



How Can V2 Vary?

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Goals

Goal of this workshop (cf. the workshop announcement):

“to try to determine what the main issues [of ‘verb movement’] are and take a new look at them through 2010 goggles”

Recent challenges include (the announcement again):

new data from extensive dialect studies

My goggles and my data:

to look not only at variation in ‘verb movement’ (or V2) itself in some detail (in Icel. and Far.) but also investigate what it correlates with, since this might help determine its nature



The structure of the talk

- First: What do I mean by “V2” (and “V3”)?
- **Introductory remarks** (some ideas about V2 and what they should imply about the nature of V2-variation; two ways of making progress; what I want to and why; a bit about the methodology ...)
- **An overview of V2 and V3** in Icelandic and Faroese
- The observed **generational** and **geographical** differences
- **Some correlations** between verb placement and other features of Faroese syntax
- Concluding remarks.



What do I mean by “V2”

Descriptive term for ‘verb in second position in any clause’

Some examples from Faroese (not all accepted by all speakers, as we shall see, cf. also Thráinsson et al. 2004:243–245 etc.):

- (1) a. Jens **hevur aldri** lisið bókina.
Jens has never read the book
- b. Eg haldi, at Jens **hevur aldri** lisið bókina.
I think that Jens has never read the book
- c. Eg eri keddur av, at Jens **hevur aldri** lisið bókina
I am sad about that Jens has never read the book
- d. Hon spurdi, hvør **hevði aldri** lisið bókina.
she asked who had never read the book
- e. Eg ivist í, um hon **hevur altíð** sagt satt.
I doubt in if she has always said true
- f. Har vóru nógv fólk, sum **høvdu ikki** lisið bókina.
there were many people that had not read the book
- g. Tey hata hana, hóast tey **hava aldri** sæð hana.
they hate her although they have never seen her



... and V3?

... is then just a descriptive term for clauses where the verb is in third position, without any claims about its nature. So it will include the following Icelandic examples, for instance:

(2) a. Ég náttúrulega **veit** það ekki.

I naturally know it not

b. Það sem hann **ekki** sagði var merkilegra.

it that he not said was more-interesting



Introduction

Some popular ideas about V2:

- It arises through V-to-I (in its various guises...)
- It arises through V-to-C (in its various guises...)
- It arises through remnant movement of VP “to the C-domain”

Analyses of these different kinds should make different predictions as to how V2 might vary and what it might correlate with, broadly speaking “other IP-phenomena” (cf. e.g. Holmberg & Platzack 1995, Bobaljik and Thráinsson 1998) “other CP-phenomena” (cf. e.g. papers by Bentzen, Wiklund, Hróarsdóttir and Hrafnbjargarson in various permutations (known at the time as TFF, the Tromsø Fearsome Four); also Heycock et al. 2010).



Introduction, 2

Questions:

- Don't we already know everything there is to know about V2-variation in Icelandic and Faroese?
- Hasn't this been discussed *ad nauseam* in recent papers and presentations, many of them somehow connected to NORMS or ScanDiaSyn, even by authors in the audience here (cf. e.g. Angantýsson 2007, 2010; Wiklund et al. 2007; Bentzen 2007, Bentzen et al. 2009; Heycock and Sorace 2007, Heycock, Sorace and Hansen 2010)?

Answer to first question:

No, I don't think so.

Answer to second question:

Well, maybe, but I don't care.



Introduction, 3

Two ways of making progress in accounting for V2 (as any other linguistic phenomenon):

- revising or refining (formal) accounts of previously known data
- extending the empirical basis

The present talk is of the second kind.



Introduction, 4

The reason:

- We have systematically collected variation data from **more speakers** of Icelandic and Faroese than has been done before:
IceDiaSyn: over 700 subjects from all age groups and all parts of the country in three different overviews (i.e. 700+ x 3); plus some interviews.
FarDiaSyn: over 300 subjects from all age groups and a number of islands in two different overviews; plus a number of interviews.
- We can systematically compare **more types of constructions** than has been done before (over 40 in Icelandic, many of the same in Faroese).



Introduction, 5

Some questions we should be able to give more reliable answers to than before:

Descriptive issues:

- How does V2 vary in these languages? (generational?, regional?, by clause type?)
- What does this variation correlate with? (e.g. with alleged “CP-phenomena” or “IP-phenomena”?)

Theoretical interest:

Extending the empirical basis in this fashion should in the end help us choose between alternative theoretical accounts — or at least add a bit of spice to the discussions.



Introduction, 6

A few points on our methodology:

Most of our data have been elicited by using written questionnaires. To get reliable results using questionnaires it is important to take certain methodological precautions (cf. e.g. Schütze 1996 (ch. 5), Cornips and Poletto 2005):

- make sure everybody get the **same instructions** (preferably read them aloud)
- **explain the grading scale** by giving illustrative examples
- **vary the order** of the test sentences (e.g., reverse for half of the subjects)
- **test different constructions** in each overview and **include fillers**
- **vary the tasks** (absolute judgments, relative judgments, fill-ins ...)
- **include a break** in long sessions to prevent excessive fatigue and boredom
- **include context sentences** to get all subjects thinking of similar contexts
- **try to use natural sounding examples** (short, plausible, lexically neutral ...)
- test **multiple examples** of each construction to minimize unwanted effects
- try to make the contrasting variants maximally close to **minimal pairs**
- test **different types of speakers** (age groups, locations ...)
- throw out data from **“unreliable speakers”** (e.g. “language specialists”)
- get speakers to **report on their own intuition** (cf. Henry 1995, 2005a,b)



Introduction, 7

Our results indicate that the methodology worked because:

- The **variation is systematic** (differences between clause types, age groups and (in a few cases) regions, etc.) and not random.
- All **generations seem reliable** (e.g., it's not the case that the youngest generation “accepts everything”).
- The **subjects answer honestly** in general and don't seem worried by any kind of prescriptivism or the like (there is very little awareness of most of the variants investigated anyway).
- Comparison of **different tasks** confirms reliability of judgments.
- Comparison with **corpora** confirms reliability of judgments.
- Comparison with **interviews** confirms reliability of judgments.
- Comparison with **other studies** can sometimes serve as a confirmation, although there are also certain discrepancies (cf. below) ...

(cf. e.g. Thráinsson 2010c)



Introduction, 8

The format of typical questions on the questionnaire (the English glosses were not included!):

Settu X í viðeigandi dálk:

'Put an X in the appropriate column.'

- Já = **Eðlileg** setning. Svona get ég vel sagt.
yes = 'Natural sentence. I could easily say this.'
- ? = **Vafasöm** setning. Ég myndi varla segja svona.
? = 'Doubtful sentence. I would hardly say this.'
- Nei = **Ótæk** setning. Svona get ég ekki sagt.
no = 'Unacceptable sentence. I could not say this.'

		já	?	nei	Athugasemdir
T2100	<i>Þingmaðurinn heimsótti kjósendur.</i> Hann spurði hvort að þeir alltaf hefðu búið í kjördæminu.				

There were typically over 100 questions of this kind.



Introduction, 9

Question:

Why did we opt for a three-way choice rather than, say, two or five or use magnitude estimation?

Some answers:

- To keep the instructions and evaluation as simple as possible.
- We were mainly interested in categorical answers (acceptable/unacceptable), not in “degrees of acceptability” per se. Hence we would have liked yes/no, +/- ...
- We has some reasons to believe that subjects would develop different heuristic strategies if they only given two choices and then found some examples questionable.
- We did a pilot study trying out different methods.
- We did s separate study of the effects of giving subjects different numbers of choices (2, 3, 5, 7, cf. Árnason 2007).



Introduction, 10

Árnason's (2007) results:

yes		no				
56%		44%				
yes	?			no		
49%	12%			39%		
1	2	3	4	5		
37%	14%	14%	13%	22%		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32%	12%	9%	10%	11%	8%	18%

Table 1: Effects of giving the subjects different numbers of choices (cf. Árnason 2007)

Main points:

- Four comparable groups judged the same examples and they were given 2, 3, 5 or 7 choices.
- Adding to the number of choices mainly led to a more fine-grained evaluation of the “unacceptable” and “acceptable” sentences.



An overview of V2 and V3 in Icel. and Far.

Conflicting claims in the literature include:

- Faroese **has/does not really have** “V2” (or V-to-I) in embedded clauses (Petersen 2000, Thráinsson 2003, Thráinsson et al. 2004, Bentzen et al. 2009, Heycock et al. 2010 w. refs.)
- Icelandic **has/does not really have** “V3” (or has/does not have obligatory V-to-I) in embedded clauses (Bobaljik and Thráinsson 1998, Wiklund et al. 2007, Angantýsson 2007, 2010, etc.)



Overview, 2

An overview of results for V2 and V3 in FarDiaSyn and in Angantýsson (2010) for different clause types:

Clause type	Word order	FarDiaSyn	Angantýsson 2010
Non-bridge verb complements	Vfin-Adv (V2)	25,8%	21%
	Adv-Vfin (V3)	79,3%	98%
Indirect questions	Vfin-Adv (V2)	27,4%	24%
	Adv-Vfin (V3)	94,5%	90%
Relative clauses	Vfin-Adv (V2)	29,1%	23%
	Adv-Vfin (V3)	96,1%	94%

Table 2: An overview of findings for V2 and V3 in FarDiaSyn (N>320) and by Angantýsson (2010, N 48)

Comment:

- Very similar results but different examples and different subjects. Acceptance of V2 relatively high (cf. below).



Overview, 3

An overview of results for V2 and V3 in IceDiaSyn for different clause types:

Clause type	Word order	IceDiaSyn
Non-bridge verb complements	Vfin-Adv (V2)	73,8%
	Adv-Vfin (V3)	11,2%
Indirect questions	Vfin-Adv (V2)	88,8%
	Adv-Vfin (V3)	12,3%
Relative clauses	Vfin-Adv (V2)	87,5%
	Adv-Vfin (V3)	36,2%

Table 3: An overview of findings for V2 and V3 IceDiaSyn (N>740)

Comment: Low scores for V3 except for the relative clause (cf. below).

Overview, 4

For the (Icelandic) record:

- We did not find any evidence for influence of “extra *að*” on the acceptability of V2 vs. V3 in Icelandic, contra Wiklund et al. (2007): “When there is verb movement, *að* is optional; when there is no verb movement, *að* is impossible” (or, to put it differently, V-movement is obligatory when *að* is present):

Word order		Examples	Acceptance
V2	no <i>að</i>	Hún spurði hvort þeir hefðu alltaf verið flughræddir <i>she asked whether they had always been flying-afraid</i>	88,8%
	w. <i>að</i>	Hann spurði hvort að þeir hefðu alltaf sungið falskt. <i>he asked whether that they had always sung out-of-tune</i>	74,3%
V3	no <i>að</i>	Hann spurði hvort þeir aldrei hefðu borðað svið. <i>he asked whether they never had eaten sheep-heads</i>	10,0%
	w. <i>að</i>	Hann spurði hvort að hún aldrei hefði borðað kjöt. <i>he asked whether that she never had eaten meat</i>	10,1%

The (non-)influence of "extra að" complementizer on the acceptance of V3 in Icelandic



Overview, 5

For the (Faroese) record:

We did not find that V-Neg examples were consistently less acceptable than (other) V-Adv examples in Faroese V2 (contra Heycock et al. 2010). Almost the same “mean grade” for both kinds. An example of a near-minimal pair:

type of adverb	Examples	Acceptance
negation	Har hittu hann vinmenn, sum hann hevði ikki sæð í nógv ár. <i>here met he friends that he had not seen for many years</i>	37,6%
other adverb	Har var nógvur matur, sum hon hevði ongantíð smakkað. <i>here was enough food which she had never tasted</i>	29,1%

An example of acceptance of V-Neg and V-Adv in FarDiaSyn (N>320)

V2/V3-variation in Icelandic and Faroese in more detail

Judgments of comparable V2 examples in Icel. and Far.

Cls. type	Lang.	Examples	Age groups				
			< 20	20–39	40–59	60+	All
non-brdg	Icel	Honum sárnaði að Kastljósið fjallaði aldrei um þær.	65,8%	80,6%	77,2%	70,7%	73,8%
	Far	Hann er keddur av, at Jógvan hevur ongantið lisið hana	34,1%	24,3%	18,2%	28,4%	25,8%
ind-ques	Icel	Hún spurði hvort þeir hefðu alltaf verið flughræddir	82,1%	90,6%	93,8%	88,5%	88,8%
	Far	Hann spurdi, hví Pætur hevði ikki lisið bókina	40,2%	27,0%	18,6%	24,3%	27,4%
rel	Icel	Þar var alls konar matur sem henni líkaði ekki	75,0%	90,6%	89,7%	96,2%	87,5%
	Far	Har var nógvur matur, sum hon hevði ongantið smakkað	36,8%	28,0%	24,7%	26,5%	29,1%

Table 2: Acceptance of V-Adv order in different clause types in Icelandic (N > 740) and Faroese (N > 320)

Main points:

There is a clear and consistent difference between Icel. & Far. Acceptance rate in Far. is higher than expected, especially by the youngest age group (cf. e.g. Petersen 2000, Thráinsson 2001, 2003, Thráinsson et al. 2004:443, Bentzen et al. 2009, Heycock et al. 2010 — but see Angantýsson 2010 (cf. above)).



V2/V3-variation, 2

Glosses for the sentences on the preceding slide:

Non-bridge examples:

Icel. Honum sárnaði að Kastljósið fjallaði aldrei um þær.
him(D) felt-bad that The Spotlight dealt never with them

Far. Hann er keddur av at Jógvan hefur ongantíð lisið hana.
he is sad about that J. has never read her

Indirect questions:

Icel. Hún spurði hvort þeir hefðu alltaf verið flughræddir.
she asked whether theyhad always been flying-afraid

Far. Hann spurdi, hví Pætur hevði ikki lisið bókina.
he asked why Peter had not read the book

Relative clauses:

Icel. Þar var alls konar matur sem henni líkaði ekki.
there was all sorts food that her(D) liked not

Far. Har var nógur matur, sum hon hevði ongantíð smakkað.
there was much food that she had never tasted

V2/V3-variation, 3

Judgments of comparable V3-examples in Icel. and Far.

Cls. type	Lang.	Examples	Age groups				
			< 20	20–39	40–59	60+	All
non-brdg	Icel	Honum leiddist að stjórnin aldrei hlustaði á þær.	18,4%	7,0%	12,4%	6,3%	11,2%
	Far	Tey harmast um, at neyðhjálpin ongantið er komin fram í Asia.	70,2%	86,7%	82,8%	77,1%	79,3%
ind-ques	Icel	Hún spurði, hvort þeir alltaf hefðu verið hræddir við mýs.	18,4%	11,4%	9,7%	8,9%	12,3%
	Far	Foreldrini spurðu, hví Pætur ikki hevði ringt heim.	93,1%	100,0%	93,9%	90,9%	94,5%
rel	Icel	Þar var margt fólk sem hann ekki þekkti .	30,8%	30,5%	39,1%	46,8%	36,2%
	Far	Har vóru nógv fólk, sum hon ongantið hevði sæð fyrr.	95,3%	98,7%	94,9%	95,8%	96,1%

Table3: Acceptance of Adv-V order in different clause types in Icelandic (N > 740) and Faroese (N > 320)

Main points:

- Again, a very clear and consistent difference between Icel. and Far.
- Acceptance rate of V3 in Icel. is in general very low, except for the relative clause with the pronominal subject (cf. also Angantýsson 2007, 2010).
- Note, however, the differences between the judgments of the age groups in Icelandic for different clause types.



V2/V3-variation, 4

Glosses for the sentences on the preceding slide:

Non-bridge examples:

- Icel. Honum leiddist að stjórnin **aldrei hlustaði** á þær.
him(D) was-hurt that the government never listened to them
- Far. Tey harmast um, at neyðhjálpin **ongantið er** komin fram í Asia.
they regret about that the emergency-aid never is come forth in Asia

Indirect questions:

- Icel. Hún spurði, hvort þeir **alltaf hefðu** verið hræddir við mýs.
she asked whether they always had been afraid of mice
- Far. Foreldrini spurðu, hví Pætur **ikki hevði** ringt heim.
the parents asked why Peter not had rung home

Relative clauses:

- Icel. Þar var margt fólk sem hann **ekki þekkti**.
there was many people that he not knew
- Far. Har voru nógv fólk, sum hon **ongantið hevði** sæð fyrr.
there were many people that she never had seen before

Intermezzo about V2/V3 in written Faroese

Results of a preliminary investigation cf. Thráinsson 2001, 2003; cf. also Thráinsson et al. 2004:359ff., 438ff.):

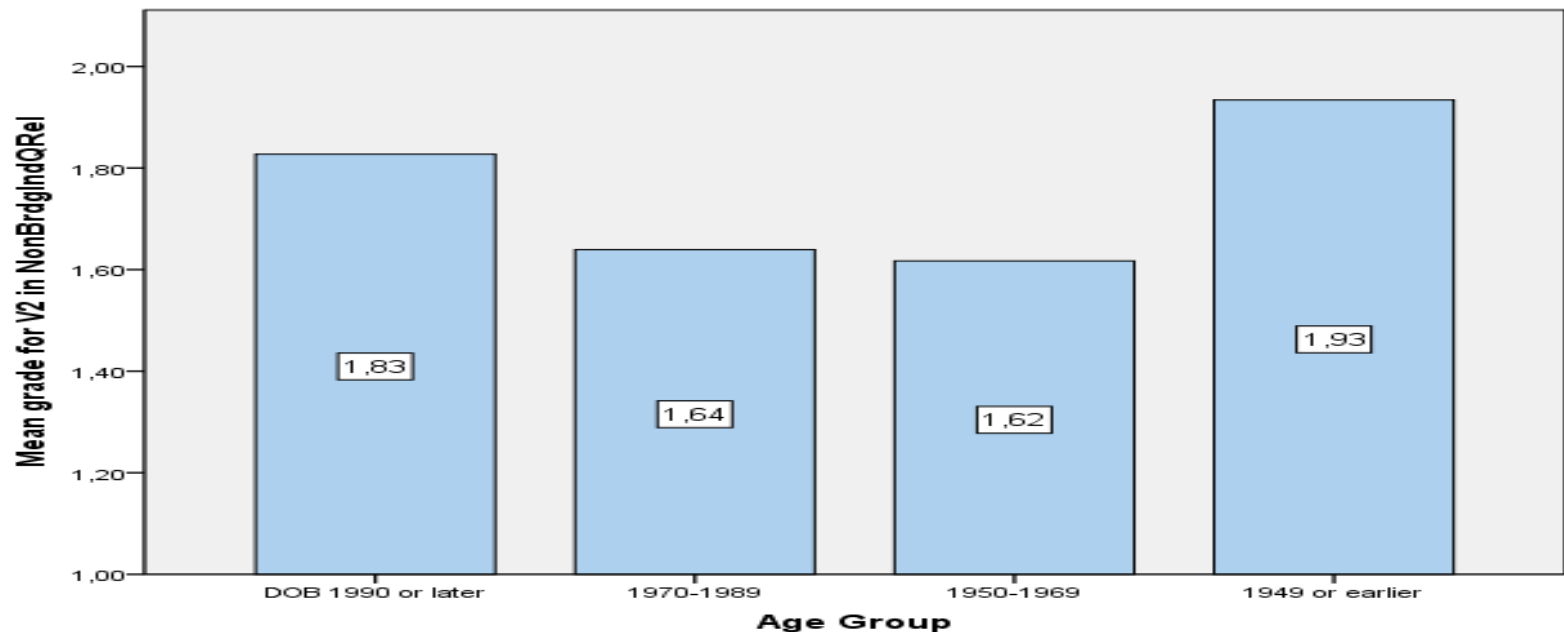
Groups of authors	Non-bridge compl.		Indirect questions		Relative clauses	
	V2	V3	V2	V3	V2	V3
3 authors born before 1900	4	8	3	2	1	6
4 authors born 1900–1939	10	12	2	5	4	6
3 authors born 1940–1950	2	7	0	2	0	7
Total examples	16	27	5	9	5	19
% V2 order	37%		36%		21%	

Examples of V2 and V3 in different clause types in sample works of 13 Faroese authors

Corresponding acceptance rates in FarDiaSyn: 26%, 27%, 29%, respectively (but acceptance rates are by nature higher than usage rates when there is a change in progress).

Generational and regional differences in Faroese V2

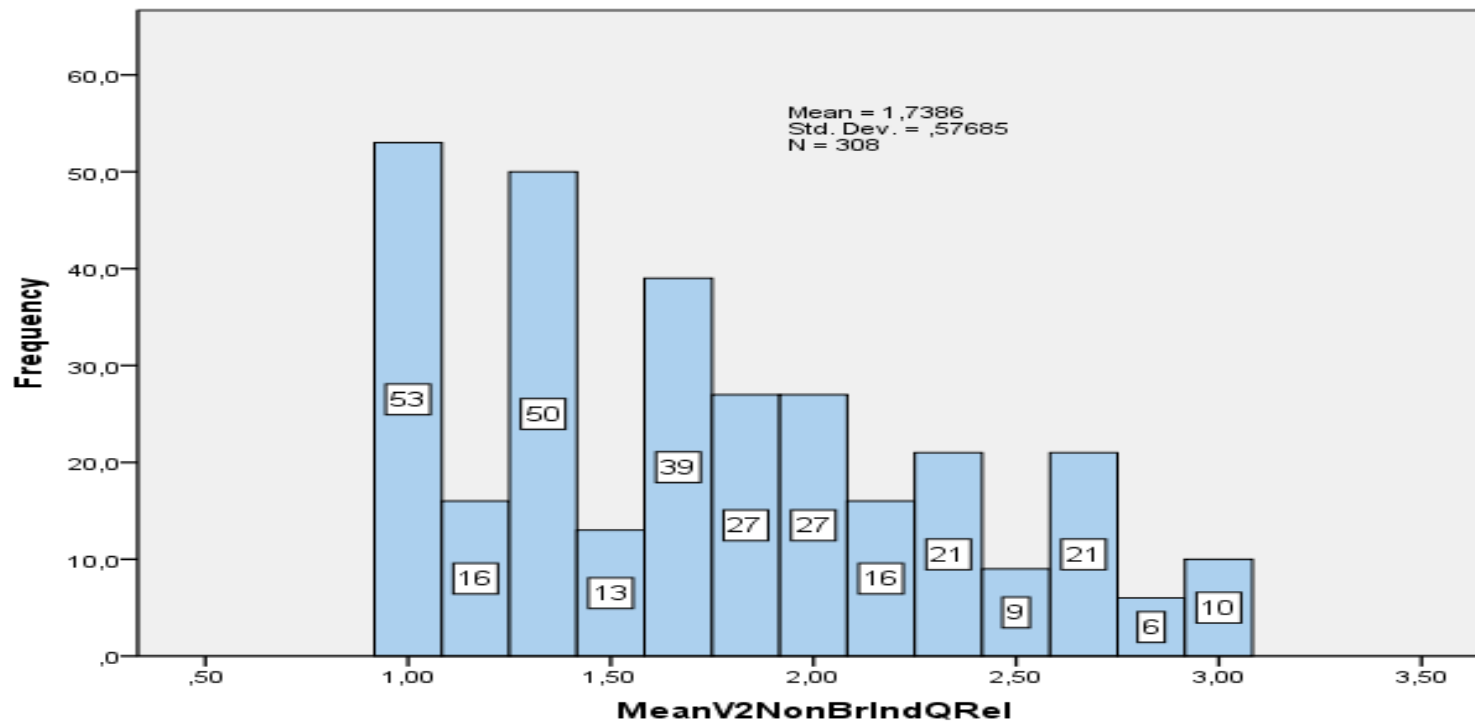
“Mean grade” for V2-examples in different clause types
(NonBridge compl., Ind. Quest. and Rel., 2 of each (cf. slide 22)).
3 = finds all, 1 = finds no V2-examples natural.



No correlation with age. Note acceptance by youngest speakers
(= less Danish influence?)

Generational and regional, 2

Intra- and inter-speaker variation w.r.t. V2 in embedded clauses in FarDiaSyn (N 308):



Interpretation: 53 speakers reject all V2 examples, 10 accept them all; most accept some but reject others.

Generational and regional, 3

Number and distribution of participants in FarDiaSyn I:

Streymoy 73

Eysturoy 98

Norðoyggjar 77

Vágar 41

Sandoy 19

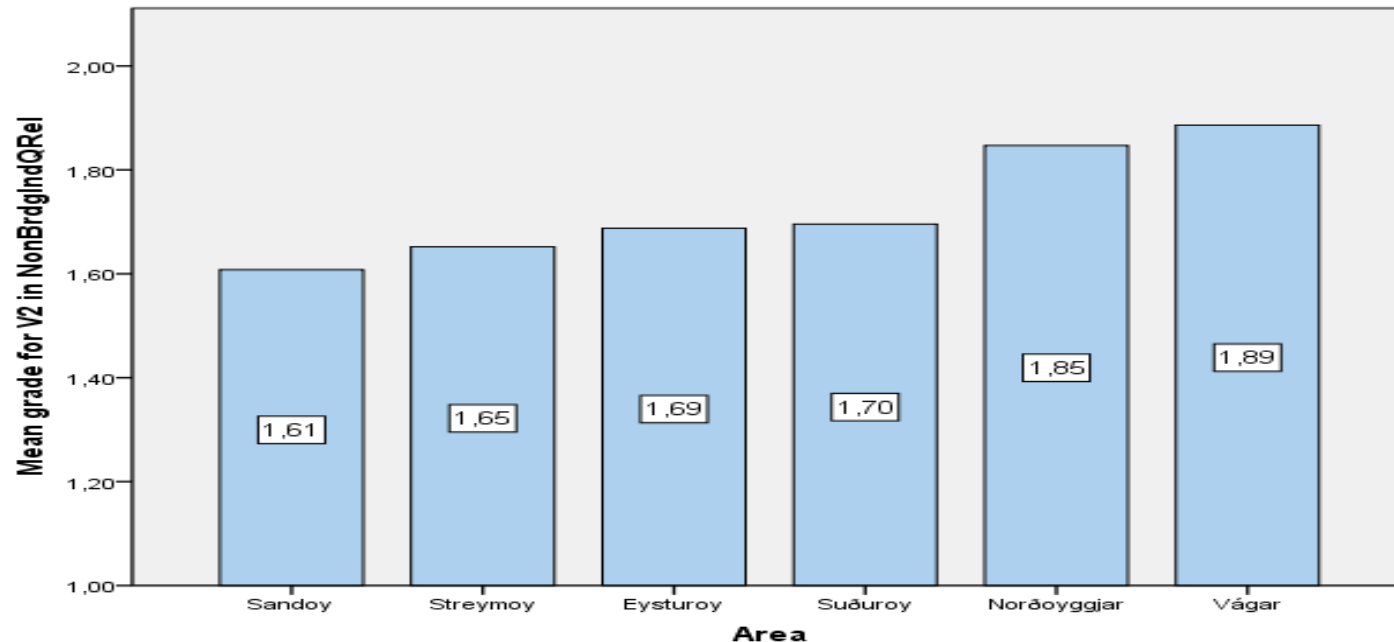
Suðuroy 27

Total 335



Generational and regional, 4

Mean grade for NonBridge compl., Ind. Quest. and Rel. in the different islands (3 = all accept all; 1 = all rejected)



Comment:

Not a North/South split (same finding as by Bentzen et al. 2009 and Heycock et al. 2010, cf. also Thráinsson et al. 2004:362–363; contra Jonas 1996). (What about Heðin and Hjalmar?)



Some correlations

Question:

If there is not only inter-speaker variation in V2 in embedded clauses in Faroese but also intra-speaker variation, no correlation with age and rather unclear regional variation, doesn't that mean that the acceptance of V2 is just random or haphazard and thus should not correlate with anything else in the grammar of Faroese speakers?

What about the correlations predicted by Holmberg and Platzack 1995, for instance, or Bobaljik and Thráinsson 1998?



Some correlations, 2

A prediction in the spirit of Holmberg and Platzack's (1995) Agr Parameter:

- If V2 in Faroese is to some extent at least due to V-to-I, then it should correlate with **Stylistic Fronting (SF)**

Two of predictions in the spirit of Bobaljik and Thráinsson's (1998) Split-IP Parameter:

- If V2 in Faroese is to some extent at least due to V-to-I, then it should correlate with **High Position (HiPos)** of the associate of the expletive and with **Transitive Expletives (TEC)**.



Some correlations, 3

SF-examples in FarDiaSyn (out of 7 in all):

- Skúlastjórinn held talu fyri teimum, sum **liðug** vóru við skúlan. *the principal heldspeech for those that finished werewith the school*
- Tey vilja keypa ein bil, sum **vælegnaður** er til eina barnafamilju. *theywant buy a car thatsuitable is for a child-family*

HiPos-examples from FarDiaSyn (out of 5 in all):

- Tað hevði **onkur** dansað í garðinum. *therehad somebody danced in the garden*
- Tað eru **nakrir gestir** komnir úr Íslandi. *thereare some guests arrived from Iceland*

TEC-examples from FarDiaSyn (out of 4 in all):

- Tað hevði onkur etið súreplið. *there had someone eaten the apple*
- Tað hevði onkur tikið súkkiluna hjá mær. *there had someone taken the bike of me*

Some correlations, 4

Observed correlations in FarDiaSyn between mean judgments of V2 on the one hand and of HiPos, TEC and SF (cf. the examples above):

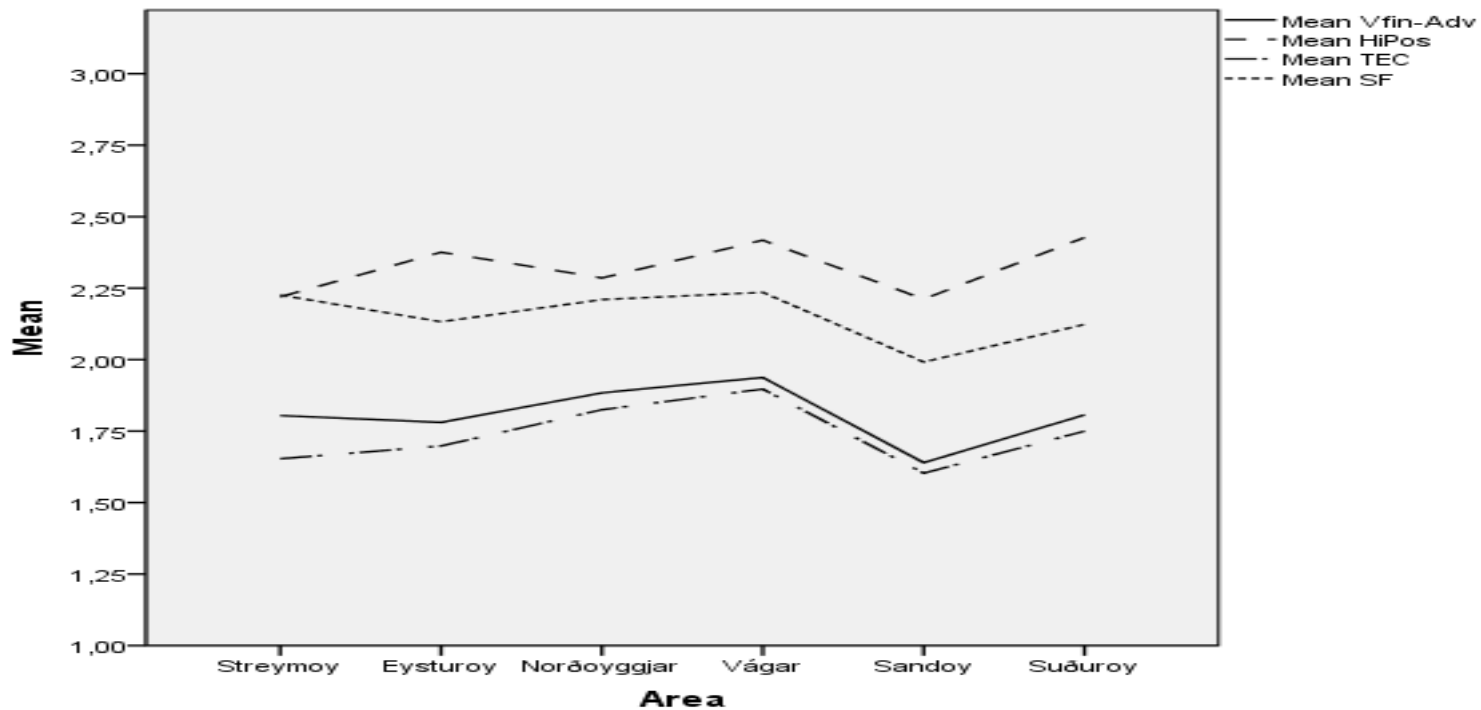
Construction	HiPos	TEC	SF
V2	$r = .297$	$r = .345$	$r = .485$
	$p = .000$	$p = .000$	$p = .000$

Comment:

The r-value (Pearson's Correlation Coefficient) can range from -1.0 (complete negative correlation) to $+1.0$ (complete positive correlation) and $r = 0.0$ would thus be no correlation at all. In studies of the present kind, an r-value of $.10$ would be considered a **small effect**, $r = .30$ would indicate a **medium effect**, and $r = .50$ a **large effect**. A p-value smaller than $.05$ is normally considered statistically significant, but small correlation will be statistically significant with a large number of subjects like here.

Some correlations, 5

Finally, observe the regional variation in V2, SF, HiPos and TEC in FarDiaSyn:



Rather neat?



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