

4 Some similarities and differences between Icelandic and Yiddish

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1 Introduction

Among the Germanic languages, Icelandic and Yiddish are only distantly related and have had virtually no contact, yet they share a striking number of important (morpho)syntactic properties: head-initial phrase structure, rich subject-verb agreement, overt case morphology on full noun phrases, the availability of empty expletive subjects, and the productive use of verb-first declarative clauses in narrative contexts.¹ Both languages also exhibit the verb-second (V2) phenomenon—not only in root clauses, but in subordinate clauses as well.² While the similarities between Icelandic and Yiddish have been the subject of some discussion in the literature (Platzack & Holmberg 1990, Santorini 1989, Sigurðsson 1990a, Vikner 1991), less attention has been paid to the differences between them. In this paper, I attempt to right this balance by focusing on these differences.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 sets the stage for the discussion of the differences between the grammars of Icelandic and Yiddish by reviewing an important similarity between them: the productivity of embedded V2. Following much recent work, my analysis of this shared property relies on the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis, according to which subjects originate in a position dominated by a maximal projection of the verb. The remainder of the paper is devoted to differences between the two languages. Section 3 shows that although empty expletives are licensed in both Icelandic and Yiddish, their distribution is not identical: empty expletives can occupy Spec of IP in Icelandic, whereas they are barred from this position in Yiddish. Section 4 shows that traces of long subject extraction have the same distribution as empty expletives; non-subject traces, on the other hand, are ruled out in Spec of IP in Icelandic as well as in Yiddish. As

I will show, this constellation of properties follows straightforwardly if we assume that the feature composition of COMP can be "hybrid" (Rizzi 1990a) in Icelandic, but not in Yiddish. Section 5 is devoted to a discussion of stylistic fronting in Icelandic, a phenomenon superficially akin to topicalization, yet often regarded as distinct from it, and not available in Yiddish. I propose an analysis of stylistic fronting according to which it is adjunction of a lexical head to INFL, and I relate the restriction of stylistic fronting to Icelandic to the possibility of leaving Spec of IP phonologically empty in that language. Finally, section 6 briefly addresses the issue of parametric variation of the sort exhibited in Icelandic.

2 Embedded V2

As is well known, most Germanic languages exhibit the V2 phenomenon—that is, the position preceding the inflected verb need not be occupied by the subject, but may be occupied instead by some other argument or by an adjunct, as long as the inflected verb occupies second position. Further, many V2 languages exhibit a root-subordinate clause asymmetry: root clauses are V2, whereas subordinate clauses are not. This asymmetry is most striking in an OV language like German, where the position of the inflected verb relative to the other constituents varies by clause type, giving rise to word order contrasts as in (1) and (2).

- (1) a. Ich *habe* gestern einen Schreibtisch gekauft
I have yesterday a desk bought
'I bought a desk yesterday'
b. Einen Schreibtisch *habe* ich gestern gekauft
a desk have I yesterday bought
'I bought a desk yesterday'
c. Gestern *habe* ich einen Schreibtisch gekauft
yesterday have I a desk bought
'I bought a desk yesterday'
- (2) ob ich gestern einen Schreibtisch gekauft *habe*
if I yesterday a desk bought have
'whether I bought a desk yesterday'

According to the analysis of V2 currently accepted as standard (Chomsky 1986b: 6, cf. den Besten 1983), the inflected verb in a V2 clause moves to COMP and some maximal projection moves to Spec of CP, as indicated schematically in (3).

- (3) [_{CP} XP_i [_C V+Infl] [_{IP} ... t_i ... t_j]]

A major strength of this analysis is that it accounts straightforwardly for the absence of V2 subordinate clauses in "asymmetric" V2 languages like Dutch and German. In such languages, whenever COMP is occupied by a complementizer, the inflected verb must stay within IP.

It has often been noted, however, that Icelandic and Yiddish, in contrast to Dutch and German, are "symmetrical" V2 languages—that is, they are V2 not only in main clauses, but in all types of subordinate clauses as well (for Icelandic, see Maling 1990: 71f.; Maling & Zazwara 1981: 255f.; Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990: 22–29; Thráinsson 1986: 179, 186; for Yiddish, see Diesing 1990: 64–67; Santorini 1989: 52–60 and references cited therein).³ Embedded V2 is illustrated for Icelandic in (4) and for Yiddish in (5) ((4a,b) = Thráinsson's (28a,b); (5a,b) = Diesing's (35b), (40b)).

- (4) a. Kennari sem slíkan þvætting ber 4 borð fyrir nemendur
a-teacher who such nonsense lays the-table before students
er til alls vís
is to all capable
'A teacher who tells students such nonsense is capable of anything'
b. Ég spurði hvar henni hefðu flestir að dáendur gefið blóm
I asked where her had most fans given flowers
'I asked where the most fans had given her flowers'
- (5) a. der yid vos shabes bay nakht vet Khayim zen
the man that Sabbath at night will Chaim see
'the man that Chaim will see on Friday night'
b. Ikh veys nit tsi of dos bukh hot er geleyent
I know not whether FOCUS the book has he read
'I don't know whether he has read that book'

2.1 Phrase structure

Following much recent work based on an idea originally due to Fillmore (1968) and McCawley (1970), we can resolve the dilemma raised for the standard analysis of V2 by the acceptability of embedded V2 in Icelandic and Yiddish by assuming the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis, according to which subjects originate in a position dominated by the maximal projection of the verb rather than in Spec of IP. Several different variants of this hypothesis have been proposed in

the literature, with some authors arguing that subjects originate in Spec of VP and others, that they occupy a position adjoined to VP. For present purposes, the precise position in which subjects originate is irrelevant, as long as it is dominated by a maximal projection of the verb, and I will simply refer to the underlying position of the subject. Further, I follow Heycock (1991)—contra Fukui (1986), Fukui & Speas (1986) and Fintel (1990)—in assuming that every clause contains Spec of IP, regardless of the thematic properties of its verb and the case-assigning properties of INFL. The “underlying” structure of the subordinate clauses in (4) and (5) is thus as shown schematically in (6).⁴

- (6) Underlying structure of (4) and (5):
 [CP [COMP] ... [IP ^ε [INFL ^ε] [VP Subj V ... XP ...]]]

The superficial word order of (4) and (5) can then be derived by two instances of movement. First, the highest verb moves from its underlying position within VP into INFL. Second, some XP—in the examples at hand, a phrase other than the subject—moves into Spec of IP. The resulting derived structure is shown schematically in (7).

- (7) Derived structure of (4) and (5):
 [CP [COMP ...] [IP XP_i [INFL V+Inf]_i [VP Subj t_j ... t_i ...]]]

2.2 The feature composition of COMP

As we have just seen, symmetrical V2 languages differ from asymmetric ones in two respects: first, the inflected verb moves to INFL in symmetrical V2 languages, but to COMP in asymmetric ones, and second, the landing site of topicalization is Spec of IP in symmetrical V2 languages, but Spec of CP in asymmetric ones. Adopting an idea in Rizzi (1990a), I propose to relate these two differences to the feature composition of COMP.

2.2.1 Verb movement

Rizzi (1990a: 382) suggests that just as lexical categories are defined in terms of combinations of the features [N] and [V], so functional categories are defined in terms of the features [C] and [I]. Specifically, he assumes that in addition to “pure” COMP ([+C, -I]) and “pure” INFL ([+C, +I]), there exists a “hybrid” head with the feature composition [+C, +I]. It is this hybrid category that acts as the head of V2 clauses in languages with a root-subordinate clause asymmetry like German. While Rizzi’s discussion is restricted to such languages, it can be

extended to accommodate symmetrical V2 languages like Icelandic and Yiddish if we take the location of the highest [+I] category in a V2 clause to be subject to parametric variation (Diesing 1990, Kosmeijer 1991, Santorini 1992a). Thus, in asymmetric V2 languages, the highest [+I] category is COMP (which is therefore hybrid), whereas in symmetrical V2 languages like Icelandic and Yiddish, the highest [+I] category is INFL.^{5,6} If, as Rizzi (1990a: 383) assumes, the tense specification of the inflected verb is required to c-command all the other [+I] categories in the same clause, then the difference in the landing site of the inflected verb in the two types of V2 languages falls out from the different feature composition of COMP.

2.2.2 Nominative case assignment

The highest [+I] category in a clause not only attracts the inflected verb, but also assigns nominative case (rightward) under head-government, which I define as in (8) (cf. Platzack 1986, Platzack & Holmberg 1990).⁷

- (8) Definition of head-government:
 A head-governs B iff
 (i) A is a head,
 (ii) A governs B, and
 (iii) minimality is respected.
- (9) Definition of government (provisional):
 A governs B iff
 (i) A c-commands B, and
 (ii) there is no C, C a barrier for B.

I adopt a strict definition of c-command, as in (10).

- (10) Definition of c-command:
 A c-commands B iff the node immediately dominating A dominates B.

Further, I assume that L-marked categories are not barriers (I give a more explicit definition of barriers in section 4.1). L-marking is defined as in (11) (slightly adapted from Déprez 1989: 385, (103)); I assume that hybrid COMP L-marks IP because it agrees with INFL by virtue of the value that the two heads share for the feature [I].⁸

- (11) L-marking: A L-marks B iff (i) and (ii):
 (i) A c-commands B.

- (ii) (a) A is a lexical head, or
 (b) A is a functional head and agrees with the head of B.

Given the above assumptions, we can derive the different status of Spec of IP in asymmetric and symmetrical V2 languages as follows. In an asymmetric V2 language, where the highest [+I] category is hybrid COMP, nominative case cannot be assigned to the underlying subject position: if, following Déprez (1989: 335f.), we assume that VP is not a barrier, head-government of the underlying subject position by the hybrid COMP violates (9iii) because INFL is a closer potential head-governor. Considerations of minimality therefore force the subject to move to Spec of IP so that it can be assigned nominative case. Since Spec of IP is restricted to subjects, it cannot be the topic position in these languages; however, Spec of CP is free for non-subjects to move into. In a symmetrical V2 language like Icelandic or Yiddish, on the other hand, the highest [+I] category is INFL, and nominative case can be assigned to the underlying subject position. As a result, Spec of IP is available for non-subjects to move into and can thus function as the topic position.

3 Empty expletives

I have just argued on the basis of the parallel acceptability of V2 subordinate clauses like (4) and (5) that the highest [+I] category in Icelandic and Yiddish is INFL. In this section, I will argue on the basis of the different distribution of empty expletives in the two languages that the highest [+I] category can sometimes be COMP in Icelandic (though not in Yiddish).

3.1 Impersonal constructions

3.1.1 Yiddish

In Yiddish, apparently verb-first subordinate clauses, as in the impersonal construction in (12), are completely unacceptable.

- (12) *Er hot gefregt, tsi iz varem in shtub
 he has asked whether is warm in the-room
 'He asked whether it was warm in the room'

By contrast, word order variants of (12) in which Spec of IP is filled by some overt constituent are acceptable, as shown in (13).

- (13) Er hot gefregt, tsi in shtub iz varem

- he has asked whether in the-room is warm
 'He asked whether it was warm in the room'

The contrast between (12) and (13) can be accounted for if these clauses contain empty expletives—denoted below by *e* in preverbal and postverbal position, respectively, as shown in (14).

- (14) a. *tsi [_{IP} *e* [_{INFL} iz] varem in shtub]
 b. tsi [_{IP} in shtub [_{INFL} iz] *e* varem]

In the spirit of much recent work (cf. Safir 1985: 206; Rizzi 1986a: 524; Platzack & Holmberg 1990: 21), I assume that empty expletives must satisfy the formal licensing condition in (15).⁹

- (15) Empty expletives must be head-governed by a case-assigner.

The contrast between (12) and (13) then follows from the definition of head-government in (8). Since COMP is not hybrid in Yiddish and pure COMP does not agree with INFL, IP is a barrier, and empty expletives are not licensed in Spec of IP. By contrast, since VP is not a barrier, empty expletives are licensed in the underlying subject position.¹⁰

3.1.2 Icelandic

In contrast to Yiddish, apparently verb-first subordinate clauses are acceptable in Icelandic (Maling 1990: 84–86; Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990: 31–32; Sigurðsson 1990a: 51–56). This is shown in (16) (cf. Maling 1990: 84, (44)).¹¹

- (16) Ég vissi ekki að væri ennþá ekið vinstra megin í Ástralíu
 I knew not that were still driven left side in Australia
 'I didn't know that people still drove on the left in Australia'

Impersonal constructions in which Spec of IP is occupied by an overt phrase, as in (17), are acceptable for many speakers as well.

- (17) Ég vissi ekki að í Ástralíu væri ennþá ekið vinstra megin
 I knew not that in Australia were still driven left side
 'I didn't know that people still drove on the left in Australia'

I assume that the subordinate clauses in (16) and (17) contain preverbal and postverbal empty expletives, just like the corresponding Yiddish impersonal constructions, as shown in (18).

- (18) a. að [_{IP} *e* [_{INFL} væri] ennþá ekið vinstra megin í Ástralíu]
 b. að [_{IP} í Ástralíu [_{INFL} væri] *e* ekið ennþá vinstra megin]

Given our conclusion on the basis of the embedded V2 facts that the highest [+I] category is INFL in both Icelandic and Yiddish, the acceptability of (17) is expected but that of (16) is not. If we make the reasonable assumption that the licensing condition on empty expletives in (15) is language-independent, the acceptability of (16) forces us to conclude that the highest [+I] category in an Icelandic clause can be either INFL or COMP.¹² This conclusion is consistent with the acceptability of embedded V2 in Icelandic: as long as INFL is the highest [+I] category in some clauses, Spec of IP can be occupied by non-subjects.

3.2 Subject postposing

Subject postposing constructions exhibit a pattern parallel to the one just discussed for impersonal constructions, as illustrated in (19) for Yiddish and in (20) for Icelandic (cf. Sigurðsson 1990a: 52, (27a)).

- (19) a. 'Ikh hob nit gevust, az geyn keyn Grinland azoy fil shifn
I have not known that go to Greenland so many ships
'I didn't know that so many ships went to Greenland'
b. Ikh hob nit gevust, az haynt geyn keyn Grinland azoy fil shifn
I have not known that today go to Greenland so many ships
'I didn't know that today, so many ships went to Greenland'
- (20) a. Ég vissi ekki að færú til Grænlands svona mörg skip
I knew not that went to Greenland so many ships
'I didn't know that so many ships went to Greenland'
b. Ég vissi ekki að í dag færú til Grænlands svona mörg skip
I knew not that today went to Greenland so many ships
'I didn't know that so many ships went to Greenland today'

Under the reasonable assumption that subject postposing constructions in Yiddish and Icelandic contain empty expletives (Jónsson 1991a: 26–29; Sigurðsson 1990: 55, (39–40)), as indicated in (21) and (22), the pattern in (19) and (20) follows straightforwardly from the considerations just discussed in connection with empty expletives in impersonal constructions.¹³

- (21) a. *az [IP e [INFL geyn] keyn Grinland azoy fil shifn]
b. az [IP haynt [INFL geyn] e keyn Grinland azoy fil shifn]
- (22) a. að [IP e [INFL færú] svona mörg skip til Grænlands]
b. að [IP í dag [INFL færú] e til Grænlands svona mörg skip]

4 Complementizer-trace phenomena

4.1 Long-distance subject extraction

Further evidence that the highest [+I] category can be either COMP or INFL in Icelandic, but must be INFL in Yiddish, comes from differences between the two languages with regard to complementizer-trace phenomena. As in standard English, long-distance subject extraction out of subordinate clauses is impossible in Yiddish, as shown in (23) (Diesing 1990, p. 75, (53a)).¹⁴

- (23) *Ver hot er moyre az vet kumen?
who has he fear that will come
'Who is he afraid will come?'

By contrast, long-distance subject extraction out of subordinate clauses in Icelandic is acceptable, as shown in (24) (Maling & Zaenen 1981: 264, (17)).

- (24) a. Hver heldur þú að sé kominn til Reykjavíkur?
who think you that was come to Reykjavík
'Who do you think came to Reykjavík?'
b. Þetta er maðurinn, sem þeir segja að hafi framið glæpin
this is the-man that they say that has committed the-crime
'This is the man that they say committed the crime'
c. Þetta sverð heldur konungurinn að sé galdrasverð
this sword thinks the-king that is magic-sword
'This sword, the king thinks is a magic sword'

In order to account for the contrast between (23) and (24), I rely on Déprez 1989. Following her work and the many references cited there, I assume a conjunctive formulation of the ECP, as in (25).

- (25) ECP: A nonpronominal empty category must be
(i) head-governed, and
(ii) antecedent-governed.

Further, I adopt the definition of barrier given in (26); the notion of blocking category is defined as in (27) (Déprez 1989: 334, (32)–(33)) (both definitions are slightly reformulated).

- (26) Barrier: A is a barrier for B iff (i) or (ii):
(i) A is the minimal maximal projection dominating C,
C a blocking category for B (inherited barrier)
(ii) A is a blocking category and every segment of A
dominates B (inherent barrier).

(27) Blocking category: A is a blocking category for B iff

- (i) A is not L-marked, and
- (ii) some segment of A dominates B.

Finally, I adopt the revised definition of government in (28), incorporating the notion of exclusion in (29) (Chomsky 1986b: 9).

(28) Definition of government (revised): A governs B iff

- (i) A c-commands B, and
- (ii) there is no C, C a barrier for B, such that C excludes A.

(29) Definition of exclusion: A excludes B iff no segment of A dominates B.

Given these assumptions, consider the representation of (23) shown in (30) (for expository convenience, I omit a number of intermediate traces not relevant to the present discussion).

(30) Ver₁ hot er moyre [_{CP} t'₁ az [_{IP} t₁ vet kumen]]?

Since COMP does not L-mark IP in Yiddish, IP is a blocking category for t₁, and since (30) does not involve adjunction, IP is an inherent barrier for t₁ by (29ii). Thus, t₁ fails to be head-governed by COMP, and (30) is correctly ruled out, just like the empty expletive constructions in Section 3. The alternative derivations of (23) in (31) and (32), according to which the wh-phrase adjoins to IP, are ruled out as well.

(31) Ver₁ hot er moyre [_{CP} t'₁ [_{CP} az [_{IP} t'₁ [_{IP} t₁ vet kumen]]]]?

(32) Ver₁ hot er moyre [_{CP} t'₁ az [_{IP} t'₁ [_{IP} t₁ vet kumen]]]?

This is because COMP continues to fail to govern t₁: IP remains a blocking category and an inherent barrier since every segment of it dominates the trace, and it excludes the complementizer.¹⁵

Given the ill-formedness of the three representations in (30)–(32), how can the contrast between (23) and the structurally parallel (24) be derived? Assuming, as we did in Section 3, that COMP in Icelandic can be hybrid and that it L-marks IP when it is, then IP is not a barrier in clauses with hybrid COMP. In particular, the representation of (24a) in (33) is well-formed: it is consistent with the head-government requirement on nominative case assignment, with the constraint against improper movement and with economy of derivation.

(33) Hver₁ heldur þú [_{CP} t'₁ að [_{IP} t₁ sé kominn til Reykjavíkur?]]

The analysis just presented leads us to expect traces in Spec of IP to be licensed in Yiddish if there were ever circumstances under which COMP ended up being the highest [+I] category in that language. This

expectation is borne out by the acceptability of examples like (34) (= Diesing 1990: 75, (53b)).

(34) Ver hot er moyre vet kumen?

who has he fear will come

'Who is he afraid will come?'

According to Diesing's analysis of (34), which I adopt here, the COMP node filled by *az* in (24) is underlyingly empty in (34), and the finite verb *vet* raises into it, yielding the representation in (35). As a result of movement, COMP agrees with INFL, IP is no longer a barrier, and (34) is acceptable for the same reason as the Icelandic sentences in (24).

(35) Ver₁ hot er moyre [_{CP} t'₁ vet₁ [_{IP} t₁ t₁ kumen]]?

4.2 Extraction of non-subjects

While Icelandic and Yiddish differ with regard to the long-distance extraction of subjects, the analysis of (23) and (24) just presented, taken together with the analysis of nominative case assignment in section 2.2.2, leads one to expect that they should pattern together with regard to the extraction of non-subjects through Spec of IP. Specifically, such extraction should be impossible in both languages. In clauses in which the highest [+I] category is INFL, the extraction of non-subjects through Spec of IP is ruled out on a par with the extraction of subjects by the considerations concerning barrierhood discussed in connection with (23). In clauses in which the highest [+I] category is COMP, on the other hand, IP is L-marked and hence neither a blocking category nor a barrier. However, in this second case, any trace in Spec of IP must be a subject trace. This is because nominative case cannot be assigned to the underlying subject position, since INFL is a closer potential head-governor than COMP.

This expectation concerning extraction of non-subjects is borne out, as shown by the severe ungrammaticality of (36) and (37) in Icelandic and Yiddish, respectively ((36a) = Zaenen 1980: 107, (285d); (36b) = Maling and Zaenen 1981: 266, (21b); (37b) is based on Diesing 1990: 71, (49c)).

(36) a. *Vodka_i er drykkjarföng, sem [_{IP} t₁ drekkur Ólafur 'i Rússlandi]

vodka is the-drink that drinks Olaf-NOM in Russia

'Vodka is the drink that Olaf drinks in Russia'

b. *Hverj_i heldur þú að [_{IP} t₁ hafi Ólafur hjálpað]?

who-DAT think you that has Olaf-NOM helped
 'Who do you think that Olaf helped?'

- (37) a. **dos bukh Op_i vos* [*ip t_i zoln di kinder leynen*]
 the book that should the children read
 'the book that the children should read'
 b. **Vos_i hot er nit gevolt az* [*ip t_i zoln di kinder leynen*]
 what has he not wanted that should the children read
 'What didn't he want the children to read?'

5 Stylistic fronting

Icelandic exhibits two apparently similar yet distinct fronting processes: topicalization, the process discussed in Section 2 that results in subject-verb inversion, and stylistic fronting. Like topicalization, stylistic fronting results in a constituent preceding the inflected verb, as shown in (38) ((38a,b) = Jónsson 1991a: 1, (2a), (3c)).

- (38) a. *þetta er tilbøð sem ekki er hægt að hafna*
 this is an-offer that not is possible to reject
 'This is an offer that it is not possible to reject'
 b. *þetta eru tillögumarm sem um var rætt*
 these are the-proposals that about was talked
 'These are the proposals that were discussed'

However, according to Maling (1990: 76), the two instances of movement differ in a number of ways. Topicalization applies to phrasal categories, is relatively uncommon in embedded contexts, is not accepted by all speakers in non-asserted clauses, is unbounded and is not restricted to clauses containing a subject gap. Stylistic fronting, on the other hand, applies to lexical categories (adverbs, verbs, adjectives, particles), is common and accepted by all speakers in all embedded contexts, is clause-bounded and is subject to the condition in (39).¹⁶

- (39) Stylistic fronting is possible only if the clause contains a subject gap.

The subject gap that licenses stylistic fronting may arise as a result of the thematic properties of the verb in impersonal constructions, or as a result of extracting or postposing the subject.¹⁷ Furthermore, the acceptability of extraction out of clauses with topicalization ranges from questionable to unacceptable, whereas clauses with stylistic fronting allow extraction freely (Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990: 31–34). While

Maling (1990) does not give a formal analysis of stylistic fronting, she concludes on the basis of the differences between it and topicalization that the two processes are syntactically distinct. By contrast, Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson (1990: 22–29) take topicalization and stylistic fronting to be a unitary syntactic process, though exhibiting functional differences—a position also adopted in Santorini (1989: 67). In this section, I argue in favor of Maling's position. Specifically, I propose an analysis of stylistic fronting according to which it is adjunction of a lexical head to INFL rather than movement to Spec of IP.

5.1 A lexical adjunction analysis of stylistic fronting

In contrast to topicalization, stylistic fronting affects lexical rather than phrasal categories. Conclusive evidence for this view comes from Icelandic clauses in which participles have undergone stylistic fronting, stranding their complements, as in (40) (= Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990: 25, (36a,b)).¹⁸

- (40) a. *þegar komið var til Reykjavíkur*
 when arrived was to Reykjavík
 'when one arrived in Reykjavík'
 b. *ef gengið er eftir Laugaveginum*
 if walked is along the-Laugavegur
 'if one walks along Laugavegur'

It might be argued that clauses as in (40) should be analyzed along the lines proposed for German examples like (41) by den Besten & Webelhuth (1988), where what occupies the topic position appears to be a head.

- (41) *Gelesen hat er das Buch erst gestern*
 read has he the book only yesterday
 'He read the book only yesterday'

Den Besten & Webelhuth argue that in such examples, all the verb's arguments—in this case, *das Buch*—scramble out of its maximal projection and that the original maximal projection containing the traces of scrambling undergoes 'remnant topicalization', as shown in (42).

- (42) [*ip t_i Gelesen*]_j hat er [*das Buch*]_j erst gestern t_j

However, a remnant topicalization analysis as in (42) does not extend to (40), since Icelandic does not allow scrambling (Höskuldur Thráinsson, pers. comm.), as shown in (43).¹⁹

- (43) a. *Sveinn hefur Söru gefið t_i gjöfina
 Sveinn has Sara given the-present
 'Sveinn gave Sara the present'
 b. *Sveinn hefur gjöfina_i gefið Söru t_i
 Sveinn has the-present given Sara
 'Sveinn gave Sara the present'
 c. *Hann mun [með þessu priki]_i reka burt öndina t_i
 he will with this stick drive away the-duck
 'He will drive away the duck with this stick'

I conclude from the unacceptability of (43) that stylistic fronting affects lexical heads.

Given the lexical status of the constituents affected by stylistic fronting, an analysis of it as movement to Spec of IP violates the structure-preserving constraint. An alternative analysis as adjunction to IP—attributed by Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson (1990: 28) to Sigurðsson—is ruled out by the like-attracts-like constraint of Baltin (1982). I conclude instead that stylistic fronting is adjunction of a lexical head to INFL and propose (44)—with an empty expletive occupying Spec of IP—as the representation of the examples in (40).

- (44) a. þegar [IP e [INFL komið [INFL var]]] til Reykjavíkur]
 b. ef [IP e [INFL gengið [INFL er]]] eftir Laugaveginum]

5.2 Consequences for Icelandic

Since Spec of IP in Icelandic can be occupied not only by empty expletives, but by subject traces as well, as we saw in section 4, a lexical adjunction analysis of stylistic fronting as in (44) is consistent with the subject gap condition in (39).²⁰ Furthermore, since stylistic fronting is not an instance of embedded V2 under the lexical adjunction analysis, the contrast between extraction out of clauses with embedded V2 and ones with stylistic fronting falls out naturally—whatever the reason for the unacceptability of extraction out of embedded V2 clauses in Icelandic turns out to be. A final welcome consequence of the lexical adjunction analysis is that the clause-boundedness of stylistic fronting follows directly from the fact that inflected verbs do not undergo extraction out of their clause.²¹

As Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson (1990: 27) note, stylistic fronting is not restricted to subordinate clauses. This is shown in (45) (= their (40), (41)).²²

- (45) a. Fram hefur komið að ...
 out has come that
 'It has become clear that ...'
 b. Keypt hafa þessa bók margir stúdentar
 bought have this book many students
 'Many students have bought this book'

Assuming that Spec of IP is obligatorily generated, stylistic fronting in main clauses cannot be completely parallel to that in subordinate clauses, since the empty expletive in Spec of IP in a representation like (46) would not be head-governed.

- (46) [IP e [INFL fram [INFL hefur]]] komið að ...]

I conclude therefore that stylistic fronting in main clauses is derived by moving the complex INFL node formed by adjunction into COMP, as shown in (47); such verb movement to COMP is independently motivated in Icelandic by the existence of verb-first declarative main clauses (Sigurðsson 1990a).

- (47) [CP [COMP [INFL fram [INFL hefur]]]] [IP e t_i komið að ...]

5.3 Consequences for Yiddish

Cardinaletti & Roberts (1991: 18) suggest that Yiddish, like Icelandic, allows stylistic fronting. According to the lexical adjunction analysis just presented, on the other hand, stylistic fronting should not be available in Yiddish, since empty categories, whether empty expletives or traces, are barred from Spec of IP in that language. As I will show, it is the latter expectation that is borne out.

Assuming Maling's original description of stylistic fronting, according to which it is restricted to heads, we find that there are no conclusive instances of stylistic fronting in Yiddish.²³ First, the single most favored target of stylistic fronting in Icelandic—sentence negation—is completely ruled out in clause-initial position in Yiddish, as illustrated in (48).²⁴

- (48) *vibald az nit kayklt zikh arayn
 when that not rolls REFL in
 'when it (= money) doesn't roll in'

Second, apparent instances of stylistic fronting in Yiddish, as in (49), have alternative derivations ((49a) is from Olsvanger 1947: 93).

- (49) a. vibald az aroys kayklt zikh yo un arayn kayklt zikh nit

when that out rolls REFL yes and in rolls REFL not
 'when it (= money) rolls out and not in'

- b. Zey hobn gemeynt, az gefinen veln zey im ba mir.
 they have thought that find will they it on me
 'They thought that they would find it on me.'

The fronted particle in (49a) can be analyzed as the phrasal projection of an intransitive preposition, and (49b) can be analyzed as an instance of remnant topicalization, since Yiddish, like German, allows scrambling, as shown in (50) and (51) (Hall 1979, Geilfuß 1991).²⁵

- (50) a. Avrom hot Soren_i gegebn t_i a matone
 Avrom has Sore given a present
 'Avrom gave Sore a present'
 b. Avrom hot [a matone]_i gegebn Soren t_i
 Avrom has a present given Sore
 'Avrom gave a present to Sore'
- (51) a. az men zol kenen [oyf im]_i forn t_i
 that one shall be-able on him drive
 'that one can drive on it'
 b. ...un hot [mitn shetkn]_i avekgetribn di katshke t_i
 and has with-the stick away-driven the duck
 '... and drove away the duck with the stick'

Thus, there is no compelling reason to believe that Yiddish exhibits stylistic fronting.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that the highest [+I] category in a clause can be COMP or INFL in Icelandic, but must be INFL in Yiddish, and that this allows us to capture the similarities between the two languages with regard to embedded V2 as well as the differences between them with regard to the distribution of empty categories and stylistic fronting. The question arises under what circumstances languages exhibit the type of parametric variation that we find in Icelandic, since such variation has in general been assumed to differentiate languages from one another rather than to characterize a single language. However, there is a growing body of work—based mainly, though not exclusively, on diachronic studies—showing that distinct parametric options of universal grammar can co-occur within one and the same language (Koopman & Sportiche 1991, Santorini 1989, Pint-

zuk 1991, Taylor 1990). This should not occasion surprise, since there is no theoretical principle constraining the usage of the speakers of a language (in the sense of 'E-language' introduced by Chomsky 1986a) to reflect a single set of I-language parameter values. Specifically, I have argued in Santorini (1992a) that synchronic variation of exactly the sort discussed above for Icelandic is found in the history of Yiddish. In contrast to modern Yiddish, where the highest [+I] category is always INFL, it is always COMP in the earliest forms of Yiddish, just as it is in the German from which Yiddish is descended. However, during the transition from early to modern Yiddish that took place in the 1600s, we find evidence that the highest [+I] category can be either COMP or INFL. This evidence comes from the fact that the usage of one and the same author exhibits superficially verb-first subordinate clauses as in (12) and (19) as well as instances of embedded V2. A further case in which synchronic parametric variation has been invoked concerns the dialect of Finland-Swedish spoken in Kronoby; Platzack & Holmberg (1990: 24) suggest that the finiteness operator [+F] may be located in COMP or INFL in this variety of Swedish.

Since we know that the mainland Scandinavian languages have undergone a number of syntactic changes in the course of their history, we might conclude that synchronic syntactic variation is the reflex of linguistic change in progress. Icelandic, however, is generally held to be an extremely stable language. We speculate therefore that the variation that we find in Icelandic reflects the influence of the grammar of the modern mainland Scandinavian languages,²⁶ in which the highest [+I] category is COMP, on a grammar representative of old and insular Scandinavian, which like modern Yiddish requires the highest [+I] category to be INFL. Since the diachronic change in the highest [+I] category in Yiddish is restricted to East Yiddish, the dialect that had contact with Slavic, parametric variation might then be regarded as a concomitant of language contact, regardless of whether such contact actuates linguistic change or results in stable variability.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Mikhi Herzog, Jóhannes Jónsson, Noyekh Miller, Eirikur Rögnvaldsson and Höskuldur Thórinnsson for generously supplying native-speaker judgments, not all of which have found their way into the paper. Many thanks also to Caroline Heycock and Raffaella Zanuttini for much discussion, and to Kjartan Ottósson and the audience at the Verb Movement Conference at the University of Maryland at College Park for their helpful comments.

2. Here and throughout this paper, I will use the term "V2" in its traditional descriptive sense to refer to declarative clauses with the following two properties: (1) the inflected verb is the second constituent of the clause, and (2) if the first constituent is not the subject (in instances of "topicalization"), subject-verb inversion is obligatory. As I will use the term "V2", it is intended neither to refer simply to the position of the inflected verb nor to be prejudiced in favor of any of the particular analyses of the phenomenon that have been proposed in the literature (such as verb movement to COMP).
3. The symmetrical V2 languages also include Old English (Pintzuk 1991), Old French (Adams 1988, Cardinaletti & Roberts 1991, Dupuis 1989, Hirschbühler & Junker 1988) and Old Spanish (Fontana 1992). It is worth noting that not all speakers of Icelandic or Yiddish find non-subject-initial word order in *wh*- or non-asserted subordinate clauses equally acceptable (cf. Diesing 1990, Hornstein 1991, Lowenstamm 1977, Ottósson 1989, Platzack & Holmberg 1990, Sigurðsson 1990a).
4. I do not assume the split INFL hypothesis (Pollock 1989): I take AGR to be a feature on INFL instead of heading its own maximal projection.
5. I take COMP in asymmetric V2 languages to be hybrid in both main and subordinate clauses; for discussion, see Heycock & Santorini (1992, fn. 5).
6. The question immediately arises why Spec of IP cannot be filled by non-subjects in English, French or Italian, where INFL is the highest [+I] category just as it is in Icelandic and Yiddish. Elsewhere, I have proposed to derive this difference from a separate parameter: namely, the feature content of AGR (Santorini 1992b, Heycock & Santorini 1992).
7. In Section 4.1, I will incorporate the notion of exclusion into the definition of government, as in Chomsky (1986b: 9). For the moment, however, since we are not dealing with adjunction structures, the simpler definition of government will suffice.
8. In keeping with the spirit of Déprez's analysis, we might interpret [+I] as an abbreviation for a set of phi-features.
9. In addition to the formal licensing condition in (15), empty expletives must also satisfy an additional identification requirement (cf. Rizzi 1986a: 520, (41)), which is of no concern in the present context.
10. Note that a definition of head-government in terms of *m*-command fails to capture the contrast between (12) and (13); cf. the discussion in Déprez (1989: 366–373) and the definition of head-government in Koopman & Sportiche (1991: 230).
11. The acceptability of such clauses varies considerably by speaker, type of clause and mood of verb. According to Kosmetscher (1991: 192, fn. 1), two out of five speakers accepted (i), two rejected it and one judged it to be questionable.
 - (i) Hann vissi að hefði verið dansað í gær.
he knew that had-INDIC been danced yesterday.
'He knew that there had been dancing the night before.'
 Clause-initial empty expletives are more acceptable when the verb is in the subjunctive rather than the indicative mood (Eiríkur Rögnvaldsson, pers. comm.), and they are also more acceptable in clauses involving movement of a *wh*-operator than in *that*-clauses (Maling 1990: 84f.).
12. The conclusion that there are two possible licensors for empty expletives in Icelandic is independently arrived at by Cardinaletti & Roberts (1991: 48).
13. The contrast between Yiddish and Icelandic with regard to the distribution of empty expletives has significant implications for recent attempts to eliminate empty expletives from the conceptual inventory of grammatical theory. Haider (1988, 1990) has argued that in grammars in which case is marked overtly, subjects remain in their underlying VP-internal position and a derived subject position is not generated. Since arguments are overtly case-marked in both Icelandic and Yiddish, Haider's approach incorrectly leads us to expect both languages to pattern together and to allow verb-initial subordinate clauses. The contrast between (12) and (16) is thus unexpected for him, as is that between (19a) and (20a). These contrasts therefore provide evidence for the existence of empty expletives in universal grammar.
14. Local extraction of subjects through Spec of IP is possible in Yiddish headed relative clauses, just as it is in English. Other instances of local subject extraction in Yiddish, such as free relatives or indirect questions, pattern with long-distance extraction of subjects. The analysis of these facts is beyond the scope of this paper; for relevant discussion, see Prince (1988).
15. The representation in (32) is ruled out in addition by the constraint against improper movement proposed by Déprez 1989: 114, (90), according to which constituents cannot move from an adjoined position to a non-adjoined position.
16. Stylistic fronting is not unique to Icelandic, but is also attested in Faroese (Barnes 1987, Lockwood 1955), medieval Scandinavian (Platzack 1988) and Old Spanish (Fontana 1992). While stylistic fronting bears a striking resemblance to the Breton participle-fronting construction discussed in Borsley (1990: 82ff.) and Hendrick (1990a: 128ff.), the two constructions are not identical: on the one hand, the Breton construction is not restricted to subject-gap clauses; on the other hand, it affects only participles and is restricted to main clauses, leading Hendrick (1990a) to treat it as COMP-substitution.
17. In Old Spanish, stylistic fronting is also licensed by thematic null subjects.
18. Jónsson (1991a: 24) makes essentially the same argument presented below, though he does not discuss the potential remnant topicalization analysis, and he independently proposes a lexical adjunction analysis of stylistic fronting. An important difference between his analysis and mine is that he assumes that empty expletives do not require case. Rather, he argues that nominative case in Icelandic is assigned by INFL to its specifier under adjacency and that since stylistic fronting interrupts the adjacency between INFL and Spec of IP, elements in Spec of IP fail to receive nominative case in clauses with stylistic fronting (Jónsson 1991a: 18–21). From the comparative point of view of this paper, Jónsson's assumption that empty expletives do not require case is problematic since it either incorrectly leads him to expect empty expletives to be available in Spec of IP in Yiddish, or forces him to impose different licensing conditions in empty expletives in the two languages—surely an undesirable move given considerations of learnability.
19. Icelandic does allow so-called object shift, a form of leftward movement superficially similar to scrambling (Holmberg 1986, Vikner 1991), but it is heavily restricted: it is possible only in clauses with a tensed main verb and it applies only to definite NPs. Another relevant difference between remnant topicaliza-

tion and stylistic fronting is that constituents that undergo remnant topicalization receive (contrastive) stress, whereas stylistically fronted constituents are not necessarily emphasized or stressed (Maling 1990: 76).

20. An important question that remains unanswered given the analysis just proposed is why stylistic fronting is incompatible with movement of an overt constituent into Spec of IP (Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990: 28–29). I assume that the incompatibility of the two types of movement is related to the general restriction against adjunction to the maximal projection of the highest [+I] head in V2 languages, a restriction that in turn appears to be related at a more abstract level to the impossibility of adjoining wh-phrases to CP in languages that do not allow multiple wh-questions at S-structure. The precise formulation of the principle in question remains a task for future research.
21. See Jónsson (1991a: 15f.) for discussion of some exceptional cases in which stylistic fronting apparently applies across a clause boundary.
22. As in subordinate clauses, stylistic fronting in main clauses obeys the subject gap condition in (39).
23. Cardinaletti & Roberts (1991) depart from Maling's original notion and take stylistic fronting to be the fronting of any constituent in a clause containing a subject gap; they do not require the fronted constituent to be a lexical head.
24. (48) is not ruled out because of thematic *pro*, since Yiddish allows thematic null subjects under the proper discourse conditions; cf. (49a).
25. I assume—contra Hall and Gellfuß—that Yiddish is VO.
26. It is important to bear in mind that Iceland was under Danish rule for most of its history—from 1380 until 1918.

5 Comments on the paper by Santorini

Kjartan Ottósson

1 Introductory remarks

In her paper, Santorini presents an ambitious and imaginative proposal, the first one in the literature, to unify certain syntactic differences between Icelandic and Yiddish.¹ These differences have to do with long subject extraction across a complementizer, empty expletives in Spec of IP, and stylistic fronting, all of which are only possible in Icelandic. In commenting on the proposed account, I have deemed it most useful to stick to the perspective of a native speaker of Icelandic, not venturing too far into the intricacies of Yiddish, of which I know little. Further, I have endeavored to stay within the general theoretical framework assumed in the paper.

Santorini proposes to reduce the various differences discussed to a single factor, the location of the feature [+I] (from Rizzi 1990a). She assumes that this feature is in INFL in Yiddish, whereas it can be in either COMP or INFL in Icelandic. Nominative is assigned under head government by the highest [+I] category in the clause. The case-assigning property of the highest [+I] is also assumed to enable the head that bears it to license empty expletives. A third function of [+I], having nothing to do with nominative assignment, is voiding barrierhood, to account for long subject extraction.

It is presupposed in Santorini's paper that Icelandic and Yiddish are quite similar syntactically. It should be noted at the outset, however, that the similarity is probably less striking than one would gather from the list of common features at the beginning of the paper. Most importantly, the case system of the two languages differs in significant ways, with overt morphological case on full noun phrases much reduced in Yiddish as compared to Icelandic. More specifically, Yiddish does not have oblique subjects, nor nominative objects, which