

**Approaching V2 from the North:  
A Macrosyntactic View on Dependent V2 Variation in Icelandic**  
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In most Germanic V2 languages (cf. Vikner 1995), the distribution of dependent (aka "embedded") V2 is restricted to environments supporting what Holmberg and Platzack (1995) called "Main Clause Interpretation" (MCI), a speech act sensitive property the exact characterization of which has so far eluded researchers (cf., e.g., Gärtner and Michaelis 2010; Heycock 2006; Reis 1997). Along with Yiddish, Icelandic belongs to the few languages where these restrictions are less strong (Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson 1990). Thus, for example, non-subject initial V2 is possible in the complement of non-assertive predicates like *doubt* (p.23) and *not expect* (Angantýsson 2011:123). I'll refer to the two distributional patterns as "narrow" and "broad" V2 (NV2/BV2).

To understand Icelandic BV2, one must keep in mind that this language lacks three important surface cues for dependent V2: (i) in VO languages there is no (automatic) ordering reversal between finite verbs and VP internal constituents under V2. (ii) V2 argument clauses standardly retain their complementizers in Icelandic. (iii) Due to "V-to-I," V2 is usually not detectable in subject-initial clauses. Somewhat loosely speaking, these facts conspire against the usefulness of V2 as a signaling device for MCI.

At the same time, BV2 is by no means an "anything goes" in Icelandic. Many of the restrictions on V2 in dependent interrogatives and adjunct clauses and subregularities concerning predicate classes allowing V2 complements are reminiscent of NV2 (Angantýsson 2011; Hrafnbjargarson and Wiklund 2009). And, as pointed out by Jónsson (1996:2.5.3), Icelandic actually comes in two varieties, one displaying BV2 (Icelandic A), and the other an "ordinary" NV2 language like Mainland Scandinavian (MSc) (Icelandic B). This makes Icelandic an ideal testing ground for hypotheses concerning the deeper forces at work in the licensing of dependent V2.

Building on previous work (Gärtner 2003), I will focus on the role of a factor that, though occasionally discussed, has not been appreciated enough as decisive in the debate on Icelandic BV2. Thus, Icelandic – as opposed to MSc – possesses a rather regular and robust indicative/subjunctive alternation. In particular, subjunctive is a reliable indicator of subordination in many environments. The intensively studied *weil*-V2 phenomenon (Antomo and Steinbach 2010; Reis 2013), for example, plays out analogously: non-MCI environments ban V2 in German and require subjunctive in Icelandic (Sigurðsson 1990:327).

My hypothesis therefore is that clausal dependencies are marked by verbal mood in Icelandic A. Through this, V2 is "liberalized" and plays the role – via the filling of a clause initial specifier – of information structural profiling, much as does scrambling and frame setting in the left-peripheral middle field of OV languages. This hypothesis has the additional benefit of making the divide between Icelandic A and B amenable to a "classical" account: decay and eventual loss of subjunctive. Thus, Sigurðsson (1990:4.4) reported on the rise of an "I(ndicative)-Dialect" in the domain of long-distance reflexive licensing, and Angantýsson (2011: chapter 4) found an "age effect," such that evidence for BV2 is attested more frequently with older speakers of Icelandic. The hypothesis also allows us an obvious additional perspective on the change from BV2 to NV2 in MSc, which has usually been linked to loss of V-to-I (Vikner 1995:5.5). The details of the loss of subjunctive in MSc have only begun to be studied in more detail (Nordström 2011).

In the talk I will try to outline an account of the reorganization of the "Type-Mood-Force system" accompanying the change from BV2 to NV2, both from a formal syntactic as well as from the semantico-pragmatic side.

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