# English-like V3-orders in matrix clauses in Icelandic

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**Abstract**
In this article we report on English-like verb-third orders in non-heritage Icelandic with a comparison to North-American Icelandic. A central question is whether the constructions under investigation can be considered extensions of the previously known leakage of the V2 constraint, some kind of task effect as mentioned by Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002), or whether they could be the result of English influence. Our reanalysis of the data from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. (2018) point towards an influence of English as well as the expansion of patterns existing in non-heritage Icelandic. Recent data from a large-scale online survey and follow-up interviews in the MoLiCoDiLaCo project (Sigurjónsdóttir & Rögnvaldsson 2018) and Jónsdóttir's (2021) online survey indicate that the V3 orders in question are marginal and without any sociolinguistic connotation in non-heritage Icelandic. However, we show that to the extent that "exceptional V3" is found in Icelandic, it is in some ways similar to the V3 phenomenon found in Germanic urban dialects (Walkden 2015): It is found in topicalization structures, the preposed element is typically an adjunct, and the subject is preferably pronominal. In addition to pervasive indications of V2 leaks from judgment data in heritage and non-heritage Icelandic, we present examples from Icelandic and Norwegian children's lyrics where V3 (and even V4, V5 and V6) appear quite frequently. This points to a scenario where children's relatively fast acquisition of V2 does not rule out a more surfacy nature of the constraint, where children learn that V2 violations are possible and even possibly extended.

## 1 Introduction

In their well known paper on the New Impersonal (aka New Passive) construction in Icelandic, Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir point out the following in a footnote (2002:114):[1]

> It is worth noting some curious aspects of the results for ungrammatical control sentences. It may be that subjects paid less attention to word order than to agreement. One of the ungrammatical controls involved a V2 violation: *Í dag kennarinn er lasinn* 'Today the teacher is sick.' A surprising 19% of the adolescents and 14% of the adults accepted this sentence. However, when adult subjects who accepted it were asked to read it back, they read it with grammatical V2 order. While this might be interpreted as reflecting an unconscious correction, it is noteworthy that Pouplier (2001) also found a surprisingly high acceptance rate for V2 violations. Further research is needed to determine how to interpret these results.

[1] Thanks to the participants of the Linguistics Coffee Meeting, held by the Icelandic Linguistics Society and the Institute of Linguistics at the University of Iceland in December 2019, and to the organisers and participants of the Syntax workshop at the University of Iceland in December 2021. We would also like to thank Johan Brandtler, the editor of WPSS, for useful comments and corrections on our manuscript. Special thanks go to all the informants in the various research projects reported on in the paper.

What Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir are talking about in this quote is the fact that they included example (1b) in their test as a control sentence. They expected that everybody taking the test seriously would reject it since it would be a clear "V2 violation" and (1a) would be the only acceptable variant:

(1) a. [Í dag] **er** kennarinn lasinn. V2
today is teacher-the sick
'Today the teacher is sick.'
b. *[Í dag] kennarinn **er** lasinn. V3
today teacher-the is sick

In (1a) the finite verb is in second position, as expected for a V2 language like Icelandic, but in (1b) it is in third position. So why did a considerable number of Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir's subjects accept this variant?

In (1b) the finite verb is preceded by a fronted non-subject plus the subject and the result is an English-like V3 order, as the English gloss shows. But in English one can also find subject-initial V3 orders, but such orders are typically ungrammatical in Icelandic. Example (2b) is a case in point:

(2) a. Strákurinn **gegnir** aldrei foreldrum sínum. V2
boy-the obeys never parents his
'The boy never obeys his parents.'
b. *Strákurinn aldrei **gegnir** foreldrum sínum. V3

Despite this, the following is a well known line from a popular children's song:

(3) Gutti aldrei **gegnir** þessu ... V3
Gutti never obeys this

Here the finite verb *gegnir* 'obeys' is preceded by the subject (*Gutti* is a name) and the adverb *aldrei*. But while the word order in (3) doesn't seem to bother anyone, the corresponding order in (2b) does. How can that be?

The main objective of this paper is to investigate the extent and nature of V2 violations in Icelandic main clauses and to determine if this adds something to our understanding of the V2 phenomenon in general. But before presenting our data, it is necessary to give an overview of well known exceptions to the V2 constraint in Icelandic. We will do that in section 2 and then compare some of the recently discovered "exceptional exceptions" to these. This will raise the question whether the exceptional exceptions can be considered "extensions" of the known leakage of the V2 constraint, some kind of task effect as mentioned by Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002), or whether they could be the result of English influence. In section 3 we will then show that both non-subject initial and subject initial violations of the V2 constraint are quite common in North American Icelandic (a heritage language still spoken to some extent in parts of Canada and the US), most likely

because of English influence (Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018). In section 4 we will present new analysis of V3 data from Icelandic Icelandic. First we will analyze data from the extensive research project Modelling the Linguistic Consequences of Digitial Language Contact, abbreviated here as MoLiCoDiLaCo (see Sigurjónsdóttir & Rögnvaldsson 2019 and *http://molicodilaco.hi.is/*) in section 4.1 and then in section 4.2 comparable data from further research (Jónsdóttir 2021) on some of the issues that were raised by the MoLiCoDiLaCo study. Given the general acceptance of examples like (3) in nursery rhymes, we will then do a preliminary study of such lyrics in Icelandic, with some comparison to Norwegian nursery rhymes, and report on the results in section 4.3. We then conclude the paper in section 5, summarizing and discussing the results from these diverse sources of data.

## 2 Background

### *2.1 V1, V2, V3*

As is well known, the so-called verb second (V2) phenomenon is a central trait of the Germanic languages other than English. This can be illustrated by main clause examples like the following from Icelandic:

(4) a. Ég **keypti** ekki bókina.
I bought not book-the
'I didn't buy the book.'

b. Bókina **keypti** ég ekki.
book-the bought I not
'The book, I didn't buy.'

c. Ég **hef** ekki keypt bókina.
I have not bought book-the
'I haven't bought the book.'

d. Bókina **hef** ég ekki keypt.
book-the have I not bought
'The book, I haven't bought.'

In all these examples the finite verb comes in second position, be it a main verb as in (4a,b) or an auxilary verb as in (4c,d), regardless of the grammatical function of the initial constituent. In the following we will refer to this phenomenon as the **V2 constraint** for convenience, without implying anything about its theoretical or descriptive status.

The Danish linguist Diderichsen was probably the first to propose a structural account of the the similarities between sentences like the ones in (4). His main idea (Diderichsen 1966, see also Diderichsen 1946) was that there is a single position before the finite verb in Germanic V2 languages and this position can either be filled by the subject (as in (4a,c)) or by a non-subject (as in (4b,d)). The same basic idea can be found in early generative accounts (see e.g. Koster

1975 and den Besten 1983). The similarities can be illustrated as in the following diagram for main clauses (see Platzack 1985:70; Thráinsson 2007:19; see also Basbøll 1976):

| **Diderichsen's labels** | *F* | *v* | *n* | *a* | *V* | *N* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Early generative labels** | *COMP* | *V* | *NP* | *ADVP* | *V* | *NP* |
| a | Ég | **keypti** | -- | ekki | -- | bókina |
| b | Bókina | **keypti** | ég | ekki | -- | -- |
| c | Ég | **hef** | -- | ekki | keypt | bókina |
| d | Bókina | **hef** | ég | ekki | keypt | -- |

*Table 1: A simplified comparison of Diderichsen's and early generative accounts of V2.*

The schematic representation in *Table 1* makes certain claims about the relationship between sentences of the sort exemplified in (4). But although the V2 order illustrated there typically holds for main clauses in the Germanic V2 languages, there is a well known set of exceptions to it as discussed in considerable detail by Holmberg (2015; see also Angantýsson 2020).[2] Because apparent exceptions to the V2 constraint can shed light on its nature, we will now give a fairly extensive overview of them – with Icelandic examples as before.

Descriptively these exceptions can be divided into three groups. First, the finite verb (apparently) sits in the **initial position** in a number of constructions as exemplified by the following Icelandic sentences:

(5) *V1 examples:*

a. **Keyptir** þú bókina? (polar question)
bought you book-the
'Did you buy the book?'

b. **Tak** þú / **Taktu** bókina. (imperative)
take(imp.) you take-you book-the
'Take the book!'

c. **Sefur** bara í vinnunni! (exclamative)
sleeps(2.sg.) just in work-the
'You are just sleeping at work!'

d. **Gengur** út til hægri. (stage directions)
goes(3.sg.) out to right
'Exit stage right.'

e. **Les** hann þá bókina og ... (narrative inversion)
reads he then book-the and

[2] For early descriptions of some of these example types see Thráinsson 1986 and Sigurðsson 1986, 1990.

'Then he reads the book and ...'

f. **Veit** (það) ekki. (subject ellipsis)
know(1.sg.) it not
'Don't know.'

As has often been pointed out in the literature, it is entirely possible that many of these examples are best analyzed as containing a non-overt preverbal element of some sort. Since we will not be concerned with (apparent) V1 constructions in this paper, we will not comment any further on these examples.

The second class of examples is characterized by initial non-subject constituents and the verb apparently in third position:

(6) *Non-subject initial V3:*

a. Þessi bók, ég **keypti** hana í Noregi. (left dislocation)
this book (Nom) I bought it (Acc) in Norway
'This book, I bought it in Norway.'

b. Þessa bók, hana **keypti** ég í Noregi. (contrastive dislocation)
this book (Acc) it (Acc) bought I in Norway
'This book, I bought it in Norway.'

c. [Í gær] [um fimmleytið] [þegar ég kom heim úr vinnunni]
yesterday around five when I came home from work-the
**hitti** ég gamlan félaga. (stacked adverbials)
met I old fellow
'Yesterday, around five, when I came home from work, I met an old friend.'

d. Í fyrra (að) þá **komu** fáir ferðamenn til Íslands. (XP-*þá*-construction)
in former (that) then came few tourists to Iceland
'Last year, few tourists visited Iceland.'

e. Kannski (að) hann **komi** á morgun. (subjunctive exception)
maybe (that) he come (subjunct.) tomorrow
'Maybe he comes tomorrow.'

Closer inspection reveals that there are several differences between the non-subject initial V3 examples in (6) and they are not all equally well known nor straightforwardly analyzed. But it is fairly obvious that the initial constituent in Left Dislocation in examples like (6a) is in some sense outside the main clause (base generated there or externally merged). One piece of evidence is the fact that case marked left dislocated constituents show up in the nominative case whereas their pronominal copy is appropriately case marked (Acc in (6a) above).

By contrast, the case of the initial constituent in the Contrastive Dislocation construction in (6b) is is determined by the relevant case assigner in the main clause. This suggests a closer relationship between the initial constituent and the rest of the sentence (see e.g. Thráinsson

1979:59 ff., 2007:358–359; see also Zaenen 1980 and Holmberg 2015, section 2.3.3).[3] Note also that in the Contrastive Dislocation example in (6b) the pronominal copy has been fronted and the subject follows the verb.

In examples like (6c) it appears that the finite verb is preceded by a number of adverbial constituents but it is followed by the subject. In this case the adverbial constituents are all of the same nature (temporal) so an adjunction analysis, where each adverbial is adjoined to the next one, would seem feasible. If so, examples of this sort do not represent a violation of the V2 constraint (see Holmberg 2015, section 2.3.2). Another possibility is that a cartographic analysis along the lines of Rizzi (1997 and much later work, especially Benincà & Poletto 2004) is relevant in this context. In that kind of approach the "left periphery" of sentences has a more complex structure than assumed in early generative structural accounts, which makes room for more than one preverbal constituent. But any analysis of the V2 constraint has to account for the fact that although examples like (6c) are perfectly fine, it is normally not the case that more than one constituent can precede the finite verb. Thus the examples in (7) are no good in Icelandic, for instance:

(7) a. *[Á virkum dögum] Jón **les** alltaf dagblöðin.
on weekdays John reads always newspapers-the
(Intended reading: On weekdays John always reads the newspapers.)

b. *[Á virkum dögum] [dagblöðin] **les** Jón alltaf
on weekdays newspapers-the reads John always
(Intended reading: On weekdays John always reads the newspapers.)

In (7a) the verb is by an adverbial constituent and the subject and in (7b) it is preceded by the same adverbial constituent and a fronted object. The order corresponding to (7a) would be fine in English, of course (it is the normal order in the case of topicalization in English), but an order like (7b) would not.

The so-called XP-*þá* construction in (6d) has been analyzed in considerable detail by Jónsson (2019), who takes a cartographic approach and contrasts this Icelandic construction to the superficially similar XP-*så*-construction discussed by Eide (2011), for instance.

Finally, the "subjunctive exception" in (6e) is often mentioned as a violation of the V2 constraint. The fact hat the initial *kannski* (historically related to *kann ske* 'may happen') may optionally be followed by the complementizer *að* 'that' and the following verb shows up in the subjunctive (*komi* in (6e)) indicates that the structure of examples of this sort may not be that of a simple main clause. Interestingly, sentences like (8) contrast with (6e) in various ways as illustrated (see e.g. Thráinsson 1986:187–188):[4]

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[3] Note also that Contrastive Dislocation can occur in some embedded clauses whereas Left Dislocation cannot (see e.g. Thráinsson 2007:359). Eide (2011) discusses a variety of dislocation constructions and mentions (p. 185) that the case marking difference between Left Dislocation (or Hanging Topic Left Dislocation) and Constrastive Dislocation (her Copy Left Dislocation, CLD) pointed out above is also found in German.

[4] As Sigurðsson shows (1986:141–142), there are some more "subjunctive exceptions" exceptions that are

(8) Kannski (*að) **kemur** hann á morgun.
maybe that comes (ind.) he tomorrow
'Maybe he comes tomorrow.'

So if the verb following *kannski* shows up in the indicative (which is, of course, the default main clause mood), it has to show up in second position and cannot be preceded by the complementizer *að*.

Third, there is a class of subject-initial exceptions to the V2 constraint where adverbials of a certain type can occur between the subject and the finite verb as originally pointed out by Sigurðsson (1986:144–145) and Thráinsson (1986:175–176). This is illustrated in (9):

(9) *Subject-initial V3:*
a. Ég bara **keypti** bókina.
I just bought book-the
'I just bought the book.'
b. Hann einfaldlega **kann** ekkert.
he simply knows nothing
'He simply doesn't know anything.'
c. Jón [meira að segja] **hlær** að þessu.
John more to say laughs at this
'John even laughs at this.'
d. Hann einfaldlega bara **kann** ekkert.
he simply just knows nothing
'He simply just doesn't know anything.'

As (9c) shows, the relevant adverbial can have a complex structure and as (9d) indicates (based on examples in Sigurðsson 1986:145) the relevant adverbs can be combined or stacked. Interestingly, a similar class of adverbials can "trigger" V2 violations in Norwegian and Swedish, for instance (see especially the detailed discussion by Brandtler & Håkansson 2017; Julien 2018 and Lundquist 2018). This is exemplified in (10):

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reminiscent of (6e) such as the following:
(i) a. Ætli (að) Jón **komi**?
wonder that John come (subjunct.)
'I wonder if John comes.'
b. Bara (að) Jón **komi**!
only that John come (subjunct.)
'If only John would come!'
Sigurðsson refers to these as "unembedded but inherently subordinate". We have nothing interesting to say about them.

(10) a. [Min dotter] bara **rörde** vid lejonet. (Swedish)
my daughter just touched with lion-the
'My daughter just touched the lion.'

b. De [rett og slett] bara **gjorde** et nytt forsøk. (Norwegian)
they simply just made a new attempt
'They just simply made a new attempt.'

As example (10b) indicates, the "V3 adverbials" in Mainland Scandinavian need not be single words and they can also be stacked (compare the Icelandic examples in (9c,d)).

As this overview shows, the V2 constaint "leaks" in Icelandic and comparable leakage is found in other Germanic V2 languages although they vary in detail in this respect. The question is, then, whether this leakage makes the V2 constraint vulnerable. If so, we might expect to find exceptions to it that could be considered "extensions" of this leakage. With this in mind, we will now have a second look at the more "exceptional exceptions" to the V2 constraint in Icelandic that originally roused our interest, as described in the introduction.

*2.2 The exceptional exceptions*

The exceptional example mentioned by Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir is repeated here as (11):

(11) [Í dag] kennarinn **er** lasinn. non-subject initial V3
today teacher-the is sick

As pointed out above, the order in this example is "English-like", i.e. it is the normal order found in topicalization constructions in English. So it is different from the acceptable non-subject initial V3 examples in (6) above but the same as in the unacceptable (7a). But since it is English-like, it could possibly be the result of English influence. We will look more closely into that issue in sections 3 and 4.2.

The second exceptional example mentioned above is repeated here as (12):

(12) Gutti **aldrei** gegnir þessu ... subject-initial V3
Gutti never obeys this

This, too, is an English-like V3 example, but it also looks like a straightforward extension of the subject-initial examples shown in (9). It just contains a different type of adverb.

With this in mind, we will now give an overview of results on V2/V3 selection by speakers of North American Icelandic, a heritage language which has evolved in contact with English.

## 3 V3 orders in North American Icelandic main clauses

### *3.1 Why study V2 in heritage Icelandic?*

Aside from the fact that the "exceptional exceptions" described in 2.2 are English-like, and that the characteristics of North American Icelandic are in part the result of intense language contact with English, there are various interesting aspects to the investigation of the V2 constraint in North American Icelandic. We will briefly review those aspects before describing patterns in North American Icelandic speakers' preferences for V2/V3 orders based on the results from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. (2018).

Speakers of North American Icelandic are heritage (language) speakers who align well with e.g. Polinsky's (2018:9) definition of a "simultaneous or sequential (successive) bilingual whose weaker language corresponds to the minority language of their society and whose stronger language is the dominant language of that society". North American Icelandic is therefore a heritage language, "a language spoken at home or otherwise readily available to young children, and crucially this language is not a dominant language of the larger (national) society" (Rothman 2009:156). North American Icelandic is preserved in third and fourth generation Canadians and Americans of Icelandic descent (see Arnbjörnsdóttir 2006 and Arnbjörnsdóttir & Thráinsson 2018 for an overview on North American Icelandic). It is now mainly spoken in Canada, more precisely in the Interlake region north of Winnipeg in Manitoba and in Northern Saskatchewan, and parts of the United States. The bulk of the emigration of Icelandic speakers took place between 1873 and 1914, when over 14,000 Icelanders, out of 75,000 inhabitants, moved to North America. But few left after 1914, resulting in almost no renewal of speakers since then. This has resulted in a dramatic decline of the number of persons claiming to speak Icelandic in North America, with few speakers under the age of 75. The data presented in section 3.2 were collected between 2013 and 2015 within the pluridisciplinary project "Heritage Language, Linguistic Change and Cultural Identity" (PIs Höskuldur Thráinsson and Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir). 126 Western Icelanders, as they are typically called, participated in the project, and about half of them participated in data collection targeting the V2 constraint.

The V2 constraint was one of many linguistic variables which were tested. It is of interest in the context of heritage languages more generally in part because syntactic phenomena have been thought to be more resilient than e.g. inflectional morphology in heritage languages (Benmamoun et al. 2013), although increased difficulties in the development of complex syntax have also been observed. In this context, seemingly contradictory findings about V2 in non-heritage Icelandic and other languages are relevant. As was described in the previous section, V2 is robust in non-heritage Icelandic and is additionally acquired early (Sigurjónsdóttir 1991). At the same time, V2 is typologically rare, potentially difficult to acquire by adults in a second language (e.g. Håkansson et al. 2002, Walkden 2017) and the relevant cues involve non-subject-initial clauses (Westergaard 2009), i.e. complex syntax. Considering this, should we expect Icelandic V2 to be preserved in a heritage language situation? If we consider the fact that V2 is robust and acquired early, as well as the resilience of syntax in heritage languages, we would expect V2 conservation in North American

Icelandic. But the possible difficulties of acquiring it in a second language, the fact that cues depend on complex syntax and the leaks outlined in the previous section, point in the opposite direction. Previous research does too. Indeed, there is clear cross-linguistic evidence of V3 patterns (which would be ungrammatical in the non-heritage language) in English-dominant heritage language situations. This has been shown for German (Schmid 2002), Danish (Kühl & Heegård Petersen 2018), Swedish (Larsson & Johannessen 2015) and Norwegian (Johannessen 2015; Eide & Hjelde 2015; Westergaard & Lohndal 2018). Additionally, it is relevant that the stronger language, English, has SVO and residual V2. This leads to the question of whether the preservation of the V2 constraint in heritage languages, or lack thereof, is conditioned by the word order in the dominant language, i.e. English.

In section 3.2, we use the data from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018 to investigate North American speakers' preferences for V2 or V3. Specifically, we investigate the contexts in which heritage speakers of NAmIce are most likely to select V3 orders. We expect the speakers' choices to be conditioned by the exceptions documented for non-heritage Icelandic but maybe more so by the word order of the dominant language. We therefore hypothesized that the rate of V3 would be greater in clauses with topicalization (as opposed to subject initial clauses) where Icelandic is different from the dominant English in that it requires V2. On the other hand, because English is SVO, the subject-initial clauses often have the same word order in the two languages. Looking at subject-initial clauses more closely, we also hypothesized that the rate of V3 would be higher when the finite verb is the lexical verb rather than an auxiliary. This is because of the properties of residual V2 in English, and it also has been reported that children acquiring Nordic languages seem to have a stronger tendency to move auxiliaries than lexical verbs early on (Westergaard 2009). Finally, we assumed that V3 adverbs would entail higher rates of V3, as opposed to V2 adverbs and negation, (which also triggers V2 orders in English). Here it is important to note that we do not exclude the possibility that loss of V2 represents an internal change in heritage Icelandic instead of being contact-induced, as will be elaborated on in sections 4 and 5.

### *3.2 The results of the study*

The data were collected during three visits to North America in 2013–2014. The regions visited were Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North Dakota and Washington State. V2 was tested in 60 participants aged 26–98, with a mean age of 77. As described in Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018, all the participants were exposed to Icelandic from birth, but 50.9% of the them were exposed to English from birth as well, with the rest not encountering English until school. V2/V3 orders were tested as part of a larger forced choice task battery where participants chose between two or more options. A total of 28 sentences were tested for the V2/V3 variable, 8 non-subject-initial and 20 subject-initial. An example of the testing set-up can be found in (13):

(13) Við erum búin að borða. Núna skulum við / við skulum fara í bíó.

we are finished to eat now shall we / we shall go in cinema

'We are finished eating. Now let's go to the cinema.'

Participants were presented with the context and test sentences orally but could also read them on a tablet screen before selecting one or both options. This type of relative judgment contrasts with the absolute judgment task used in Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002), since both options are apparent, the targeted construction clear and the attention to speech therefore arguably higher, prompting more standard forms. As is common in the fieldwork setting, there was extensive variation in the amount of presented sentences, making statistical analyses more complicated, but mixed effects logistic regression models were run when possible (lme4 in R, Bates et al. 2015). In addition to the forced choice task, elicitation data were collected through storytelling tasks but have only been partially analyzed.[5]

We will now present the results based on the hypotheses formulated above and discuss them briefly before moving onto V3 orders in non-heritage Icelandic. Figure 1 shows the difference in V3 rate between subject-initial and non-subject-initial test sentences.

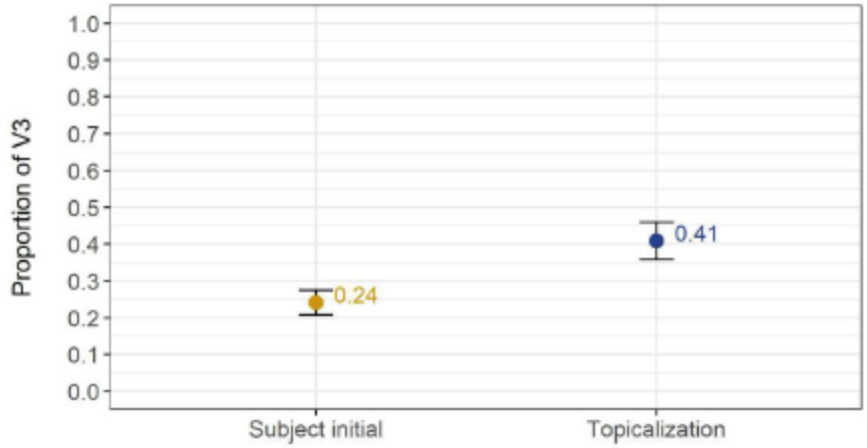


***Figure 1**: Rate of V3 selection in forced-choice task by fronting type, North American Icelandic. 95% confidence interval.*

As can be seen, V3 is selected more frequently when topicalization, and therefore fronting of a non-subject, occurs.[6] As was outlined in section 2, V3 in such non-subject-initial contexts are more unusual in non-heritage Icelandic but in line with English. It also arguably involves more complexity (or movement) than subject-initial sentences, a factor which might contribute to lack of preservation in heritage languages. This could be explained by various reasons, one of them being simply less exposure to topicalization. In fact, Westergaard, Lohndal and Lundquist (2021)

[5] Examples from the elication task can be found in Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018
[6] Adding the fronting variable to a base model (random intercept for participants) for the data fit significantly (Likelihood Ratio Test, $\chi 2$ (1) = 10.85, $p < 0.001$).

report less non-subject-initial clauses in heritage Norwegian and associate this loss of context with lower rates of V2. It is still interesting that across the data, V2 is more commonly selected (73%) than V3 in our results. Even in topicalization sentences, the rate of V3 only reaches 41%, showing that the speakers are clearly far from aligning completely with the word order of the dominant language. This fits individual response profiles. 56.3% of speakers who were presented with more than one topicalization sentence ($N = 48$) showed some intra-speaker variation, the rest chose V2 consistently, meaning that no speaker chose V3 consistently.

Taking a closer look at the subject-initial clauses, Figure 2 shows that the speakers align with the patterns in English and select V3 more often with lexical verbs than auxiliaries. Figure 3 furthermore shows that the so called V3 adverbs in non-heritage Icelandic trigger more V3 selection than negation (V2 with negation is consistent with English) and V2-adverbs. Interestingly, the statistical analysis shows that the effect of verb type disappears once we correct for adverb type.[7] This means that the contrast in Figure 2[8] is actually a reflection of the contrast between adverb types in Figure 3, with more of the sentences containing lexical verbs also having V2-adverbs or negation. We see that the adverb type triggers the sharpest contrast (Figure 3), with V3 orders only being selected in 14% of sentences with V2-adverbs and negation but reaching 42% with V3-adverbs.

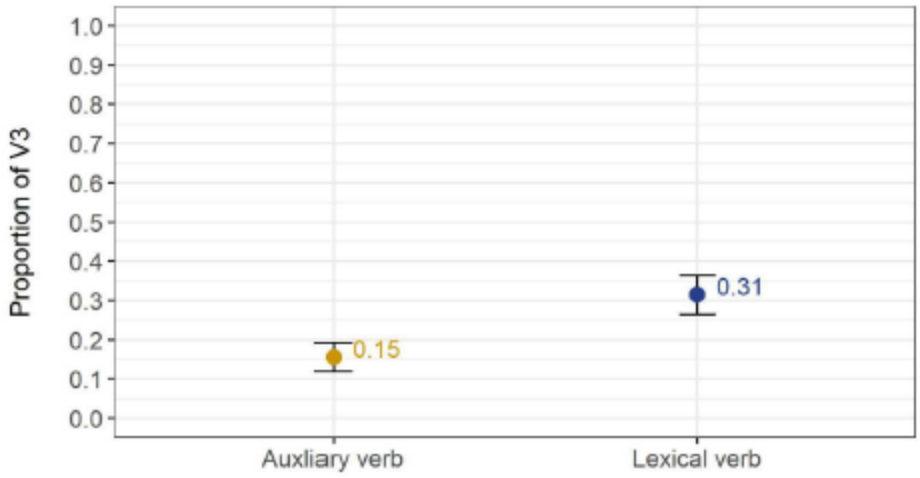


***Figure 2**: Rate of V3 selection in forced-choice task by verb type, North American Icelandic. 95% confidence interval.*

[7] ANOVA for the model including verb and adverb type (random intercept for participants):

| | estimate | standard error | z value | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| verb type | 0.3266 | 0.3783 | 0.863 | 0.388 |
| adverb type | 1.4777 | 0.3801 | 0.3801 | < 0.001 |

[8] We still consider Figure 2 relevant, as it provides descriptive statistics of the results.

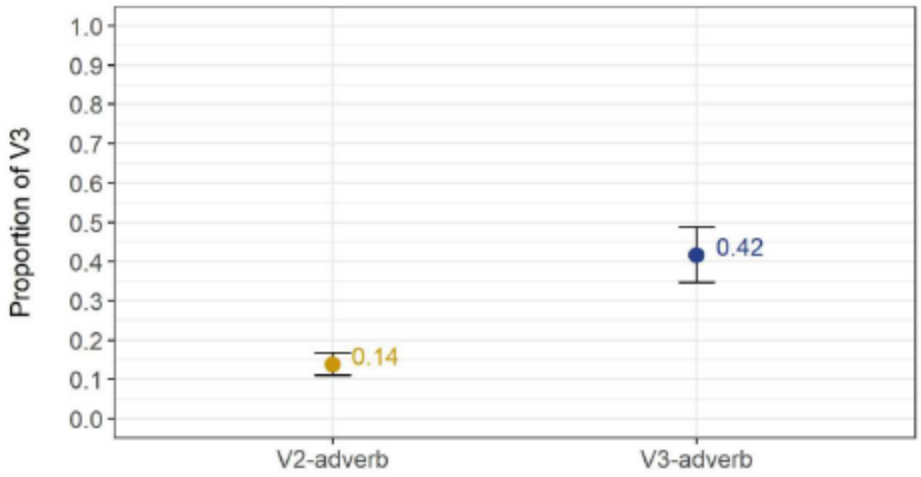


***Figure 3:*** *Rate of V3 selection in forced-choice task by adverb type, North American Icelandic. 95% confidence interval.*

Summarizing this reanalysis of the data from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. (2018), it is clear that our results show only a partial preservation of V2 in North American Icelandic, with speakers selecting V3 orders to varying degrees depending on context in a forced-choice task. V3 was selected more frequently in non-subject-initial sentences. Within subject-initial sentences, adverb type (and negation) also mattered. In line with the somewhat contradictory predictions which can be deduced from the literature, these results cannot be interpreted in any straightforward manner. V2 is in part preserved, which would be expected considering its robustness, early acquisition and previously observed resilience of syntactic phenomena in word order. But V3 is also very present, consistent with the dominant language, difficulties in the late acquistion of V2 and possibly less exposure to the necessary cues. Additionally, the conditioning patterns point towards an influence of English as well as the expansion of patterns existing in non-heritage Icelandic. This, along with Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir's (2002) note, suggests that various factors are crucial to the understanding of possible and existing leaks to the V2 constraint. In the following section, we explore additional pieces to this puzzle.

## 4 V3 orders in non-heritage Icelandic

As described in the preceding section, V3 orders were often selected in a forced choice task by the participants in the study of North American Icelandic, although not as frequently as the V2 alternative. We concluded that this could partly be attributed to influence from English. So the question arises whether there is any evidence for similar influence on other V2 languages.

In a survey of a number of Germanic urban vernaculars, Walkden (2017) has analyzed the relatively frequent V3 orders in these dialects, largely basing his study on data reported by Freyvald et al. (2015). His main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

(14) a. The V3 orders are typically topicalization structures rather than subject-first sentences.
b. The first element is almost always an adjunct and not an argument. Although it is not categorically restricted, adverbs or adverbial phrases are most common, i.e. "frame-setters" in terms of time, place or condition, as he calls them (2017:55).
c. The second element is almost always the subject, usually pronominal.

This description fits the example in Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) remarkably well, except that in their example the subject is not pronominal. Walkden agues that the development of V3 in these urban dialects is a language contact phenomenon, and we have outlined in section 3 how this could be the case for heritage Icelandic. Walkden cites evidence for the claim that although V2 seems to be "acquired quickly and robustly by child L1 learners, [it] is difficult for adults to learn regardless of their L1" (2017:67). In the relevant urban societies then, there will be "a substantial proportion of non-native speakers (L2 acquirers) … whose production has then served as the input for a new generation of native speakers", giving rise to V3 in their language.

The preference for pronominal subjects in the immediate preverbal position in the V3 constructions in the Germanic urban dialects is reminiscent of the observation made by Eide (2011) in her study of Norwegian non-V2 declaratives. She argues that in the Norwegian *så*-construction (e.g. *[I forrige uke] så sa Marit at …* 'Last week Marit said that …') and the Copy Left Dislocation (CLD) as she calls it (e.g. *[Ei leiligheit] det skulle vi hatt* = lit. "An apartment it should we had", i.e. 'An apartment, we should have had one') the resumptive elements (*så* and the relevant pronominal copy) are necessarily light. Hence they can occupy the "Wackernagel position" right before the verb whereas heavier constituents cannot. She also points out (2011:191; see also Anderson 1993) that "the constructions we are discussing here are typically spoken phenomena … making the potential importance of prosody and stress patterns more likely".

We can now look at data on V3 in non-heritage Icelandic with the following questions in mind, among others:

(15) a. Is there any evidence for English influence on the acceptance of V3 orders in non-heritage Icelandic?
b. Are the "most popular" V3 examples in non-heritage Icelandic similar to the V3 orders typically found in Germanic urban vernaculars (topicalization with preposed (adverbial) adjuncts and pronominal subjects)?
c. Is it possible to find further evidence for the effect of "prosody and stress patterns" on the acceptance of non-V2 orders?

We will keep the first two questions in mind in sections 4.1 and 4.2 and section 4.3 will then be devoted to data from Icelandic and Norwegian lyrics to see to what extent prosody can override the V2 constraint in such a context.

*4.1 Study on V3 in non-heritage Icelandic (MoLiCoDiLaCo data)*

As has been mentioned, adverbial fronted V3 matrix clauses (comparable to the one in Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) as well as Walkden's (2017) prototypical examples) were tested within the MoLiCoDiLaCo-project at the University of Iceland (PIs Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir and Eiríkur Rögnvaldsson). The data were collected between 2017–2019 and consisted of a large-scale online survey as well as follow-up interviews and testing sessions. The main goal of the project was to document the presence of English in the Icelandic language community and investigate the possible effects of English input and use on Icelandic. Amongst other things, data on the distribution of English and Icelandic in participants' language environment were collected and a judgment task administered. 1 615 speakers aged 13–98 participated in the online questionnaire (completed independently by participants) and 126 did the follow-up sessions.[9] Sentences were rated on a 5 point Likert Scale, ranging from 'unnatural' to 'completely natural' and each V3 sentence appeared with a context sentence. Each participant rated only one V3 sentence online (four versions were assigned at random, all with preposed adverbials and a pronominal subject) and two sentences in a comparable survey administered during the interviews (one with a pronominal subject and one with a full NP). Additionally, the participants who had accepted V3 sentences in the online survey (ratings 4 and 5) also rated four recorded sentences consisting of two minimal pairs where the variables subject type (pronoun/full NP) and intonational break after the preposed element (break/no break) were manipulated. For the purpose of this paper, we ran regression analyses and nested mixed model model comparisons to find out whether contact with English predicted V3 acceptance.

Table 2 shows the overall acceptance rate of topic-initial V3 in the large-scale online survey described above, where 1414 participants (others did not complete the task) rated one of four sentences targetting the variable. The acceptance rate here consists of the combined results for the "completely natural" and "rather normal" ratings.

| | | | | | | | | **V3** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (16) | a. | Í dag | **hann** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 31% |
| | | today | he | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |
| | b. | Bráðum | **hann** | **þarf** | að | endurnýja | áskriftina. | | 15% |
| | | soon | he | needs | to | renew | subscription-the | | |
| | c. | Stundum | **hún** | **fer** | eftir | vinnu. | | | 30% |
| | | sometimes | she | goes | after | work | | | |
| | d. | Á | fimmtudögum | **hún** | **fer** | til | sjúkraþjálfara. | | 34% |
| | | on | Thursdays | she | goes | to | physiotherapist | | |

***Table 2:*** *Non-subject initial V3 (topicalization structures).*

[9] 724 children aged 3–12 also participated in the project but their results are not discussed here.

As can be seen, the result from Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) was replicated to a great extent, with a surprising 27.5% mean acceptance rate. Interestingly, V3 acceptance did not show a relationship with age – even though syntactic variation in Icelandic is generally correlated with age rather than other social factors (see e.g. the papers in Thráinsson et al. (eds.) 2015). For (14a–b), weak correlations with gender (higher acceptance ratio for men) and higher education (lower acceptance ratio) were found. But most importantly, the English contact measure developed within the project, based on participants' answers on their English input and use, did not have a significant effect on V3 acceptance. The regression model with the contact measure, including age as well, explained only a minor part of the variation (Adjusted R-squared: 0.004017, $F = 2.904$, DF = 1414, $p < 0.05$). Based on this, we could maybe write off V3 acceptance as some kind of stable processing effect where participants parse the sentence as V2 even though it is V3. Still, the examples of V2 loss or variation described above, as well as the well-known exceptions in non-heritage Icelandic, indicate that a task effect is only one possible part of the explanation.

To investigate this (and other variables) further, 126 MoLiCoDiLaCo participants came to the University of Iceland for more extensive testing, with 35 of them (28%) having accepted V3 in the online survey. In this test, acceptance of topic-initial V3 dropped to 10.3% for pronominal subjects and 5.6% for full DP subjects, as can be seen in Table 3. This result further points towards a processing effect.

| | | | | | | | | **V3** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (17) a. | Í dag | **hann** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 10.3% |
| | today | he | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |
| b. | Í dag | **Jón** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 5.6% |
| | today | John | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |

***Table 3:** Judgments of non-subject initial V3 with a light pronoun vs. a full NP (reading).*

Although the set-up for the in-person questionnaire was identical to the online survey, the participants were in a different testing environment (university setting, investigator present) which might have prompted another approach to the task. In the testing interviews, more precise information about participants' English input and use were collected. These measures (average English use, input and proportion) as well as the age of the participant, rating for V3 in the online survey and subject type (pronoun/full DP) were used in a nested mixed effects model comparison with the V3 rating of the in-person survey as the outcome variable. The only variable which improved the fit of the base model significantly was V3 acceptance in the online survey ($\chi 2$ (1) = 4.61, $p < 0.05$). As can be seen in figure 4, speakers who accepted V3 in the online survey rated the V3 sentences in the in-person survey slightly higher:

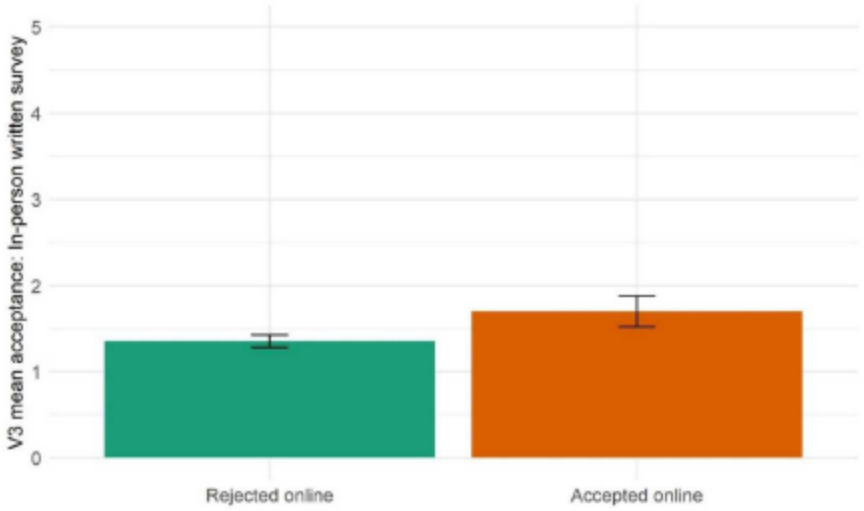


**Figure 4**. V3 rating in the in-person questionnaire by rejection/acceptance in the online survey. 95% confidence interval.

This is still only a small effect, and the participants who accepted V3 in person did not necessarily do so online. Finally, the informants who accepted V3 in the online survey were asked to judge V3 orders by listening to a recording. As shown in Table 4, it does not really matter if there is an intonation break or not (represented by the comma) after the preposed constituent when the subject is pronominal:

| | | | | | | | | **V3** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (18) a. | Í dag | **hann** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 17.1% |
| | today | he | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |
| b | Í dag, | **hann** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 17.1% |
| | today | he | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |

***Table 4:*** *Judgments of non-subject initial V3 with and without an intonation break – Pronoun subject (listening).*

When there is a full NP subject as in Table 5, the example improves if an intonation break is inserted, but this variable did not significantly improve the fit of a mixed effects model with a subject type * intonation break interaction.

| | | | | | | | | V3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (19) a. | Í dag | **Jón** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 8,6% |
| | today | Jón | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |
| b. | Í dag, | **Jón** | **ætlar** | að | fá | sér | ís. | 17.1% |
| | today | John | intends | to | get | himself | ice cream | |

***Table 5:*** *Judgments of non-subject initial V3 with and without an intonation break – (Repeated) full NP subject (listening).*

If this effect is in fact present in the judgments of speakers who accept V3, the effect in the general population is probably too small to be detected with $N = 35$. In general, we can see that of the 35 speakers who accepted V3 in the online survey, only 17.1% of them accept the sentences when listening to a recording containing the construction. This can be interpreted as evidence for a task effect – but what about the speakers who consistently accept V3, even in recordings? Although a large part of the observed V3 matrix clause acceptance in non-heritage Icelandic seems to be due to task effects, there might be some leaks from what has traditionally been viewed as robust and categorical. The possible intonation break effect is reminiscent of left-dislocation and the "scene-setting" in Walkden (2017), and a preference for pronominal subjects would also fit the patterns of the Germanic urban vernacular V3 word orders (as well as patterns reported for Norwegian acquisition in Westergaard 2009). The phenomenon still seems to be marginal and without any sociolinguistic connotation in Icelandic, but it might be informative for V3 phenomena in non-heritage Germanic urban vernaculars – as well as heritage North-American Icelandic. In any case, the results clearly warrant further investigation, and the same holds true for subject-initial V3 which was not tested in MoLiCoDiLaCo. We will look at the latter issue in the next section.

*4.2 The results from a new online study*

The questionnare data presented in this subsection was collected online by Jónsdóttir (2021) in March 2021 (159 participants of various ages). The questionnaire included 28 minimal pairs contrasting subject-initial and topic-initial V2/V3 orders in matrix clauses. For each test sentence, there were five possible responses, exactly the same as in the online survey in MoLiCoDiLaCo:

(20) a. Unacceptable
b. Rather strange
c. Neither natural nor unnatural
d. Rather normal
e. Completely natural

Seven out of the 28 minimal pairs were introduced with a context sentence in order to help the participants get the intended reading of the test sentences. For a direct comparison, the four relevant examples from the MoLiCoDiLaCo project (see *Table 2*) were used in the questionnaire, and most

of the other test sentences were either identical to or modelled after examples from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. (2018). It should be emphasized here that in Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. (2018) the participants were asked to select between alternatives, while in Jónsdóttir's (2021) survey the speakers were asked to evaluate every example.

Table 6 shows the overall acceptance rate[10] of some selected subject-initial V3 sentences with potential V3-adverbs (from the most accepted one to the least accepted), i.e. the combined results for "completely natural" and "rather normal" (the test sentences in 21b, c, f, h, j are taken from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018).

| | | **V3** |
|---|---|---|
| (21) a. | (Aron átti erfitt með að fara með trúarjátninguna). | |
| | Aron had difficulties in reciting the confession of faith | |
| | Hann **bara gat** ekki lært hana utan að. | 83.55% |
| | he just could not learn it by heart | |
| b. | Við **kannski stoppum** á leiðinni heim. | 38.99% |
| | we maybe stop on way-the home | |
| c. | Smiðurinn **nefnilega kemur** á morgun. | |
| | carpenter-the namely comes tomorrow | 27.85% |
| d. | (Anna datt af hjólinu og meiddi sig í hnénu). | |
| | Anna fell off bike-the and hurt herself in knee-the | 23.41% |
| | Hún **augljóslega þurfti** að fá plástur. | |
| | she obviously needed to get band-aid | |
| e. | (Það eru allir að fara heim úr veislunni). | |
| | expl. are all to go home from party-the | 12.58% |
| | Ég **líka ætla** að drífa mig. | |
| | I also want to hurry myself | |
| f. | Ég **bara vil** vatn. | 9.11% |
| | I just want water | |
| g. | Hún **líka spilar** vel á píanó. | 6.96% |
| | she also plays well on piano | |
| h. | Guðmundur **líklega getur** keyrt. | 3.17% |
| | Guðmundur probably can drive | |

*Table 6: Subject-initial V3 with potential V3-adverbs*

With the exception of (21e) and (21g), there is a speaker-oriented adverb intervening between the subject and the finite verb. Beforehand, one would expect such sentences to be acceptable for the most part. However, some of them receive quite low scores. A possible explanation is that in all cases the participants were also asked to evaluate an equivalent example with subject-initial V2. Another possibility is that the participants were not thinking of the appropriate intonation since they were

[10] Jónsdóttir's (2021:34–36) comparison of age-groups did not reveal any significant results.

reading the examples online rather than listening to them. The relatively high acceptance rate of the English-like worder in (21e) is somewhat surprising as well.

In Table 7, there is a central sentence adverb intervening between the subject and the finite verb (the examples are all from Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018). A priori, one would not expect them to receive high scores.

| | | V3 |
|---|---|---|
| (22) a. | Hún **oft fer** til Bandaríkjanna.<br>she often goes to US-the | 10.13% |
| b. | Freyja **alltaf hefur** unnið svo mikið um helgar.<br>Freyja always has worked so much on weekends | 4.43% |
| c. | Hún **alltaf vinnur** um helgar.<br>she always works on weekends | 2.53% |
| d. | Kristín **stundum talar** á ráðstefnum.<br>Kristín sometimes speaks on conferences | 1.89% |

*Table 7: Subject-initial V3 with central sentence adverbs*

The overall numbers are obviously much lower than we saw for subject-initial V3 with potential V3-adverbs. Interestingly, however, some 10% of the speakers accepted the English-like word order in (22a). If the possibility of subject-initial V3 in sentences like (22b) and (22c) was somehow linked to English influence one would expect (22c) to receive higher score than (22b), but that is not the case. However, since the scores are so low for both sentences, nothing can be concluded from this comparison.

Let us now look at some 13 examples of topic-initial V3 order in Table 8. Based on the previously presented results from MoLiCoDiLaCo and the empirical observation made by Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) mentioned at the beginning, it is interesting to see to what extent the participants in Jónsdóttir's (2021) survey accept sentences of this type (examples 23b, d, e, f are from MoLiCoDiLaCo; 20a, i–m are modelled after Arnbjörnsdóttir et al. 2018).

| | | V3 |
|---|---|---|
| (23) a. | Á morgun **við skulum** fara að sjá einhverja skemmtilega mynd.<br>tomorrow we should go to see some fun movie | 24.68% |
| b. | Stundum **hún fer** eftir vinnu.<br>sometimes she goes after work | 20.89 |
| c. | Núna **hann vill** ávexti.<br>now he wants fruits | 18.99% |
| d. | Í dag **hann ætlar** að fá sér ís.<br>today he intends to get himself ice cream | 15.82 |
| e. | Á fimmtudögum **hún fer** til sjúkraþjálfara.<br>on Thursdays she goes to physiotherapist | 15.46 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| f. | Bráðum **hann þarf** að endurnýja áskriftina.<br>soon he needs to renew subscription-the | 7.55 |
| g. | Venjulega **við förum** út á land á sumrin.<br>usually we go out on country side in summers-the | 5.69% |
| h. | Ef Siggi fréttir af þessu **hann verður** örugglega leiður.<br>if Siggi hears about this he becomes definitely sad | 5.66% |
| i. | Í gær **kötturinn veiddi** mús.<br>yesterday cat-the hunted mouse | 5.03% |
| j. | Næsta vetur **hún ætlar** til Kína.<br>next winter she intends to China | 4.4% |
| k. | Manninn þarna **ég þekki**.<br>man-the there I know | 4.4% |
| l. | Næsta vetur **Stefán ætlar** til Kína.<br>next winter Stefán intends to China | 1.90% |
| m. | Eftir að Jóna flutti til Bandaríkjanna, **hún hætti** að hafa samband.<br>after that Jóna moved to US-the she stopped to have contact | 1.27% |

*Table 8: Non-subject initial V3 (topicalization structures).*

5 out of the 13 test sentences presented here receive an acceptance rate of 15% or higher and the last 4 sentences in the table are accepted by less than 5% of the speakers. In the most accepted sentences the fronted element is an adverbial time frame-setter and the subject is a light pronoun, as in the V3 examples typical for Germanic urban dialects as discussed by Walkden (2017). 4 out of the 6 most accepted sentences were also used in the MoLiCiDiLaCo project. Interestingly, however, the scores are much lower here. A possible explanation is that the participants in the MoLiCoDiLaCo project were evenly distributed with respect to age, location, education and other important background variables whereas the participants in Jónsdóttir's (2021) survey simply volunteered online. Moreover, the majority of the speakers in Jónsdóttir's survey were members in a Facebook group called Málspjall 'Language discussion', which probably means that many of them are more aware of their own language use than the average Icelandic speaker. The most interesting result here, however, is that there are a couple of examples of topic-initial V3 that are accepted by more than 20% of the participants (around 30 out af 159 speakers). This can hardly be attributed to data noise.

*4.3 Data from Icelandic and Norwegian children's lyrics*

As shown above, the instances of "exceptional V3" is found in Icelandic are in some ways similar to the V3 phenomenon found in Germanic urban dialects: They are found in topicalization structures and the preposed element is typically an adjunct (most commonly a time or place adverbial) and the subject is preferably pronominal. Direct influence from English is unlikely. But what about examples like (3), repeated here as (24) for convenience:

(24) Gutti aldrei **gegnir** þessu …

Gutti never obeys this

This is from popular children's lyrics but examples of this kind were typically rejected in the online survey by Jónsdóttir (2021), as just pointed out. Now, it is well known that stress and prosody play a major role in lyrics of the traditional kind – and by "traditional" we mean lyrics involving rhyme and in the Icelandic case also alliteration. Since Old Icelandic poetry is famous for word order types that are not found in prose (for an overview and references see Eythórsson 2009) it would be interesting to see to what extent it is possible to find "ungrammatical" word order types in modern Icelandic lyrics. That may shed light on the nature of the V2 constraint: If it can be overridden by the demands of metrics, then it may be more "surfacy" than typical morpho-syntactic phenomena, for instance. Thus we do not know of any examples where rules involving case marking and agreement can be violated in poetry. In this section we will show that the V2 constraint frequently does not hold in Icelandic lyrics – and the same is true of Norwegian lyrics.[11]

First, it is not unexpected that V3 examples involving topicalization structures with pronominal subject are easily found in Icelandic lyrics. The preposed elements are not always adverbial although they frequently are:[12]

(25) a. [Einu sinni] ég **átti** kú (*Sönglögin okkar*, 15)
one time I had cow
'Once upon a time I had a cow.'

b . [Einn dag] hann **var** á veiðum (*Sönglögin okkar*, 17)
one day he was on hunting
'One day he was hunting'

c. [Í dýragarð] ég **fer** ... (*Sönglögin okkar*, 27)
to zoo I go
'I go to a zoo ...'

d. [Sól og vor] eg **syng** um (*Vísnabók*, 63)
sun and spring I sing about
'I sing about (the) sun and (the) spring.'

Comparable examples are also found in Norwegian lyrics:[13]

(26) a. moro vi **har** fra morgen til kveld! (17. mai sang for de små)
fun we have from morning to evening
'We have fun from morning to night'

b. Tidt du **dansa** kringom meg (Blåmann)

[11] This has also been shown for Swedish lyrics (see Magnusson Petzell & Hellberg 2014 and references cited there).
[12] The Icelandic examples are taken from various collections of children's lyrics as indicated and the poets are also mentioned.
[13] All the Norwegian examples are taken from the website *barnesanger.no* and the names of the songs are included here.

often you dance around me

c. [På piano] jeg **spiller** (Jeg er en liten spillemann)
on piano I play
'I play the piano'

d. [deilig melk] du **gir** til meg (Kua mi jeg takker deg)
delicious milk you give to me

As we can see, the category of the initial constituent is not restricted in any obvious way.

Subject-initial V3 examples are also easy to find in the children lyrics with varying kinds of constituents intervening between the subject and the finite verb, both in Icelandic and Norwegian:

(27) a. Gutti aldrei **gegnir** þessu (= (3) above) (*Sönglögin okkar*, 39)
Gutti never obeys this

b. [Hún amma mín] það **sagði** mér (*Vísnabók*, 15)
she grandma my that told me
'My grandma told me that'

c. Folöldin þá **fara** á sprett (*Vísnabók*, 41)
the foals then go on sprint
'Then the foals sprint'

d. [Lítill drengur] lúinn **er** (*Vísnabók*, 67)
small boy tired is
'The little boy is tired.'

(28) a. [Alle killebukkene] [på haugen] **sprang** (Alle Killebukkene)
all he-goats-the on mound-the jumped
'All the he-goats jumped on the mound'

b. [En liten kylling] [i egget] **lå** (En liten kylling)
a small chick in egg-the lay
'A small chick lay in the egg'

c. Bønder [sine økser] **brynte** (Ja, vi elsker dette landet)
farmers ther axes sharpened

d. [Mors lille Ole] [i skogen] **gikk** (Mors lille Ole)
mother's little Ole in wood-the went
'Mother's little Ole went into the woods'

So far we have only looked at V3 examples from lyrics that differ rather minimally from normal prose. But there is more to the story. First, it is possible to find examples of two preposed constituents followed by the finite verb and then a postverbal subject:

(29) a. Smeykur [um holtin] **var** hann að vaga (*Vísnabók*, 23)
scared on hills-the was he to walk
'He was walking scared on the hills.'
b [Fyrr en dagur fagur rann] [freðið nefið] **dregur** hann (*Vísnabók*, 43)
before day beautiful came frozen nose draws he
'He pulls his frozen nose before daybreak (from under ...)'

Similar examples can be found in the Norwegian collection:

(30) a. [Med krøllet hale og nesevis] [i bingen] **springer** en gris (Grisevisa)
with curly tail and impertinent in stall-the jumps a piglet
'An impertinent piglet with a curly tail jumps around in the sty'
b. [Nede på stasjonen] [tidlig en morgen] **står** alle togene (Nede på stasjonen)
down at station-the early one morning stand all trains-the
'Early one morning, all the trains stand down at the station'

Moreover, it is possible to find various kinds of examples of V4, V5 and even V6 in Icelandic lyrics frequently sung to children:[14]

(31) a. hátt nú allir **kveði** (= V4) (*Vísnabók* 15)
high now all sing
'Everybody should sing loudly now'
b. Þar [á klettasyllu] [svarti krummi] [sínum börnum] **liggur** hjá (= V5)
(*Vísnabók*, 93)
there on rock-shelf black raven his children lies with
'The black raven lies there by his children on a rock-shelf'
c. Stundum [eins og hugur hraður] hann [í tröll] sér **getur** breytt (= V6)
(*Vísnabók*, 17)
sometimes like fast mind he into a giant himself can change
'Sometimes he can in an instant change himself into a giant'

And Norwegian children can be treated the same way:

(32) a. Visst [en engel] du **ser** (= V4) (Brahms vuggevise)
surely an angel you see
'You surely see an angel'
b. [Hver en dag] jeg [til mitt brød] **drikker** melka di ... (= V4) (Kua mi jeg takker deg)
each day I to my bread dring milk your
'Every day I dring your milk with my bread'

[14] As pointed out to us by Johan Brandtler, similar deviant structures are also quite easily found in Swedish lyrics. Thus the translation of *Amazing Grace* begins: *Oändlig nåd mig herren gav*, i.e. V4, with the subject being preceded by both the direct and indirect object. See Magnusson Petzell & Hellberg 2014.

c. Pål [sine høner] [på haugen] ut **sleppte** (= V5) (Pål sine høner)
Poul his chickens on mound-the out let
'Poul let his chickens out on the mound'

These examples show that the V2 constraint is considerably relaxed in Icelandic and Norwegian lyrics that are sung for children acquiring the language.[15] Despite this, it seems that Icelandic and Norwegian children acquire the V2 constraint relatively easily – the literature (Sigurjónsdóttir 1991; Westergaard 2009) at least reports remarkably little V3 in child language production, implying that the evidence for V3 in the children's lyrics does not have a critical impact on the learning trajectories. But this also suggests that the V2 constraint is more surfacy than often assumed and that children might acquire a tolerance for V3 orders.

## 5 Summary and discussion

First, let us summarize some of the results from the study of V2/V3 in heritage Icelandic (North American Icelandic) reported on in section 3 above:

(33) a. V3 was more frequently accepted (selected in a forced-choice test) in topicalization sentences than in subject-initial sentences.
b. Adverb type played a role: V3 was more frequently accepted in the case of V3-adverbs as opposed to negation and V2-adverbs.

The acceptance of V3 in topicalization structures was studied in the MoLiCoDiLaCo project in a large-scale online survey and follow-up interviews as described in section 4. Some of the results are summarized in (34):

(34) a. In the online survey, four topicalization sentences with pronominal subjects were accepted by an unexpectedly large proportion of the participants (mean acceptance 27.5% of the population).
b. There was no significant relationship between acceptance of V3 and the participants' "exposure to English" (as measured by their answers to questions about their English input and use), making influence from English unlikely.
c. Acceptance of V3 showed no significant relationship with the participants' age nor any other social measures consistently.
d. The acceptance rate for V3 dropped significantly in the interviews, but speakers who

[15] It would obviously be interesting to study word order deviations in Icelandic poetry in more detail and in different kinds of poetry. Magnusson Petzell & Hellberg claim, for instance (2014: 207), that "deviant word order has gradually been ruled out in high quality poetry" in Swedish. See also Fabb 2010 for a general discussion of the relationship between literary language and ordinary language.

accepted V3 in the online survey rated the V3 sentences in the in-person survey slightly higher. A group of speakers persisted in their acceptance of V3 even when presented with audio recordings of the sentences. This suggests that the online acceptance cannot be explained solely as a task effect or misread as suggested in the original note by Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) (i.e. in the sense that the participants were processing the V3 examples as V2 constructions).

e. In the interviews an example with a full NP (the name *Jón*) was added. This example got a lower acceptance rate than the exact same kind of example with a pronominal subject. When the participants got to listen to the test sentences before evaluating them they were more likely to accept the sentence with the non-pronominal subject if the fronted constitutent was followed by an intonation break whereas an intonation break did not lead to higher acceptance of the corresponding example with a pronominal subject.

All the V3 examples included in the MoLiCoDiLaCo study were topicalization structures and the fronted constituents were mostly time adverbials. The new online study reported on in section 4.2 also included subject-initial V3 structures and a more varied selection of initial constituents. The main results of that study regarding topicalization structures are summarized in (35):

(35) a. The highest rated V3 topicalization examples had fronted time adverbials and pronominal subjects. Comparable topicalization examples with non-pronominal subjects received a lower score.

b. Topicalization examples with a fronted argument or a fronted clause received a low score.

We see then that the topicalization data from non-heritage Icelandic bear a certain resemblance to the V3 data reported for Germanic urban dialects Germanic by Walkden (2017) although V3 is still exceptional such constructions in Icelandic. But since speakers of heritage Icelandic also accepted (selected) subject-initial "exceptional" V3 constructions (i.e. subject-initial V3 orders other than those containing typical V3 adverbs), such constructions were also included in the recent online study reported on in section 4.3. We summarize the results in (36):

(34) a. As expected, most of the subject-initial sentences containing typical V3 adverbs (speaker oriented adverbs like 'just', 'simply', 'obviously') were widely accepted. The fact that some of them received a lower score than expected could in some instances be attributed to the fact that the participants may have been contrasting the examples with corresponding examples with V2 order or because they were reading the examples rather than listening to them with appropriate intonation and stress.

b. Examples with subject-initial V3 order where the element intervening between the subject and the finite verb was a typical sentence-medial adverb like *stundum* 'sometimes', *alltaf* 'always' generally received a very low score. Since comparable examples are typically fine in English, and were also accepted (selected) by speakers of heritage Icelandic to

some extent (although not as frequently as examples with typical V3 adverbs), this is perhaps not what we had expected if V3 orders in Icelandic were the result of influence from English.

In addition to pervasive indications of V2 leaks from judgment data in heritage and non-heritage Icelandic, section 4.3 reviewed examples from Icelandic and Norwegian children's lyrics where V3 (and even V4, V5 and V6) appear quite frequently. This points to a scenario where children's relatively fast acquisition of V2 does not rule out a more surfacy nature of the constraint, where children learn that V2 violations are possible and even possibly extended. Such a tolerance for V2 violations might then contribute to a possible task effect, where a V3 order is less salient than for example agreement violations to reuse the comparison in Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir's (2002) note. In any case, the data presented here shows that V3 acceptance persists through various testing scenarios in a minority of non-heritage Icelandic speakers, and that it is not (yet) predicted by a possible contact scenario even though that might be the case for heritage Icelandic and Germanic urban vernaculars. We believe that further investigation of such a marginal phenomenon with well-established parallels in related languages might be informative in the context of language variation and change more broadly, but future work should further investigate the implications for work on acceptability judgment reliability and sentence processing (e.g. Ferreira 2005 and Sprouse and Almeida 2012).

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Issue 106
December 2021

# Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax

Stockholm University

Lund University

Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax is an electronic publication for current articles relating to the study of Scandinavian syntax. The articles appearing herein are previously unpublished reports of ongoing research activities and may subsequently appear, revised or unrevised, in other publications.

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Stockholm, December 2021,

Johan Brandtler, editor

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Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax
ISSN: 1100-097x

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