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Modal Substitution in Koine Greek: The Gospels of Mark and Luke

Jordi Redondo

Abstract: This paper continues our former research on the Greek Koine from a diachronic perspective. Our main goal deals with the use of the subjunctive and optative moods both in main and in subordinate clauses. The direct corpus of our analysis consists of the Gospels of Luke and Mark, as they represent a more literary (Luke) and a rather non-literary Greek Koine (Mark). Other contemporary texts, including non-literary evidences, are also used as a reference in order to establish the extent of some tendencies. The results obtained contribute to the understanding of the decline of the subjunctive and optative moods.

Keywords: Gospels of Luke and Mark; Koine; subjunctive; optative; orality; literacy; Atticism

1. Introduction

The modal system of standard Greek was radically altered in the post-Classical Age (Radermacher 1925: 156-157, 159-179; Blass & Debrunner 1965: 217, 220-236; López Eire 1991: 74-86), since its four elements were reduced to three by means of the elimination of the optative mood.1 But the reconstitution of the modal expression went beyond the simple reduction of the personal moods: in spite of its relevance, this is only one chapter within the whole process of modal substitution, as we will try to underline in this paper. By modal substitution we understand the mere syntactic process, without any relevant semantic consequence, of replacing a mood with another one. Actually we think of subjunctive and optative as two very close subcategories, in those terms formulated by Wackernagel and Ruipérez.2

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2 Wackernagel 1920, 232:

Der Unterschied beider Modi besteht also bloss darin, dass der Konjunktiv ein Wollen, der Optativ ein Wünschen ausdrückt. ... Man kann demgemäss den Unterschied der beiden Modi auch so definieren, dass beim Konjunktiv eine grössere Annäherung an die Wirklichkeit stattfindet.

Ruipérez 1952, 15:

En ambos se trata de una volición, pero en el subjuntivo lo que quiere el que habla, cree que el sujeto mismo puede efectuarlo; en el optativo la realización del deseo expresado está fuera de las fuerzas propias del sujeto, depende de otros. Paralelamente podemos decir — extendiendo la definición de Wackernagel — que el subjuntivo prospectivo

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In dealing with the modal syntax of New Testament Greek, the scholars used to focus on the weakness of the aorist subjunctive as it was gradually being replaced by the future indicative\(^3\), since the loss of the optative was considered an indisputable matter. Only Radermacher stresses the increase of the uses of the subjunctive forms, in spite of being very often replaced with the future indicative.\(^4\)

More recently, there has been some attention to the survival of the optative in non-literary texts of the late Roman age, that is to say, it was a wrong issue to think of this mood as an already non-existent category in real speech, while literary authors used it just as a stylistic device (Higgins 1945). Therefore, in the quite extended view of the moderns, every example of the optative should be analysed as a literary phenomenon due to the influence of the Atticist movement (Anlauf 1960). Yet the attested instances of the optative in the late post-Classical age give to the matter a much more nuanced perspective, in which we have to keep in mind the phonological and morphological processes that resulted in a merger of this mood with the subjunctive, as Gil points out.\(^5\)

2. Methodological remarks

Methodologically, all the obtained data are ranged according with the following criteria: the type of clause: main clause / subordinate clause; the verbal tense: pres. / aorist / perfect; and the literary frame: narrative / oral passage. In our opinion, there are no implications on the requested matter according with the person of the verbal forms. Maybe there are according with their voice, but as this criterion seems not actually relevant at first sight at least, it has been neglected.

Another important methodological aspect consists of taking as real the intention of the author to bring up a coherent and vivid reflection of the oral language. If so, no one of the interventions was under the effect of any literary technique. That is to say, both Mark and Luke adopt several narrative strategies and stylistic utterances in order to follow the model of the didactic, oral gender of the Gospel, but without an extended use of rhetorical and literary devices.

A different case is that of the manuscript variants that fluctuate between subjunctive and optative. In our corpus this situation is attested in five passages (Mc. 4, 29; 5, 43; 9, 30; 14, 10, and Lc. 19, 15).
(1) Mc. 4, 29:

And when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.  

In all these cases, in spite of the choice of the editors, it is easy to see that some manuscripts coincide in substituting some Koine features with others more close to the Atticism, while others act in the contrary way by introducing Koinisms.

Two other variants (Mc. 8, 35, Lc. 19, 40) involve aorist subjunctive and future indicative. This is the first instance:

(2) Mc. 8, 35:

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel shall save it.

The future indicative ἀπολέσει appears at the codices THVLM, while the aorist subjunctive ἀπολήσῃ is attested at the codices WS.

It is not without sense to pay attention to the second instance:

(3) Lc. 19, 40:

To whom he said: I say to you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.

We find the future indicative ζησπήζει at the codices THWVLM, while the aorist subjunctive σιωπήσῃς is attested at the codex S. If we are right, the subjunctival forms are only originated in an Atticist reading of the New Testament authors.

Other changes belong to an abridged grade of modal substitution, for the mainly involved element is not the mood itself, but the subordinating connector, see (5):

6 The subjunctive παραδῷ is attested at the codexes SV, while the optative παραδοῖ appears at the codices THWLM. Similar cases are Mc. 5, 43 with γνῶ at the codices SVM and γνωῖ at the codices THWL; Mc. 9, 30 with γνῶ at the codices SV and γνώι at the codices THWLM; Mc. 14, 10 with παραδῷ at the codices SV and παραδοῖ at the codices THWLM; and Lc. XIX 15 with γνῶ at the codices SV and γνωῖ at the codices THWLM. Cf. Moulton, Howard & Turner 1963, 129: ‘These optatives, like that in Mk. 122, are probably the learned corrections of Atticistic scribes’.

7 The subjunctive σιωπήσῃ is attested at the codexes SV, which is the lesson given by the codices THWLM; at Mc. 3, 31 the codex V prefers the perfect form ἑζηῶθεο instead of the present σιωπήσῃ, which is given by the codices THWSLM.

8 At Mc. 1, 41 the codex W prefers the lesson δόνῃ instead of δόνασα, which is given by THSVLM.

9 The future indicative ἀπολέσει appears at the codices THVL, while the aorist subjunctive ἀπολήσῃ is attested at the codices WS.

10 We find the future indicative σιωπήσῃς at the codices THWVL, and the aorist subjunctive σιωπήσῃς is attested at the codex S.
MODAL SUBSTITUTION

(4) Mc. 11, 19:

Καὶ ὅταν ὅψε ἐγένετο, ἔξεπορεύοντο ἔξω τῆς πόλεως.

And when evening was come, he went forth out of the city.\(^{11}\)

Other cases are doubtful, as there is not a cogent transmission of the text. For example, in (6) all but one of the extant manuscripts attest the lesson ὅψησθε, since Th gives the variant ὅψωσθε.

(5) Lc. 13, 28:

ἐθεὶ ἔζησα ὁ θειόκτο καὶ ὁ βραχίον τῶν ῥόξων, ὅταν ὅψησθε Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακὼβ καὶ πάντας τοὺς προφήτας ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃμᾶς δὲ ἐκβαλλόμενους ἔξω

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God: and you yourselves thrust out.

Of course the manuscript variants in themselves attest to a syntactic change — where also phonological and morphological changes are involved, as pointed out above — but they make less reliable any diachronic perspective on the matter, even if the text is such as a Gospel, present in many manuscripts at a quite early date.

Since this paper deals with the substitution of the subjunctive and the optative moods in two Gospels, it is to be intended as a partial approach to the matter. We will not deal, for example, with modal indicative forms that can also be replaced with simple, formally non-modal, indicative.

3. Commentary of the obtained data

If we now pay attention to the different clauses, we will notice that most of the cases of subjunctive and optative occurring in main clauses belong to oral passages where direct discourse is implied — 70 instances from a total figure of 76. Of course, main clauses at the narrative sections appear predominantly in indicative. In subordinate clauses, the oral frame is dominant in the temporal and relative sentences of the Markan Gospel. But the Gospel of Luke shows a completely different situation, since the increasing figures of the orally performed clauses affect much more syntactical types: besides temporal and relative clauses, as in Mark, Luke prefers the oral frame for final, conditional and substantive also.

For a complete evaluation of our figures it should be necessary not only to check the whole of the New Testament, but also to estimate the extent of the oral and the narrative sections. Therefore, this is an approximative frame to develop further research. Our figures are the following:

Mark:

*Main clauses:* 35 examples, 33 oral sections, 2 narrative sections
*Subordinate clauses:*
*Final:* 57 examples, 28 oral sections, 29 narrative sections

\(^{11}\) The same substitution of ὅψε with ὅψωσθε appears at Mc. 3, 11, and 11, 25. In this last instance, however, it must be noticed that the codex S gives the lesson στήρησθε, as a way of emendating the syntax of the passage.
As a general remark, it is noteworthy that the presence of subjunctive forms in the oral sections is increasing as the Gospel — Markan or Lukan, it does not matter — goes on. Therefore, it seems that the link between literacy and the use of the modal forms tends to diminish; in other words, the trend to use subjunctive in the oral sections seems to be weak at first, but later it equalizes and even clearly overcomes the use at the narrative sections.

Regarding the distribution of the utterances between the different types of clauses, the obtained data attest very similar figures in both authors, with an only difference. In the case of the temporal clauses, Mark shows a deeper tendency for substitution of the subjunctive mood. Take as an example the following passage:

(6) Mc. 3, 11:

καὶ τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα, ὅταν αὐτὸν ἔδηρμον, προσέπησαν αὐτῷ καὶ ἔκραξαν
λέγοντα ὅτι Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

And the unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him: and they cried, saying.

It is remarkable also that the modal substitution in temporal sentences is quite frequent in contemporary Koine texts. An author like Galen, writing in a non-literary Koine occasionally embellished with an Atticist touch (Vela Tejada 2009; Redondo 2017), shows a smaller frequency than the New Testament writers, but a deeper analysis is needed, for some passages were emendated by Kühn, as in (13):


ἐσμέν γὰρ ὅτι ἔξι μετὰ τὴν τοῦ ὀλίου σώματος κάθαρσιν χρήσθη τῷ τοπικῷ βοήθημα, καὶ
φλεβοσχήμα τaversable καὶ καθαρσία καὶ κλωστήρα καὶ ἀπταμία, ὅταν ἢμῖν τὸ πάν
σώμα φαινεται πληθυντικόν καὶ κακόχρημον ὑπάρχῃ.

We know that after cleaning the whole body it is necessary to use topical remedies, so that we use phlebotomy, purgation, clyster-pipes, and diets, as much time as the whole body seems to us full and hosting bad humour.12

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12 Here Kühn emendates in φαινεται. On the problem of the textual transmission of the Galenic Commentary on the Hippocratic treatise On Humours, see Redondo 2014.
In order to make clear that this innovation belongs to the general Koine evolution of the modal system, we will give an example taken from the historian Polybius:

(8) Pol. XIII 7, 10:
... ἐπεδαλ ἐθ ηῆο θαζέδξαο ἀνέζηηζε ηὴλ γπλαῖθα θαὶ πεπιέπηςξε ηαῖο ρεξζί, πξνζήγεην θαηὰ βξαρὺ πξὸο ηὰ ζηέξλα.

As soon as the man offered his hand to the supposed lady to raise her from her seat, the figure threw its arms round him and began drawing him by degrees towards its breasts.

A second Galenic example is free of any textual problem:

(9) Gal. Hum. I 1, XVI 1.1.7.12-15 K.:
νεκροῦσθα γάρ δηλοὶ τὶν διοικοῦσαν αὐτὸν δύναμιν καὶ τὰ λευκὰ τῶν όφθαλμῶν ἐρυθρὰ φαίνεσθαι, ως ὅταν πελιὰ ἢ μέλανα φελεῖα ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἕρωσε.

He shows that his strength is dead and the white of his eyes looks red when they have inside them livid or black veins.

As a parallel phenomenon to that of our textual evidence, it is not without interest that in several oral Lukian passages there is no way to distinguish between the aorist subjunctive and the future indicative. This situation does not appear in narrative passages, so that it leads to the conclusion that some of these changes have to do with the oral performance, to the context of the practical use of the language.

A special case is that of the sentences where the verbal subordinated form attests the syntactical construction known as Complementizer Deletion (CD) (Poletto 2001; Giorgi & Pianesi 2004; Grau-Llinàs & Fernández Sánchez 2013). This small group of sentences consists of three Markan and three Lukian instances (Mc. 10, 36; 10, 51; 15, 36; Lc. 6, 42; 9, 54; and 22, 7). This is the first example at the Gospel of Mark:

(10) Mc. 10, 36:
ὁ δὲ εἶπελ αὐηνῖο Τί ζέιεηε ποιήζυ ὑκῖλ;
But he said to them: What would you that I should do for you?

If we apply the CD theory, the apparently ambiguous form ποιήσω should be analysed as a subjunctive. In the second Markan passage the verbal form is also ποιήσω, so that there is no morphological way to decide to which mood it belongs. But all the other instances will show that we are actually dealing with aorist subjunctives, as it can be seen after our sentence (12):

(11) Mc. 15, 36:
δραμὼν δὲ τὶς γεμίσας σπόγγον ἄξους περιθές καλάμῳ ἐπότιζεν αὐτὸν, λέγων Ἀφετε ἰδοὺς εἰ ἔρχεται Ἡλέαις καθελεῖν αὐτὸν.

13 The instances are the following: Lc. 7, 31; 12, 17 (bis); 13, 18; 13, 35; 16, 3; 16, 4; and 18, 18. Most of them are main clauses, but the second instance at 12, 17 is a causal clause, and 13, 35 is a temporal clause.

14 Mc. 10, 36; 10, 51.
And one running and filling a sponge with vinegar and putting it upon a reed, gave him to drink, saying: Stay, let us see if Elias come to take him down.

Perhaps we should be attracted by the idea that here ἂνετε is just a fixed imperative, partly because it is placed as the opening word of the sentence. If so, our next example (12) could be of some help:

(12) Lc. 6, 42:
πῶς δόγματο λέγειν τῷ ἄθειος σου ἄθεος ἐξβάλει τῷ κάρφῳ τῷ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ σου, οὕτως τὴν ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ σοῦ δοκῶν ὑμῖν βλέπων;

Or how canst thou say to thy brother: Brother, let me pull the mote out of thy eye, when thou thyself see not the beam in thy own eye?

This second example suggests that the imperative governs the following verb. Therefore, the syntactical pattern of the sentence coincides with the CD model. Two more remarks on this group of sentences: first, none of them presents textual variants of the type aorist subjunctive/future indicative, and second, all of them belong to oral sections. Therefore, it could be inferred that the CD pattern is more at home in speech situations than in literary texts.

It is also to be noticed that the Latin Vulgata actually renders some Greek subjunctives by future indicative, as in (11):

(13) Lc. 13, 35:
λέγω [δὲ] ὅμως, οὕτως ἐπιτε ἔπη σὺ ἐκβάλει ἐγώ ἐπεί καὶ ἔτοι ἐπείκις ἐπὶ ὄνοματι Κυρίου'.

dico autem vobis, quia non videbitis me donec veniat cum dicitis: benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

And I say to you that you shall not see me till the time come when you shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

At the age of the New Testament authors and Galen, the modal system was already under a severe crisis, so that it will not be surprising that we can find hypercorrections such as the following one, at (15):

(14) Gal. De anat. adm. II 10, II 2.10.329.10-13 K.:
εἰ γὰρ ἐφορτοῖς τὸ μὲν τι μέρος αὐτοῦ συνδραμεῖν εἰς ἱππότιον, τὸ δὲ ἐπὶ τείνον τοῖς σιματαῖς δυσκολότατοι πλετόντες, ἀφροστότερον σοὶ φανεῖται τὸ πλατυτέρον τοῦ συνδραμοῦντος.

… If you let one part shrink while you stretch and distend another, the latter will appear weaker.

The weakness of the optative mood led Galen to try another kind of hypercorrection:

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15 Mc. 10, 36 shows a variant attested in some codexes, in which the subjunctive is replaced with an infinitive, so that an accusative subject is needed. The manuscripts choosing this option are the same that present the Atticist emendations, S and V. Other manuscripts, ThWL, show even the odd, agrammatical conflation με ποιήσο.
When you begin dissecting from above, seek to move downward through the hinder and inner region of the tigth.

It must be said that the Gospels of Mark and Luke do not show hypercorrections such as those of the examples (15) and (16), that is to say, even Luke does not share some of the Atticist trends. A last example of this case of modal substitution can be read at the (16) text, taken again from Polybius:

(16) Pol. IV 32, 5-6:

Accordingly when the attention of the former was distracted by domestic or foreign war, the Messenians were secure; for they always enjoyed peace and tranquillity from the fact of their country lying out of the road; but when the Lacedaemonians, having nothing else on hand to distract their attention, took to inflict injuries on them. (transl. E.S. Shuckburg)

On the question of the optative, as either a literary device or an already existent linguistic reality, our research points out that besides the scarcity of this mood, there exist different ways of substituting it.

The desiderative function of the optative appears twice in our corpus of texts, and it is Luke the author who uses it:

(17) Lc. 1, 38:

And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

(18) Lc. 20, 16:

He will come and will destroy these husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others. Which they hearing, said to him: God forbid.

In both cases the Hebrew affirmative adverb ָּשָּׁנָז has been rendered by means of a desiderative optative, and there is room to describe the Greek device as a concession of Luke to the Atticist trend.

The expression of wish by means of syntactical and semantical markers — past indicative tense of a verb stating lack, want or need — is also attested, but not in our two Gospels:
I would they were even cut off, who trouble you.

The potential optative is not attested in our two Gospels. The so-called oblique optative — a narrative tense according with the proposal of Faure (Faure 2009) — can be found only at the Lukan text, but the circumstances are here just the opposites to the case of the subjunctive mood: Luke does not use the optative in oral sections rather than in the narrative, but on the contrary; at the oral sections there are no examples of oblique optative, while eight examples appear at the narrative sections. Actually there is an instance where we could point to an oral context, but in a very loose way:

(20) Lc. 15, 26:

… καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος ἕνα τῶν παιδιῶν ἐπνοθάντετο τί ἦν εἶπα ταῦτα.

… And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

The substitutes of the optative mood are the present indicative, the imperfect indicative and the future indicative.

Our example (21) presents both the imperfect indicative and the aorist indicative instead of the optative:

(21) Mc. 6, 56:

καὶ ὅσον ἦν εἰσεπρέπετο εἰς κόμας ἢ εἰς πόλεις ἢ εἰς ἄγρας ἢ τις ἄθικας ἐπίθεσαν τοῖς ἀσθενοῦνται, καὶ παρεκάλεσαν αὐτοῖς ἵνα κἀκεῖνος τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῖς ἀρχυνται καὶ ὅσον ἦν ἄρτιντο αὐτοῦ ἐπαίζοντο.

And whithersoever he entered, into towns or into villages or cities, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch but the hem of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

Mark shows an instance of the substitution with future indicative:

(22) Mc. 11, 13:

καὶ ἤδην συκὴν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔριζον φῦλλα ἔριζεν εἰ ἠρα τι εὑρήσῃ ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ ἠλθὼν ἐπ᾿ αὐτὴν οὐδὲν εὗρεν εἰ μὴ φῦλλα, ὁ γὰρ καρπὸς οὐκ ἦν σύκαν.

And when he had seen afar off a fig tree having leaves, he came, if perhaps he might find any thing on it. And when he was come to it, he found nothing but leaves. For it was not the time for figs.

Luke seems much more flexible not only for introducing another variant, the present indicative, but also because of the different types of clauses where the substitution is

16 This possibility is already present at the Homeric poems, cf. Hom. Il. IV 315-316: ἀλλὰ σε γῆρας τέφρη ὁμοϊοίν τε ἀμφιέλαν τε ἀνθρών ἄλλοις ἔχειν, σοὶ δὲ κοινοτέροος μετέτηναι, and it is not unknown at the Classical age, cf. Dem. XVIII 320: οἱ ἐπεδή δὲ κἐ ἐμπρος ἀμφιέλαν συνέβη κτλ. The Homeric example shows a modal adverb — similar expressions are εἴθε, εἴ γάρ, and so on — as the Demosthenic example begins with the modal negation μή.

17 Lc. 1, 29; 1, 62; 3, 15; 6, 11; 8, 9; 9, 46; 18, 36, and 22, 23 (narrative sections); 15, 26 (oral sections). Cf. Moulton, Howard & Turner 1963: 129.
attested: main, conditional and relative clauses.\(^{18}\) We will look at first at the examples where the optative is replaced with the future indicative:

(23) \(\text{Lc. 11, 11-12:}\)

\text{τίνα δὲ ἐξ ὑμῶν τὸν πατέρα \textit{αιτήσει} ὁ \textit{ὑιός ιηθήν}, \textit{μὴ ἀντὶ ιηθός} ὃποι \textit{επιδόσει}; ἢ καὶ \textit{αιτήσει} ὃποι, \textit{επιδόσει} \textit{αὐτῷ} σκορπίον;}

And which of you, if he ask his father bread, will he give him a stone? Or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion?

These first two instances could actually be expressed by means of the future indicative, that is to say, with \textit{ἐπηδώζει} instead of \textit{ἐπηδώζεη}, according with the Attic rule. This is also the case of the sentences (25) and (26), where the protesis is much more clearly expressed:

(24) \(\text{Lc. 11, 18:}\)

\text{εἰ δὲ καὶ \textit{ὁ} Σαηαλᾶο \textit{ἐθ᾽ ἑαπηὸλ δηεκεξίζζε}, πῶο \textit{ζηαθήζεηαι} ἡ \textit{βαζηιεία} αὐηνῦ;}

And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?

(25) \(\text{Lc. 17, 7-8:}\)

\text{Tί δὲ ἐξ ὑμῶν δούλων ἔχειν ἀροτριῳντα ἢ ποιμαῖνοντα, ὃς εἰπελθοῦντι ἐκ τοῦ ἄγροι \textit{ἐρει} αὐτῷ \textit{Εὐλέος} παρελθῶν ἀνάπεσε, \textit{ἄλλ.} οὐχί \textit{ἐρεῖ} αὐτῷ \textit{Ἑποίμασσον} τί δειπνήσῃ, καὶ \textit{περιοισάμενος} διακόνει μοι ἕως φάγω καὶ πίω, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα φάγεσαι καὶ πίσσαι σὺ;}

But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say to him, when he is come from the field: Immediately go. Sit down to meat. And will not rather say to him: Make ready my supper and gird thyself and serve me, whilst I eat and drink; and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink?

There is an only case where the conjunction used is \textit{ἐάλ}:

(26) \(\text{Lc. 16, 30:}\)

\text{ὁ δὲ \textit{εἶπεν} Οὐρί, πάτερ Αβξαάκ, ἄλλ᾽ \textit{ἐάν} τις \textit{ἀπὸ νεκρῶν} πορευθῆ πρὸς αὐτοὺς \textit{μετανοήσουσιν}.

But he said: No, father Abraham: but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance.

This construction, certainly not new in the history of the Greek language, is the most common in the non-literary Koine.\(^{19}\)

Our following instance implies a main clause:

(27) \(\text{Lc. 20, 13:}\)

\text{ἐπεν δὲ \textit{ὁ} κόριος τοῦ \textit{Ἄμπελόνος} \textit{Τί} ποιήσῃ; πέμψω τὸν υἱόν μου τὸν ἄγαπητόν· ἵες τοῦτον \textit{ἐντραπήσωνται}.

\(^{18}\) \textit{Lc. 11, 11 (bis); 11, 12; 11, 18; 16, 30; 17, 7 (bis)}, both instances being cases of relative clause, and 20, 13.

\(^{19}\) Radermacher 1925\(^2\), 161: 'Gewöhnlich ist auf ihnen [i.e., in den Ptolemaic papyri] \textit{ἐάν} cum Coniunctivo im Vordersatz, im Nachsatz das Futurum'.
Then the lord of the vineyard said: What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. It may be, when they see him, they will reverence him.

Notice that the main verb ἵνα could also be analyzed as an ambiguous case, as nothing implies that it be a future indicative — the most tenable option — or an aorist subjunctive — a literary construction, almost found in tragedy.

The Galenic Koine prose will provide the examples (29) and (30):

(28) Gal. De anat. adm. III 2, II 3.2.351.2-4 K.: 
καὶ χρή πρὸς τὸ δέρμα τὴν σμίλην ἐρείδοντας τὸν ὑμένα χωρίζειν, ώς, εἰ γε πρὸς τὸν ὑμένα τὴν σμίλην ἐγκλίνως, τρώσειται αὐτὸν.

You must incline the lancet toward the skin when separating the membrane. If you turn it toward the membrane, you would injure it.

(29) Gal. De anat. adm. III 2, II 3.2.353.6-7 K.: 
εἰ δ᾿ ἐγκαταλείπει τὴν σμίλην, πολλὰ διαρήσεις ἠμα.

… But if you apply the lancet transverserly, you may divide many.

If we now come back to Luke, the most interesting instance is (30), where the optative is replaced with the present indicative:

(30) Lc. 17, 9: 
μὴ ἐξει χάριν τῷ δούλῳ ὃτι ἐποίησαν τῇ διαταχθέντι;

Doth he thank that servant for doing the things which he commanded him?

The modal negative adverb μὴ suggests a first consideration, as its use implies a modal verbal form, which is not the case of the present indicative. Therefore, ἔξει has a modal meaning that in Classical Greek should have been afforded by an optative — as the inherited, traditional solution — or alternatively by a future indicative.

Some conclusions
As a general conclusion, the data gathered in these New Testament texts suggest that the process of modal substitution is much more alive in speech than in literature. This observation fits with the Atticist contrary trend aiming at the preservation of subjunctive and especially optative.

It must be taken into account that all the cases of substitution of the optative mood in Luke have been found in oral sections. This means that the loss of the optative is not a literary matter, but a phenomenon that has its origin in daily speech. On the contrary, from all the attested examples of this mood — eleven examples — only those belonging to main clauses, just two of them, were found in oral passages, besides an only example among a group of nine sentences. That is to say, it seems that the optative was still in use as a main clause, even if this utterance was restricted to the sociolect of the more cultivated people or to some speech situations. Yet in subordinated clauses the tendency to substitute the optative was beyond any doubt very strong. Vice versa as in the main clauses, here the appearance of the optative seems linked to an Atticist, literary trend, much more at work in Luke than in other authors of our neotestamentary texts.
The ways to substitute the optative do not bring up a sufficient number of instances to obtain any tenable conclusion. Yet it seems that the future indicative appears as the most preferable solution.

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Bibliography


