in the latter, only infinitival complements are possible.

- (37) *naj, najta, najmo, najte*, lass, lasst, lassen wir 'let, let us'
- (z "da" 'with *da*'): *naj* da tvoja vest tebi govori, lass dein Gewissen zu dir sprechen [. . .] 'let your conscience speak to you'; *najte* da izvemo, lasst uns in Erfahrung bringen [. . .] 'let us find out'; *Najmo* da voda stoji, lassen wir das Wasser stehen [. . .] 'let us allow the water to stand' [. . .];

¹⁸ In his grammar, Jernej Kopitar (Kopitar 1808) cites examples taken from Japelj.

¹⁹ The fact that *da* and its omission are explicitly mentioned by Pleteršnik, might probably be interpreted to indicate a structure with *naj* belonging to the matrix clause with *da* introducing the complement clause.

- (“da” je izpuščen ‘*da* is omitted’): *najte* se učimo, lasst uns lernen ‘let us learn’ [. . .]; *najte* vas vprašam, lasst mich euch fragen ‘let me ask you’ [. . .];
 - (z infinitivom ‘with infinitive’): *najmo* zvon hladiti, lasst uns die Glocke abkühlen ‘let us leave the bell to cool down’ [. . .]
- (38) *naj*, *najta*, *najmo*, *najte*, z infinitivom, = nikar ‘with infinitive, = ‘in no case’
naj me žaliti, beleidige mich nicht [. . .] ‘do not insult me’; *naj* se groziti, drohe nicht [. . .] ‘do not threaten’ [. . .]; *najte* soditi, richtet nicht [. . .] ‘do not judge’

Even though the meanings given for inflected *naj* are quite different – permission/volition on the one hand, (37), prohibition/warning in on the other, (38) – Pleteršnik gives the same origin for both: “skrčeno iz ‘nehaj’” ‘abbreviated from *nehaj*’, i.e. deriving from *nehati*, which again originates from *ne hajati* ‘not bother, not care’.²⁰ This seems contradictory, but only at first sight. Both interpretations constitute two manifestations of deonticity, with the differences relating to two different scopes of negation: narrow scope including only the auxiliary (do not bother, do = you should do, let do, i.e. permission/volition), wide scope including also the verbal complement (do not bother doing = stop doing, i.e. prohibition/warning). In contemporary Slovene, the former is associated with the lexical verb *nehati* ‘to stop’, which functions as a phasal verb taking infinitival complements, the latter with the modal particle *naj* taking finite complements.

The phasal verb *nehati* and the particle *naj* may be combined, which shows that they indeed have different scope and are hence independent of each other, see (39a)–(39c); in (39c) *nehati* is used as a main verb without complement.

- (39) a. *Naj neha noreti!*
naj stop.PRS.3SG freak.out. IPFV.INF
 ‘Listen!’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu/>)
 [lit.: ‘He shall stop freaking out!’]

²⁰ See Pleteršnik’s entry to *nehati*, which lists ‘stop’ and ‘let’ as two meanings: *neháti*, -*âm*, nav.: *nêhati*, -*am*, vb. pf. 1) aufhören ‘to stop’; *n. delati*; *nehaj me zmerjati* ‘stop scolding me’; *dež, zima neha* ‘the rain stops, the winter ends’ [. . .]; – ablassen ‘desist’: *n. od dela* ‘desist from work’; – 2) = pustiti, lassen ‘let’: *n. kaj* ‘let s.th.’ [. . .]; *ne neham vas sirote* ‘I will not leave you as orphans’ [. . .]; *nehaj me!* = *pusti me!* ‘leave me alone!’ [. . .] – = *odpustiti* ‘forgive’: *ves strašni dolg mu je nehal* ‘he has forgiven him all debt’ [. . .].

- b. *Ampak nihče mi ni rekel, naj neham delati,*
 but nobody has told me naj stop.PRS.1SG work..IPFV.INF
ko začnem dobivati pokojnino.
 when begin.PRS.1SG receive.INF pension
 ‘But nobody has told me, that I should stop working, when I start to receive my pension.’ (Gigafida: Delo Revije 2008)
- c. *Poskušal sem jo prepričati naj neha.*
 I tried her convince.PFV.INF naj stop.PRS.3SG
 ‘I tried to get her to stop.’ (<http://opus.nlpl.eu>)

The entries given in (37) and (38) not only show a semantic differentiation from the same etymological source into a phasal verb and a modal marker, they also show the emergence of *naj* as modal marker from a former imperative form. In the available corpora, only rare attestations of inflected *naj* in the permissive/volitional function can be found; they date to the 19th c., see (40a)–(40b).

- (40) a. *najta mene vama za očeta biti*
 let.IPFV.IMP.2DU me you as father be.INF
 ‘let me be a father for the two of you’ (IMP; nl.ijs.si/imp; 1847)
- b. *najte de le v’ nebefa gledam*
 let.IPFV.IMP.2PL that just in heaven look.IPFV.PRS.1SG
 ‘[you] let me just look into heaven [lit: let that I look]’ (IMP; nl.ijs.si/imp; 1837)
- c. *Naj se imata rada!*
 naj REFL have.IPFV.PRS.2DU like
 ‘May they like each other!’ (IMP; Žrtve, 1901)

The data presented here allow to derive a first insight into the historical development of *naj*: The (narrow scope) negated imperative form (*ne haj* > *naj*, *najte*, *najmo*, *najta*) of a lexical verb (*ne hajati* ‘not bother’) developed into an uninflected functional element (*naj*) by expanding its semantic and syntactic scope while at the same time restricting its complement to finite verbs. That is, the original imperative form has lost its inflectional morphology. Morphological information is provided on the verbal complement (inflection is in a way ‘externalised’) and is restricted by the non-assertive potential of the original imperative. From this, *naj* inherited its non-assertive potential, while the introduction of an attitude holder is a remnant of its former lexical semantics.

4.2 Independent uses: Verbal modifier

The non-inflecting particle *naj* is attested in its independent use already in the early Bible translations by Dalmatin (DAL) and Trubar (TRB) of the 16th c., see (41) and (42).²¹

- (41) a. *Ony imajo Mosefsa inu Preroke, naj ony teifte poľlufhajo.* (DAL)
 b. *Oni imajo Moifefa inu te Preroke, nai te ifte poslushaio.* (TRB)
 c. *Imajo Mojzesa in preroke, te naj poslušajo!* (SSP3)
 ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ (Lk 16,29)
- (42) a. *On je dofti ftar, vprafhajte njega, naj fam sa fe govory.* (DAL)
 b. *On ie ftar fadofti, vprashaite nega, nai on fam safe gouori.* (TRB)
 c. *Dovolj je star. Sam naj govori o sebi.* (SSP3)
 ‘He is of age. He will speak for himself.’ (Jn 9,21)

In general, most contexts which exhibit *naj* in the SSP3 display different constructions in JAP, DAL and TRB, whereby *naj* seems to appear more frequently in JAP than DAL and TRB. In addition, several more specific patterns seem to obtain.

For the two variations of deonticity expressed by *naj* in contemporary Slovene, i.e. permission and volition, preferences for different constructions can be found in DAL, TRB and JAP: for the permissive, the imperative of *pustiti* ‘let’ + infinitive tends to be used in DAL and TRB, whereas JAP has *naj* (43)–(44).

- (43) a. *Takó naj vaša luč sveti pred ljudmi* (SSP3)
 b. *Taku naj fveři vafha luzh pred ludmy* (JAP)
 c. *Taku puftite vafho Luzh fvejtiti pred Ludmy* (DAL)
 d. *Taku puftite vasho luzh fueititi pred ludmi* (TRB)
 ‘Let your light shine before others’ (Mt 5,16)
- (44) a. *Oni pa so še bolj kričali: »Križan naj bo!«* (SSP3)
 b. *Ali ony fe she bòl vpyli, rekózh: Naj bó krishan.* (JAP)
 c. *Ony fo pak she vezh vpyli, iuu fo djali: Pufti ga krishati.* (DAL)
 d. *Oni fo pag teim vezh vpyli inu giali. Puftiga Cryshati.* (TRB)
 ‘But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”’ (Mt 27,23)

²¹ In these examples, *naj* is immediately pre-verbal in SSP3, while in DAL and TRB material may intervene between *naj* and verb. Whether this attests to a diachronic trend remains to be investigated.

For the volitional interpretation, *imeti* ‘have’, (45), *morati* ‘must’, the future tense (46) and the morphological imperative (47) prevail in JAP, DAL and TRB.

- (45) a. *Rečeno je bilo: Kdor se loči od svoje žene, naj ji dá ločitveni list.* (SSP3)
 b. *Rezhenu je pak: de vsaki, kateri fe bó od fvoje shene lózhil, imá njej en lozhitni lyft dati.* (JAP)
 c. *Onu je tudi rezhenu: Gdur fe od fvoje Shene lozhi, ta ima njej en lozhitni lyft dati.* (DAL)
 d. *Onu ie tudi rezhenu, kateri fe lozhi od fuie shene, ta ima neei dati en lozhitui lift.* (TRB)
 ‘It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ (Mt 5,31)
- (46) a. *Gospod, kolikokrat naj odpustim svojemu bratu, če greši zoper mene??* (SSP3)
 b. *Gospód, koliku krat bó grèfhil supèr mene mój brat, inu bóm njemu odpuftil?* (JAP)
 c. *GOSPVD, kuliku krat moram tedaj mojmu Bratu odpuftiti, kateri meni pregrishi?* (DAL)
 d. *Gospud kuliku krat ieft moram muimu bratu, kir na meni pregrishi, odpuftiti?* (TRB)
 ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?’ (Mt 18,21)
- (47) a. *Kdor ima ušesa, naj poslušá.* (SSP3)
 b. *Kateri imá vufhefsa sa poslufhat, tá poslufhaj.* (JAP)
 c. *Kateri ima ufhefsa h’poslufhanju, ta poslufhaj.* (DAL)
 d. *Dur ima vshefa hposlushanu, ta poslushai.* (TRB)
 ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’ (Mt 11,15)

For the volitional optative, *da*+indicative is found alongside *naj* in the older texts, see TRB with *da* in (48) vs. *naj* in (49):

- (48) a. *Naj prideta oblastnika sama semkaj* (SSP3)
 b. *Takú ne bó: Ampak naj famy pridejo,* (JAP)
 c. *Nikar taku, temuzh naj ony famy prideo* (DAL)
 d. *Nekar taku, temuzh de fami prideio* (TRB)
 ‘Let them come themselves’ (Apd 16,37)

- (49) a. *Ali pa naj tile tukaj sami povedo*, (SSP3)
 b. *Ali pak naj lety tukaj povèdó*, (JAP)
 c. *Ali naj lety famy povèdo*, (DAL)
 d. *Oli nai lety oni fami poueido*, (TRB)
 ‘Or else let these men themselves say’ (Apd 24,20)

There are also instances, in which DAL and TRB have *naj*, but not JAP and SSP3. In these cases, *naj* tends to appear as a complement to *pustite*, the imperative of *pustiti* ‘let’. JAP and SSP3 prefer the imperative, see (50).

- (50) a. *Pustite, poglejmo, ali bo prišel Elija in ga snel*. (SSP3)
 b. *Puftite, poglejmo, aku Elias pride, inu njega doli fname*. (JAP)
 c. *Puftite, naj vidimo, aku Elias pride, inu ga doli vsame*. (DAL)
 d. *Puftite, nai gledamo, aku Elias pride, nega doli fnemat*. (TRB)
 ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.’ (Mr 15,36)

The above-cited bible passages allow to infer a gradual expansion of *naj* into non-assertive, directive contexts formerly occupied by other deontic expressions, and its becoming established as a self-contained verb-related modal marker.

No instances of *naj* taking situational scope, i.e. in the hearsay function, could be found. This could be both an effect of the data basis, the New Testament, or an indication of a later development of these functions. The latter might be expected from what is known of the expansion of modal meanings, in this case possibly fostered also by German influence.

4.3 Dependente uses: Clausal connector

The prevailing strategy for introducing clausal arguments with final interpretation to *verba dicendi* in JAP, DAL and TRB is *da*+subjunctive instead of *naj* as in SSP3, see (51).²²

- (51) a. *In ko so ga zagledali, so ga prosili, naj odide iz njihovih krajev*. (SSP3)
 b. *Inu kadar fo ga vglèdali, fo ga profsili, de bi prozh fhàl od njih krajov*. (JAP)
 c. *Inu kadar fo ga vglèdali, fo ga profsili, de bi prozh fhàl od nyh strane*. (DAL)

²² Differently from Russian (*čtoby*), the combination of complementiser and subjunctive particle never developed into a single marker. It could be speculated whether this has been blocked by the availability of *naj*.

- d. *Inu kadar nega vgledaio, ga proffio, de bi on prozh shal od nih kraieu.* (TRB)
 ‘And when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.’ (Mt 8,34)

As Topolińska (2003: 312–313) notes, *da*+subjunctive constitutes another strategy beyond *naj* in contemporary Slovene for the attachment of non-factual clauses. That is, the data in (51) might simply be an indication of the translators opting for this particular strategy and thus not tell so much about the functions of *naj*.²³

In (52), JAP, DAL and TRB have *da*-indicative present. Since the interpretation is goal-oriented, this indicates the ability of *da* to induce non-assertive force, which is otherwise typical of Balkan Slavic, but neither of Slovene nor BCMS *da* (see also Greenberg, this volume). With the context being constant in (52), the difference between the *da*- and *naj*-structures is not related to a different kind of interpretation triggered by the choice of marker. This suggests that both have undergone a semantic development, with *naj* being preferred for final clauses in contemporary Slovene.²⁴ As has been mentioned above, if in contemporary Slovene predicates allow for a *da*- and a *naj*-complement alike, the difference consists in the addressee: it is direct for the former, indirect for the latter.

- (52) a. *reci, naj ti kamni postanejo kruh* (SSP3)
 b. *rezi, de letó kamenje kruh poftane* (JAP)
 c. *rezi, de letu Kamenje Kruh poftane* (DAL)
 d. *reci de letu kamine bode kruh* (TRB)
 ‘command these stones to become loaves of bread’ (Mt 4,3)

Another option found in older texts is an infinitival construction in contexts where contemporary Slovene has *naj*, (53).²⁵

23 In general, a closer look on the options available or preferred in the various dialects is necessary in order to see whether a particular development is indeed a language related development or related to the expansion of literacy based on a specific dialect serving as basis for an emerging norm. The latter seems to be the case for the relative pronoun *kdor*, which is gaining ground during the 18th c. not so much as a result of a language-internal development, but rather as an effect of the respective dialects constituting the basis for the emerging literary language and its spread in literary sources (Sonnenhauser 2019).

24 As one reviewer pointed out, this might have led to a stable differentiation of meanings for *reči* in contemporary Slovene: informative *reči da* vs. manipulative *reči naj*.

25 See Uhlik & Žele (2017) on the choice of infinitival complements after manipulative and desiderative verbs in contemporary Slovene. Even though in the examples discussed here, the usage of the infinitive might be due to the source texts, it still appears as an available option.

- (53) a. *In velel je ljudem, naj sedejo po travi*, (SSP3)
 b. *Inu on je vkasal mnóshizam doli fefti na travo* (JAP)
 c. *Inu on je rekàl timu Folku doli fefti na travo*, (DAL)
 d. *Inu on fapouei tim ludem doli fefti na to trauo*. (TRB)
 ‘Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass’ (Mt 14,19)

Evidence for an emerging potential of *naj* to function as clausal connector can be found in examples as (54). DAL and TRB both have two syntactically and semantically independent clauses; there is no overt element that would trigger the inference of semantic dependency. JAP has *naj* as initial element in an independent clause, for which a volitional interpretation is possible. This in turn may be related to some goal-oriented feature specified by *zaupati* ‘trust’ in the previous clause (see also Section 2.3). In SSP3, the *naj*-headed clause is orthographically presented as being more integrated and semantically connected to *zaupati* ‘trust’. This allows for evidence for a reanalysis going on at clause boundaries.

- (54) a. *Zaupal je v Boga, naj ga zdaj reši* (SSP3)
 b. *On je v’ Bogá savupal: Naj ga sdaj rešhi*, (JAP)
 c. *On je v’Bugá vupal, ta njega sdaj odrešhi* (DAL)
 d. *On ie Vbuga vupal, ta nega sdai odreshi* (TRB)
 ‘He trusts in God; let God deliver him now,’ (Mt 27,43)

Summing up, where contemporary Slovene has *naj*, the older translations in the majority of cases opt for another construction, in particular with respect to the ‘dependent’ uses of *naj*. A comparison of the parallel passages indicates the intrusion of *naj* into non-assertive contexts and allows to infer its basic clause combining potential.

4.4 Along the complementiser cycle?

The data presented in section 4.1–4.3 allow to sketch the potential diachronic development of *naj* from an inflected verbal form (imperative) towards an element that may assume clause connecting and complementiser-like functions. A brief summary of its formal development is provided in (55).

- (55) a. *nehati* (< *ne hajati*) + verb.INF full-fledged verbal form
 ‘to let’ (‘NEG to bother’)
 b. *naj* (< *nehaj*) + verb.INF imperative form
 ‘let’ (‘do not bother’)
 c. *naj* + verb.FIN no morphological distinctions,
 modal particle
 d. *naj* + clause clausal connector

The semantic contribution of *naj* is based on a combination of ‘non-assertion’, inherited from the original imperative form, and the introduction of an attitude holder, inherited from the original lexical meaning ‘not bother, let’. The morphosyntactic restriction towards an uninflected particle and the meaning generalisation towards indicating deontic non-assertion is related to an extension in syntactic functions from an independent marker taking a finite verbal complement to a clause initial element establishing an inter-clausal relation to a head predicate in the previous clause. One of the main triggers of syntactic change is reanalysis, which in turn is made possible by surface structures open to various interpretations. For ‘naïve’ native speakers (differently from certain linguists), these various interpretations most probably do not constitute a matter of ‘either – or’, but a specific space of functional possibilities available within one and the same context.

In (56), orthography suggests that the author (or the person responsible for typesetting) might indeed have intended an interpretation of *naj* as a clausal connector. However, since both clauses are quite loosely integrated and could both stand on their own, *naj* seems to function both as a verb-related independent marker and a dependent use conditioned by a final feature implied by the action of adding (*primešamo* ‘we add’) described in the matrix clause. That is, *naj* oscillates between a VP modifying position and a structural position in the left periphery of a clause.

- (56) *starega vina primešamo,* [. . .] *naj*
 we add old wine naj
bodo možilnost dobile
 be.FUT.3PL pubescence get.PFV.FUT.PL
 ‘We add old wine, such that they will obtain / let them get pubescence.’
 (IMP: Čebelarstvo, 1831)

The potential of being located in the left periphery and in a syntactic position typically assumed by clausal connectors can be seen from minimally opposed cases as (57) and (58). In the (a)-examples, *naj* follows the general complementiser *da*. It is still event-related, i.e. *naj mu povesta* and *naj stražijo* are in the scope of the assertive force of *da* (‘asked them that they should’, ‘ordered that they should’).

That is, the syntactic subordination is contributed by *da*, while *naj* contributes non-assertion. In the (b)-examples, both features are combined in *naj* ('asked his brother to' / 'ordered them to').

- (57) a. *jih je profil, de naj mu poveŝta,*
 he asked them that naj him tell.PFV.PRS.3DU
 'he asked them that they should tell him' (IMP: Zlata jabolka, 1844)
- b. *in brata prosil, naj se nikar*
 and he asked his brother naj REFL on_no_account
ne prenaŝli,
 NEG rush.PFV.PRS.3SG
 'and he asked his brother not to rush on no account'
 (IMP: Hirlanda, bretanska vojvodinja, 1851)
- (58) a. *oskrbnik je zapovedal, da naj straŝijo v veŝi*
 caretaker ordered that naj stand_guard.IPFV.PRS.3PL in corridor
 'The caretaker ordered that they should stand guard in the corridor.'
 (IMP: Rokovnjači, 1881)
- b. *Vojakom je ukazal, naj straŝijo v veŝi.*
 he ordered the soldiers naj stand_guard.IPFV.PRS.3PL in corridor
 'He ordered the soldiers to stand guard in the corridor.'
 (IMP: Rokovnjači, 1881)

The syntactic parallel between *da* and *naj*, while at the same time differing in terms of force indication, can be seen in (59). Both elements fill in a valency slot opened up by *pisati* and *se veseliti*, respectively; *naj* indicates non-assertive (directive) force, triggered by its potentially goal-directed head predicate *pisati*, while *da* as a complement to the factive predicate *veselijo se* carries assertive force.

- (59) *ino je fvoji ljubi materi pifał, naj fe s' njim veŝelijo,*
 and he.has to.his beloved mother written naj REFL with him be_happy.PRS.3PL
de je she tako bliso fvetiga raja
 that be.PRS.3SG already so close earthly paradise
 'and he wrote to his beloved mother, that they²⁶ should be happy for him, that he is already so close to paradise on earth' (IMP: Źivljenja srečen pot, 1837)

²⁶ As a native speaker reviewer pointed out, the pronoun could also refer to 'mother', since third person pronouns were used in the sense of V-addressing. The exact referential specification does not have a bearing on the analysis.

The potential of *naj* to be interpreted as being located towards the left of the clause, i.e. in the position of a clausal connector, is supported by combinations of *naj*+morphological imperative, as in (60) and (61)

(60) [. . .], *ki nas spodbujajo, da naj uživajmo življenje*
 who motivated us that naj enjoy.IPFV.IMP.1PL life
 ‘who motivated us that we enjoy live’ (Gigafida; Naša lekarna 2007)

(61) [. . .], *ki veli, naj ne govorimo po krivem,*
 who orders naj NEG say.IPFV.PRS.1SG wrongfully
naj ne izdajajmo in naj ne delajmo
 naj NEG betray.IPFV.IMP.1PL and naj NEG do.IPFV.IMP.1PL
drugim tega, kar ne želimo,
 to.others that which NEG wish.IPFV.PRS.1PL
da bi drugi delali nam.
 that SUBJ others do.IPFV.SUBJ to.us
 who orders we should not wrongfully convict, should not betray and should
 not do to others, what we don’t want others to do to us.’ (Gigafida; Internet
 2011)

Based on the fact that morphological imperatives are possible in subordinate clauses in Slovene (as described, e.g., in Dvorak 2005), see (62a) for contemporary and (62b) for 19th c. data, examples as (60) and (61) can be regarded as indicating that *naj* has uses in which it loosened its connection to the verb and moved to the left into a position occupied by elements such as the general complementizer *da*.

- (62) a. *Sem rekla, de pridi!*
 I said that come.PFV.IMP.2SG
 I said that come! (Dvorjak 2005: 38)
- b. *Ateij! mati so rekli, da pojdite domu*
 Father! mother said that come.PFV.IMP.2PL home
 ‘Father! Mother said that you should come home.’
 (IMP; Bohinjec, Peter. Žganjar. 1890)

The possible steps involved in the reanalysis underlying the functional extension of *naj* from an independent modal marker towards an element with clause combining potential is illustrated in (63). That *naj* in (63c) indeed introduces an indirect speech construction is suggested by the coreference to the addressee signalled by the 3rd person.

- (63) a. *Rekli so: naj gospodje učitelj*
 they said *naj* gentlemen teachers
se marljivo trudijo
 REFL diligently endeavour.IPFV.PRS.3PL
 ‘The said: may / let the gentlemen teachers diligently make efforts.’
 (IMP; Novice kmetijskih, rokodelskih in narodnih stvari, 1853)
- b. *ji je rekel, da naj plete nogavice*
 he told her that *naj* knit.IPFV.PRS.3SG socks
 ‘he told her that she should knit stocking’ (IMP; Milan in Milena, 1913)
- c. *Ciliki [je] rekel, naj stopi k njemu.*
 he told Cilika *naj* come.PFV.PRS.3SG to him
 ‘he told Cilika to come to his side [lit.: she should come]’ (IMP;
 Mohoričev Tone, 1886)

In addition, the set of potential matrix predicates seems to have widened from *verba dicendi* towards verbs potentially denoting a future-directed action, as *poslati* ‘send’ in (64).²⁷

- (64) *Res je, da tudi sam pošljem otroke, naj*
 it is true that also myself send.PFV.PRS.1SG children *naj*
si sperejo usta z vodo
 REFL wash_out.PRS.3PL mouth with water
 ‘It is true that I myself send the children to rinse [lit.: that they rinse] their
 mouth with water’ (Gigafida; Dnevnik 2001)

Furthermore, the future-directedness may also be induced by *naj*, as in (65) for a verbal and in (66) for a nominal head. Differently from (63), the matrix predicates are not primary speech act verbs. And differently from (64), the *naj*-structure fills a valency slot and the future-directed, goal-oriented interpretation of the *naj*-structure is not induced by a meaning component of that head predicate. In all cases, the PFV present in the *naj* clause supports the future-directed interpretation.

- (65) *To pomeni, naj stigmatizirani sprejemajo*
 this means *naj* stigmatized receive.IPFV.PRS.3PL
prevladujoča merila normalnosti
 prevailing standards of normality
 ‘This means that the stigmatized should receive the standards of normality’
 (Gigafida; Dialogi 2008)

²⁷ If *poslati* takes a verbal complement, it requires a supine. This indicates that goal-directedness is indeed a meaning component that may be activated with this verb.

- (66) *mnenja smo naj odstopi*
 we are of the opinion naj resign.PFV.PRS.3SG
 ‘we are convinced that s/he should resign’ (SSKJ)

These observations strongly suggest that *naj* has acquired the potential of serving as an indicator of directive force, syntactically located in the left periphery, i.e. the CP layer.

Thereby, the development of *naj* follows a frequently encountered path, which van Gelderen (2009, 2015) describes as ‘complementiser cycle’:

“[. . .] the left periphery, or CP layer, is renewed. Phrases that are base generated in the VP (or vP) get to be fronted and then serve two functions. They are later reanalysed as CP layer elements, both of the main clause and of the embedded one. This can be seen as a cycle, namely a CP cycle.” (van Gelderen 2009: 189)

Typically, this kind of cyclic development starts from an element having two functions (van Gelderen 2015: 172), i.e. as contributing to the event structure and to the sentence mood. As has been shown, *naj* behaves in a similar manner: Its functions range between the poles of intra-predicate marker modifying its complement predicate by introducing an attitude towards the event or situation description, and inter-predicate marker modifying the proposition state of affairs described by the *naj* structure by introducing an attitude it anchored in a previous clause on the other. This provides a starting point for a reanalysis of *naj* as potentially occupying different syntactic positions, which in turn underlies the extension of syntactic positions from a VP-internal, adverbial marker to an element located in the specifier of CP (illocutionary force marker) or the position of a C head.

5 To conclude: *naj* as clausal complementiser?

Having sketched a possible scenario for the morphosyntactic and semantic development of *naj* based on which its contemporary functional versatility can be accounted for, it is now possible to address the status of *naj* as a clausal complementiser. The question is not so much, whether *naj* ‘is’ or ‘is not’ a complementiser, but rather whether and to which degree it displays functions typical of complementisers. This leads to the problem of how to identify such functions. Here, one has to be careful to not apply ready-made categorical notions and distinctions that are in themselves problematic, such as that between arguments and adjuncts. In addition, one should avoid engaging in purely terminological

discussions that do not help in describing and systematising the data, in particular when it comes to dealing with older varieties and cross-linguistic comparison.

One possibility to circumvent such pitfalls consists in starting from the most general function complementiser-like elements assume and decomposing it into smaller-scale features. The relevant function can be described as marking a particular element or structure to be part of a larger syntactic unit. From this description, which does not presuppose a specific syntactic or semantic approach, the three features given in (67) emerge as first candidates to characterise elements with respect to their function as clausal complementisers.

- (67) A: embedding: the element serves the building-up of complex hierarchical predicational structures
 → vs. coordination on clausal level, adnominal modification on phrasal level
- B: relation: the element serves to fill in a valency slot of a verbal or nominal structure
 → vs. adverbial conjunction on clausal level, prepositional dependencies on phrasal level
- C: opacity: the element is not the target of agreement, i.e. it does not express a grammatical relation within the structure it embeds and it is not assigned features by the embedding head
 → vs. relativisation on clausal level, linking articles of the Albanian type on phrasal level

As to *naj*, it displays uses in contemporary Slovene, in which all three features are positively specified, such as (65) and (66) above. In other uses, feature (B) is not fulfilled, as in (19). In this case, feature (A) constitutes a possible interpretation via the inference of a discourse relation. Feature (B) is not fulfilled in all ‘independent’ uses of *naj*, i.e. restricted assertiveness does not necessarily correlate with syntactic dependency. Finally, feature (C) is given in all uses of *naj*.

Facing the manifold conceptions of what a complementiser ‘is’ or ‘is not (yet)’ and which syntactic and semantic aspects exactly an element should display in order to qualify as a complementiser, the above considerations might seem quite uninformed or ignorant. On the other hand, exactly this kind of categorically ignorant view seems necessary in order to prevent empirical analyses from ending up in discussions of categories as such. The features gained by decomposition allow to discriminate complementiser uses within the set of elements employed for complex VP and complex NP formation. Elements may correspond to these features to a smaller or larger degree, which is quite natural given that

languages are in constant flux. To the degree an element displays these features it can be said to display (synchronic perspective) or be developing (diachronic perspective) clausal complementiser functions. That is, features like those suggested in (67) allow for an empirically founded diachronic and diatopic comparison and hence to capture and pin down variation.

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